

# Profit-hungry company lures youth to guns

By Betsey Piette

Across the U.S., capitalist politicians, including President Joe Biden, spew endless verbiage about the need to control assault weapons, yet do little to make this happen. Meanwhile the parents of one of the children killed and a school staffer in Uvalde, Texas, have started legal actions against Daniel Defense, the gunmaker

which produced the AR-15 assault weapon used to slaughter 19 children and two teachers at Robb Elementary School. The potential plaintiffs include speech pathology clerk Emilia “Amy” Marin, Alfred Garza III, father of Amerie Jo Garza, the 10-year-old who called 911 from inside her classroom before she was shot, and her mother Kimberly Garcia. Alfred Garza, in a letter sent to Daniel

Defense through attorneys, stated: “My purpose for being now is to honor Amerie Jo’s memory. She would want me to do everything I can so this will never happen again to any other child. I have to fight her fight.”

In court documents filed June 2 in the Texas 38th Judicial District, Marin petitioned to force company officials to sit for a deposition and to produce materials related to the gunmaker’s website, profits, lobbying, sales and marketing of AR-15-style rifles. The filings question Daniel Defense’s marketing to young people, who reasonably should not own assault weapons.

Garza is being represented by attorney Josh Koskoff, who earlier this year won a \$73 million settlement against Remington for nine families of the 2012 Sandy Hook elementary school shooting victims, and Texas-based attorneys Mikal Watts and Charla Aldous.

The potential lawsuits face an uphill battle. In October 2005, the U.S. Congress under President George W. Bush, and with considerable Democratic support, passed the Protection of Lawful



## LGBTQ+ for socialism: ‘We want to live!’

We are still grieving for the 10 people of Buffalo, New York’s Black community killed there May 14. We are still grieving for the 21 people — children and teachers — killed in Uvalde, Texas, May 24.

And for so many others killed by hatred and bigotry in the past — Black people worshipping at church in Charleston, South Carolina; LGBTQ+ people dancing at the Pulse Bar in Orlando, Florida; Asian women working at health spas in Atlanta — too many to name and number here. Millions, all the way back to the foundation of this country, to the massacres of Indigenous peoples and the torture and deaths of Black people held in

enslavement.

This is a country steeped in the blood of conquest and exploitation — which has never ended. Some of that death is from guns — and some of that death is from laws and state rulings that legitimize persecution and death.

The legal targeting of oppressed people continues with yet another attack on trans lives coming out of Florida. The state’s Agency for Health Care Administration announced June 2 that it was canceling all coverage of gender-affirming care, including hormone replacement therapy and surgeries, for recipients of Medicaid, adults as well as

Continued on page 10

WORKERS WORLD  
editorial

### PRIDE

6-7

Class roots of anti-trans laws

Events challenge police, corporate control, transphobia

### Labor fights back

3

Lockout by war profiteers

Seattle museum union

Boston baristas strike



Memphis 7, fired Starbucks union organizers, celebrate 11-3 union victory, June 7.

TEAR DOWN  
THE WALLS

Palestine  
Freedom Tunnel

Stop family  
separation

July 3rd:  
Bring Mumia home!

4

### Oakland school occupied

2

### On the picket line

5

### Formula vs. corporate greed

5

### Dangerous aging subways

5

### Commentary: Uvalde’s children

10

Famine in Africa 8

Cuba/China vaccine progress 9

Boycott of Biden’s summit 11

Colombia progressives advance 11



# Oakland community fights back against school closures

By Jesse Edwards  
Oakland, California

The people of Oakland are continuing to rise up against school closures imposed by the Oakland Unified School District. Teachers, parents, students and other community members took a bold step by starting an occupation of Parker School on May 25, its official closure date and the final day of the school year. They are demanding that children in their primarily Black and Brown communities have access to the same education as children in privileged communities.

“We will not move until our voices are heard,” said Rochelle Jenkins, a Parker parent who is one of the organizers. “We are going to stay until they reverse their decision to close our schools.” She is adamant that “every child is owed [an education], and they [OUSD] don’t have a right to take it away.”

“To resist this decision and in an effort to take a stand, to keep our community ours, we have decided to take the school back for ourselves,” says Azlinah Tambu, another Parker parent. (tinyurl.com/bdfn5dju)

The teachers and parents have turned their occupation into a Community School. Students learned about gardening by planting tomatoes. They worked together to write their own stories. Some students learned about the importance and social functions of different metals and machines. Of course they get time to play; they can



Family members, students, teachers and community gather in front of Parker school.

PHOTO: NATE LANDRY

exercise their mind with some chess lessons and their bodies with classic games like double dutch.

The OUSD decided to close three schools this year. Up to 11 schools will be affected by the restructuring plan by the end of the next school year. OUSD claims the closures will allow it to cover a major budget deficit. However, the parents of Parker students are angered over the lack of transparency in the school board’s financial statements.

## Education under attack

This restructuring plan is part of a larger trend in the past 20 years that has seen less funds for public schools and the growth of private charter schools. Having no back-ground in education, billionaires like Bill Gates and the Walton family of Walmart have backed charter schools as a means to break up teachers’ unions and put their imprint on the U.S. education system, with no public voice in charter schools’ operations.

Meanwhile, schools that serve Black and Brown communities face everything from lack of resources to closures. Affluent communities will face no such penalties, and their schools are likely to benefit from the \$10-million grant that OUSD is receiving from the state of California for its restructuring program. Moreover, President Joe Biden recently implored states to allot unused COVID-19 relief funds to police departments and into the carceral state.

Against these forces, community members served by Parker School, a school strongly rooted in the East Oakland community, are insisting on their fundamental right for their children to have an education. Their occupation goes round the clock in shifts, with members taking on food and security duties in addition to operating the Community School. Occupiers hosted a Celebration on May 28 to build support from the larger community. They are receiving donations for items such as tents, sleeping bags, art supplies, food and dishes.

The Parker Parents are determined to maintain their struggle until their demands are met and the school stays open for their community. More resources and up to date information about the occupation can be found here: linktr.ee/parkerforthepeople. □

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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. □

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

**National Office**  
147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor  
New York, NY 10011  
212.627.2994  
wwp@workers.org

**Atlanta**  
PO Box 18123  
Atlanta, GA 30316  
404.627.0185  
atlanta@workers.org

**Austin**  
austin@workers.org

**Bay Area**  
P.O. Box 22947  
Oakland, CA 94609  
510.394.2207  
bayarea@workers.org

**Boston**  
284 Amory St.  
Boston, MA 02130  
617.522.6626  
boston@workers.org

**Buffalo, N.Y.**  
335 Richmond Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14222  
716.883.2534  
buffalo@workers.org

**Central Gulf Coast**  
(Alabama, Florida, Mississippi)  
centralgulfcoast@workers.org

**Cleveland**  
cleveland@workers.org

**Durham, N.C.**  
919.322.9970  
durham@workers.org

**Houston**  
P.O. Box 3454  
Houston, TX 77253-3454  
713.503.2633  
houston@workers.org

**Minnesota**  
minnesota@workers.org

**Philadelphia**  
P.O. Box 34249  
Philadelphia, PA 19101  
610.931.2615  
phila@workers.org

**Portland, Ore.**  
portland@workers.org

**Salt Lake City**  
801.750.0248  
slc@workers.org

**San Antonio**  
sanantonio@workers.org

**West Virginia**  
WestVirginia@workers.org

## MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD this week

### In the U.S.

Profit-hungry company lures youth to guns . . . . .	1
Oakland fights back against school closures. . . . .	2
Steelworkers locked out by war profiteers . . . . .	3
Starbucks workers strike for safety . . . . .	3
Museum workers hop on the union train . . . . .	3
Capitalism and baby formula . . . . .	5
Dangers lurk in subway dilapidation. . . . .	5
On the picket line. . . . .	5
Western colonizers imposed anti-gay laws. . . . .	6
Smash racism, transphobia and police brutality!. .7	
No more rainbow capitalism! . . . . .	7
Pride in 'the CLE' . . . . .	7
Uvalde will go down in abolitionist history. . . . .	10

### Around the world

African famine: the role of sanctions. . . . .	8
Cuba-China vaccine breakthrough. . . . .	9
Colombia elections: peace and justice soon? . . . .	11
Mass opposition to Biden’s Summit . . . . .	11

### Tear down the walls

Palestine ‘Freedom Tunnel’ heroes sentenced . . . .	4
Commentary: Carceral system separates families	4

### Editorial

LGBTQ+ for socialism: “We want to live” . . . . .	1
---	---

### Noticias en Español

Solidaridad con Uvalde . . . . .	12
¡Basta ya! . . . . .	12

Workers World  
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.  
New York, NY 10011  
Phone: 212.627.2994  
E-mail: ww@workers.org  
Web: www.workers.org

Vol. 64, No. 23 • June 9, 2022  
Closing date: June 8, 2022

Editors: John Catalinotto, Martha Grevatt, Deirdre Griswold, Monica Moorehead, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt

Web Editors: ABear, Harvey Markowitz, Janet Mayes

*Tear Down the Walls!* Editors: Mirinda Crissman, Ted Kelly

Production & Design Editors: Gery Armsby, Sasha Mazumder

Copyediting and Proofreading: Paddy Colligan, S. Hedgecoke

Contributing Editors: LeiLani Dowell, G. Dunkel, K. Durkin, Sara Flounders, Gloria Rubac

Mundo Obrero: Carlos Vargas

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

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

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





# Steelworkers locked out by greedy war profiteers

By Otis Grotewohl  
Union, West Virginia

Roughly 250 workers at the Collins Aerospace plant in Union, West Virginia, have been locked out of their jobs since May 23. Employees were unexpectedly met with heavy duty blockades all along the gates throughout the entrance area as they arrived to work that day.

The workers belong to United Steelworkers Local 1449 and are defiantly holding down two picket lines in front of the factory. Workers World visited the picket lines and spoke with several picketers, half of whom are women.

The locked-out workers were directed by the USW District 8 leadership not to say much publicly about specific details, but they offered a statement from District 8 Director Larry Ray. The statement declares “Collins Aerospace must be made accountable for its decision to hold our jobs, families and community hostage over issues that should be resolved through collective bargaining.” Furthermore, “Management needs to end this



Locked-out steelworkers march outside Collins Aerospace plant in Union, West Virginia.

PHOTO: UNITED STEELWORKERS

lockout immediately, return these workers to their jobs and resolve our differences at the table.”

One locked-out worker told WW, “What I can say is, the company offered a lousy contract on Saturday that most of us voted down, and on Monday we were met with a nasty blockade.”

## Company an auxiliary to endless war machine

Collins Aerospace is a subsidiary of Raytheon Technologies, one of the largest U.S.-based weapons

manufacturers.

The company has no excuse for operating in such bad faith. Just days before Collins Aerospace offered their unpopular proposals, Raytheon, along with Lockheed Martin, was granted two contracts worth \$309 million by the U.S. Army for their joint venture in creating Javelin missiles. (Reuters, May 16)

Javelin missiles are anti-tank rockets that the U.S. continues to give the puppet government of Ukraine to prolong its proxy war against Russia. As of early May, the U.S. has sent over 5,500 Javelin missiles to Ukraine. (NPR, May 3)

The workers and their family members standing on the pickets at Collins Aerospace are not benefitting from the war games being played by their bosses. They just want to get back to work and not worry about when their next paycheck will arrive. Many of the locked-out workers spent decades of their lives working at the facility, and they now feel like it was all done in vain. Some are fearful about losing their retirement.

Only a sick system permits a corporation to shut out its workforce for wanting a fair contract, while, at the same time, raking in massive profits at the cost of innocent lives. Despite all the systemic challenges, the workers are standing united as they enter their third week locked-out. □

**Boston**

## Starbucks workers strike for safety

By Steve Gillis  
Boston

May 31 — Less than a month after their May 3 vote to unionize, workers at the Cleveland Circle Starbucks store and supporters shut down operations on Memorial Day and declared a strike because of safety violations.

This was a stinging rebuke to management, which the day before had ordered workers to stay on the job while dirty water poured from the ceiling onto their heads and food stations.

Overnight, Boston Starbucks Workers United (SBWU) issued a call to strike. As the sun came up, dozens of baristas representing the state’s 17 unionizing stores — and some from as far away as Connecticut — set up Boston’s historic first Starbucks strike line.

The Greater Boston Labor Council (GBLC) put out a rapid response call for emergency strike solidarity. Representatives came from Darwin’s Café workers fighting for their first contract, SEIU health care workers, Local 26 UNITE HERE food service workers, Steelworkers school bus drivers and Boston Building Trades. These workers enthusiastically reinforced the line with solidarity resources like food, strike signs and sound equipment.

Barista Yaakov Horwath reported to assembled media and community members passing by: “We were told by our store manager to continue to work and take customers, while the ceiling above our drink hand-off area and the light fixtures above our espresso bar were leaking dirty water from the seriously broken HVAC/AC system.”



PHOTO: BOSTON SBWU

First shift strike line, Cleveland Circle, May 31, Boston.

According to shift manager and union leader Willow Montana, workers had held an emergency meeting Monday afternoon after management refused to answer their questions about safety fixes and catastrophe pay. They decided to strike Tuesday morning to ensure worker and customer safety and enforce their demands for rightful pay.

Barista Seryna Graham took on the role of picket captain, leading chants of “Contract now!” and “Stop union busting,” keeping the strike line 100% “Union Strong” for six hours under the blazing sun.

As of this writing, Starbucks management has neither fixed the dangerous leak nor agreed to pay the workers for their lost time. In this emergency situation, Darlene Lombos, GBLC executive secretary, issued a call online

to that group’s 120 constituent unions to donate to the overnight-established “Starbucks Organizing Fund” at [tinyurl.com/mrytvc5d](https://tinyurl.com/mrytvc5d).

SBWU has won five Boston-area bargaining units in mostly unanimous National Labor Relation Board votes. An additional 13 Massachusetts stores and a growing number of shops throughout the region are organized and waiting to vote in NLRB elections. Follow developments @BostonSBWU on Twitter.

*Gillis is a member of the Executive Board, United Steelworkers Local 8751, Boston School Bus Drivers.*



WW PHOTO: STEVE GILLIS

Barista picket captain Seryna Graham leads Boston strikers and supporters chanting, “If we don’t get it, shut it down!”

## Museum workers hop on the union train

By Jim McMahan  
Seattle

About 65 internal security guards in the wealthy Seattle Art Museum (SAM) just became the SAM VSO Union! VSO stands for Visitor Service Officers. The year-long organizing drive was victorious with 34-to-4 votes in the National Labor Relations Board election. The election covered workers at both the downtown Seattle Art Museum and the Asian Art Museum.

Running alongside the Starbucks Workers United and the Amazon Labor Union, museum workers are on the offensive nationally to organize and unionize.

The SAM made pay cuts, including pension pay cuts, along with many layoffs in the pandemic summer of 2020. The workers saw the need to organize when the bosses chose to restore the pension pay cuts in 2021 for the higher earning staff, but not for frontline workers. The need for workers having a say in workplace safety became clear when patrons sometimes refused to wear masks.

SAM has fought the union all year, but the workers prevailed. SAM used staff emails to attack the organizers’ characters. They fired leading organizer, Aselya Keyes, in

a blatant union-busting move. Keyes, a five-year veteran at SAM, is the only person of color among the leading organizers. She wants her job back and has filed Unfair Labor



PHOTO: AMBER CORTES/HYPERALLERGIC

Seattle Art Museum visitor-services employees who are leading union organizing at the institution.

Practice charges with the NLRB. She is still organizing from the sidelines and going to union meetings.

The SAM VSO Union wants a voice in workplace decisions about scheduling and staffing, a seniority pay system, higher wages to offset Seattle’s cost of living and reinstatement of payments to their retirement plans. SAM is a ruling-class institution, rich enough to meet workers’ demands. This museum’s wealthy benefactors have their names chiseled into the museum’s granite walls.

The VSO’s saga is part of a national movement among museum workers.

The SAM VSO Union follows the success of Seattle’s Frye Museum workers in 2019. Recently workers have organized unions at the New Museum, the Guggenheim and Whitney museums in New York City; the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the Portland Art Museum in Oregon; and more.

Museum workers are exploding the myth that since their jobs benefit the public, they should not get paid. But organizer Aselya Keyes says, “I feel like frontline staff are always the least paid, the most disregarded; but at the same time, they are the ones keeping the museum alive.” □



# Palestine ‘Freedom Tunnel’ heroes sentenced to additional years



By Richie Merino

An Israeli occupation court has sentenced six Palestinian prisoners, known as the heroes of the “Freedom Tunnel,” to an additional five years and eight months imprisonment for successfully liberating themselves from Israel’s high-security prison in Gilboa in 2021.

Mahmoud al-Ardah, Mohammed al-Ardah, Yaqoub Qadri, Ayham Kamamji, Munadil Nafa’at and Zakaria Zubaidi freed themselves from the prison by digging a tunnel with a spoon and their hands over an extended period. Their bold escape inspired Palestinians and people worldwide with their ingenuity and willingness to sacrifice for freedom. The metal spoon — the primary tool used to dig the tunnel — has become a symbol of Palestinian resistance, steadfastness, creativity and

unbreakable determination to win liberation from Israel’s violent occupation.

In response to the sentences, Yaqoub Qadri stated: “We do not care what the sentence is. The important thing is that we made the impossible possible; we were able to break through the Israeli security services and dealt a blow. We achieved something unthinkable for Israel and its security mechanisms.”

All six heroes of the Freedom Tunnel have repeatedly affirmed their commitment to the path of resistance and liberation for Palestine by any means necessary, refusing to back down from their positions despite the risks.

The sentence came only a week after occupation forces killed Daoud al-Zubaidi, Zakaria Zubaidi’s brother, a former Palestinian prisoner and a longtime fighter with the Palestinian

resistance in Jenin. Occupation forces have repeatedly invaded the Jenin refugee camp to suppress the growing resistance movement there. In one such raid, the occupation military assassinated beloved Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, while the Al-Jazeera journalist was reporting on the attack.

Resisting settler colonialism is not a crime, nor is an attempted escape from

colonial imprisonment. The Palestinian freedom fighters were tried in a military court via martial law, using colonial laws adopted from imperialist Britain. Their sentence is revenge for exposing the fragility of colonial domination in Palestine.

The Freedom Tunnel and the six heroes of the self-liberation operation represent the enduring struggle for freedom that no amount of militarized Zionist colonization can suppress. They have dealt a massive blow to the mirage of Israeli invincibility and security control. Their bravery and commitment to freedom are celebrated throughout Palestine, from the river to the sea and throughout the region. Their capture by Israeli occupation forces does nothing to dim the light of their heroism and the inspiration they provide for the future of the liberation struggle. □



Maitham Abdel’s sculpture “Freedom Spoon” CREDIT: SAMIDOUN

## WW COMMENTARY

# Carceral system separates families

By Mirinda Crissman, Houston and Ted Kelly, Philadelphia

From behind bars at U.S. Penitentiary-McCreary in rural Kentucky, Eli Torres received the news from his family back home in Uvalde, Texas. His daughter, Eliahana Cruz Torres, was dead. The 10-year-old girl, nicknamed “Eli” after her father, had been murdered at Robb Elementary School in the latest grotesquery of gun violence gripping the consciences of the U.S. working class.

It is not possible in a few column inches of this paper to describe the grief of a parent losing their child, let alone in an unimaginably violent way. Or to describe how much worse it is to lose your child without the ability to say one more “I love you” and to be so far from home when death happens.



On March 11, 2020, people protested the annual Border Expo in San Antonio, where companies were promoting weapons to use against migrants. WW PHOTO: MIRINDA CRISSMAN

But the cruelty inflicted on the Torres family did not end when the gunfire finally stopped on May 24. Federal prison officials denied Mr. Torres compassionate release to attend his young daughter’s funeral. When Eliahana’s small coffin was buried deep in the Texas soil June 2, her father grieved alone in a prison cell 1,200 miles away.

Only last summer in 2021, Khalida Jarrar, Palestinian political prisoner and a leader in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, was denied

the opportunity to attend her daughter’s funeral. Suha Jarrar, a friend of Workers World Party, died suddenly at the age of 31 at her home in Ramallah.

“The occupation robbed me of saying goodbye to my little bird Suha, forcing me to say farewell with a flower from our lands instead of a kiss,” Khalida Jarrar said shortly before her release by Israeli occupation forces a few months later. “When Suha came into the world, her father was incarcerated. And she is leaving it now with her mother behind bars.”

We remember the decades-long string of atrocities committed by the state against the members of the MOVE organization. On May 13, 1985, Philadelphia cops and Pennsylvania state police dropped a bomb on their family’s house on Osage Avenue. MOVE 9 members Janet, Janine and Consuewella Africa were incarcerated, but on that fateful day in 1985, the three women lost children among the 11 people murdered, only to be told later by prison guards.

**How many family separations over the centuries?**

These are just snapshots of the daily cruelties that have been inflicted on poor workers and colonized peoples by the infernal apparatus of colonialism and carceralism.

Because of the current capitalist prison system, how many parents and grandparents have slipped away without being able to squeeze the hand of a child they gave life to? How many children have been born without one of their parents there to welcome them into this world? How many birthdays have been spent in a sterile visitation room under the callous gaze of an armed prison guard?

The inhumanity of family separation is reason enough to abolish the entire carceral apparatus. Family separation has been a colonial policy since day one of the U.S. settler state, from the forced migrations of entire Native nations to the kidnapping of Indigenous children into “Christian boarding schools.” Today family separation continues, violently, through prisons, jails, migrant detention centers.

Uvalde law enforcement had the ability to go in to stop the mass murder of Latinx children. But the function of law enforcement is to terrorize people of color, the poor, the oppressed — to kidnap them, haul them off for show trials and

warehouse them in concentration camps until such time that their labor may be useful for the capitalist machine.

In Uvalde, parents were forcibly kept from their children. As “law enforcement” stood by doing nothing while the shooter raged, killing 19 children and two adults, parents attempted to get to their children. A mother of two at the school, farmworker Angeli Gomez explained in a later interview that she was handcuffed for being “uncooperative” for challenging why police were doing nothing, despite being armed to the teeth. When she was able to get free, she ran inside to get her kids. (CBS News, June 2)

### The racism of deadly ‘family separation’

For centuries, in the Uvalde area and along the Mexico-U.S. border, the Texas Rangers, armed posses and U.S. military forces have been praised and rewarded for incarcerating and killing people of color, including children, in the service of spreading white supremacy on the continent.

“White power has shaped state formation and border controls, particularly in Texas and California. ... After the [1848] Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the advent of the railroad brought in more settlers to both sides of the Rio Grande, land was mass-appropriated from Tejanx (Mexicans in Texas). State officials, the army and Texas Rangers enforced these land grabs with brute force. Within a decade, and in just two counties, 187,000 acres of land were expropriated from Tejanx for Anglo settler-ranchers . . .

“Vigilantes and state officials acted in concert using sheer force to enforce a color bar in the labor force and terrorize Mexicans and Mexican Americans through beatings, torture, shootings and mass decapitation. Thousands of Mexican Americans were killed during La Matanza (the period of massacres), and in the Porvenir Massacre of 1919, 15 men and boys were executed, their corpses left to rot.

“Formed in 1924, the U.S. Border Patrol’s first generation of agents was recruited from the ranks of the Texas Rangers and Klansmen, laying the ground for the culture of racism, militarism and

violence still prevalent in the agency. . . . Organized vigilantes capturing Black people, paramilitaries hunting Indigenous people and militias apprehending migrants laid the foundation for irredeemable modern-day police and border forces.” (Harsha Walia, “Border and Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism,” 2021)

Whether by prisons, jails, detention centers or law enforcement that violently lock the poor and oppressed up in cages, family separation in service of white supremacy has continued because it is an effective tool of class warfare.

ALL OUT FOR MUMIA

JOIN US IN PHILLY! WE FREE HIM OR HE DIES!

JULY 3RD

40 YEARS AGO MUMIA WAS FRAMED AND UNJUSTLY SENTENCED TO DEATH. THEY'RE STILL TRYING TO KILL HIM.

1-5PM ET

THE TORTURE WILL ONLY END IF WE ACT. WE GOT HIM OFF OF DEATH ROW. NOW WE NEED TO BRING HIM HOME!

THOMAS PAINE PLAZA

MUNICIPAL SERVICES BUILDING (BROAD AND JFK)

PHILADELPHIA, PA

ORGANIZE IN YOUR CITY: LOVENOTPHEAR.COM/40CITIES

LOVE NOT PHEAR

Some of the most effective ways to beat back racist, sexist, ableist class warfare with its centuries-long history is with the organized masses building power through vehicles like workers assemblies, tenant unions, unemployed councils and other grassroots resistance.

Granting Eli Torres “compassionate” release to attend his slain daughter’s funeral is an example of something the capitalist state in its barbarity regularly refuses to offer. The state will not even grant aging and ill political prisoners like Mutulu Shakur “compassionate release” after decades in confinement — despite the fact that he is dying from a terminal illness.

Real compassion would be funding peoples’ basic needs for food, shelter and other necessities, rather than funding endless war at home and abroad.

The struggle of workers and the oppressed has no borders! Unite families! Free them all! □



# Capitalism and baby formula

By Margaret Kimberley

The following article was posted on Black Agenda Report on May 29.

The baby formula shortage is not a glitch in the system. It actually exemplifies everything that goes wrong when the profit motive rules. Capitalism can't ensure a food supply or anything else that humans need.

"Socialism doesn't work" is repeated like a mantra. We're told endlessly that capitalism provides jobs, housing, food and health care in this country, when it does a very bad job of doing all these things. The United States is said to be "the richest country in the world," a strange statement which implies that the people are prosperous even though they aren't.

Gig work, housing insecurity, medical debt and student loan debt are all common experiences for people in the U.S. Now, to add insult to injury, the system said to be so superior can't even keep little babies fed.

There is an historic shortage of baby formula. There are parts of the country where food for infants simply can't be found at any price. This headline is the most honest about the situation. "America is running out of baby formula because three companies control the market and babies aren't that profitable." (tinyurl.com/23sxtxhv)

There are only three baby formula manufacturers; and one of them, Abbott, had to shut down its plant after a whistleblower revealed their product was contaminated. Two infant deaths may be

related to the contamination, which went undiscovered despite Food and Drug Administration regulatory authority. (tinyurl.com/2p82s8e9)

The Biden administration has invoked the Defense Production Act to increase the supply and now allows formula from foreign countries to be imported. They are making quite a show of their late-in-the-day response to a situation that should have been addressed sooner. But the stopgaps to resolve a temporary crisis should not allow a bigger problem to go unmentioned.

Capitalism is the problem. Transportation Secretary and onetime presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg admitted as much, even as he tried to defend the failed state. "But let's be very clear. This is a capitalist country. The government does not make baby formula, nor should it. Companies make formulas."

In a better society, a socialist society, baby formula wouldn't be sold by private interests. It would be provided free of charge to every family, and yes, the government would make it. The "market forces," which we are told solve every problem, actually create very serious ones. In this country even the effort to provide infant formula to all, regardless of income, is yet another means of supporting monopoly capital.

The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program provides exclusive contracts with just two companies in exchange for discounts. The handful of companies providing formulas get rich, but the market does not do a good job of caring for kids. Formula doesn't provide a big enough profit margin to be of interest

to corporations. This market we're told to believe in with semireligious fervor doesn't provide for other needs very well either. Only public outcry from desperate parents got the needed response after months of shortages.

Even cynical politicians eventually pay attention when babies' lives are at risk,

but this problem is not unique. Higher education should be free or at the very least inexpensive, as it was before neoliberalism turned the country into a failed state. Health care should also be free, but the one promise Biden has kept is to make sure that doesn't happen. The very term "medical debt" is an abomination, yet it is the reason for most personal bankruptcies. It seems that baby formula is the canary in the failed-state coal mine.

This time the crisis is about feeding babies, but there are more to come. Food shortages and rising prices, gasoline prices and voracious hedge funds snapping up houses are all symptoms of a very big problem.

Of course, capitalism creates all these

crises, but levels of indoctrination are so high that very few people make the connections. While all fingers should be pointed at the market forces which create so much misery, some people prefer to shame women who don't breastfeed. Others are angry that babies in immigration detention get the formula that the law requires them to have.

Pete Buttigieg isn't alone in cutting off any discussion of alternatives. The "socialism doesn't work" trope is quite effective. Even as the quality of life diminishes in a myriad of ways, there is little improvement in the willingness to reject American exceptionalism and its many lies. The cognitive dissonance required to face these many predicaments is too great for many people to experience, even as their expectations of basics such as a steady supply of infant formula crumble around them.

This particular crisis will ease, but it will be followed by more. There is still \$1.9 trillion in student loan debt incurred by people who only wanted to improve their lives. After allocating \$30 billion for policing, the Biden administration is telling states and localities to use unspent COVID-19 stimulus funding for the police, who apparently can't get enough public money. COVID-19 hasn't disappeared, and neither have any other health care needs that could sorely use this funding. Of course, the Ukraine cash cow has to be milked to the tune of an additional \$40 billion.

When the next calamity hits the fan, the true villain has to be named. Regardless of other symptoms, it is capitalism that causes our problems. □



# Dangers lurk in subway dilapidation

By G. Dunkel

Nobody was injured. Service was interrupted and limited for a few hours. But it could have been much worse.

Around 8 a.m. June 2, a power line on the J-train sparked and burst into flames. The J-train runs between Jamaica, Queens and lower Manhattan, taking workers from Brooklyn and

Queens to their jobs in Manhattan.

If this line had failed when another subway train — carrying up to 3,000 people — was passing, the situation would have been much more serious.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority admitted to the New York Post that this line was dilapidated and over 60-years-old, like much of the system that moves millions of workers every day.

Given that the United States can drop \$54 billion on a war in Ukraine, with the promise of more to come, without much discussion and hardly any opposition, you would think it could find a few billions to ensure the safety of workers going to their jobs or moving around. □



Sparks and flames visible under J-train, June 2.

## Rally for Chipotle workers blocks midtown Manhattan traffic

Chipotle workers were joined by local unions and politicians in midtown Manhattan in New York City June 1 to demand union representation, better scheduling and a \$20-an-hour wage. Chipotle has committed 600,000 labor law violations within the last two years, including violation of the city's "Fair Workweek Law" that requires fast-food employers to provide regular schedules to workers, regardless of their immigration status.

Representatives from Service Employees Union (SEIU) Local 32BJ — who seek to represent the Chipotle workers — the New York Taxi Workers Alliance and Amazon Labor Union (ALU) were among the speakers.



PHOTO: DYLAN RCIE, INDEPENDENT

Chipotle workers and union supporters rally, May 31, New York City.

## On the picket line

By Marie Kelly

Chipotle worker Alyssa Roman, 21, said, "Now that I'm pregnant, it's not just myself I need to defend for. Listen, you can mess with me, but when you mess with my child I promise you it's over."

Julian Mitchell-Israel, field director with ALU, shared words of solidarity with the Chipotle workers: "Just like we are fighting on Staten Island, we have your back." (tinyurl.com/4fstka9t)

## Dollar General workers protest at shareholders meeting

Hundreds of Dollar General workers protested at the Goodlettsville, Tennessee, City Hall where Dollar General shareholders were meeting. Workers are demanding a pay increase to \$15 an hour, up from the current \$8.25 an hour, and safer working conditions. The workers, along with Poor People's Campaign leader Rev. William Barber II, were denied entrance to the building in a blatant display of Dollar General's lack of concern for workers' struggles. One worker who traveled from

North Carolina described the hardship of trying to provide for three children on such a small wage.

A Labor Department press release cited four Dollar General stores for safety violations, including failing to keep receiving areas clean and orderly, stacking items in an unsafe manner and exposing workers to fire hazards. The Labor Department acknowledged that Dollar General has a long history of hazardous working conditions. (tinyurl.com/ydmnsyyx)

## Missouri library workers win union in landslide vote

Workers at the Daniel Boone Regional Library system in Columbia, Missouri, were the first library workers in the state to organize and win their union election. Daniel Boone Regional Library Workers Union (DBRLWU) voted 101-55 to join American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 61. Workers want a safe inclusive environment, a voice in decision-making about library operations and a fair equitable wage.

AFSCME reports, "Throughout the organizing process, workers received an incredible showing of support from local community and library workers around the country. DBRL staff who testified in support of a union at the library's monthly Board of Trustees meetings were often greeted by local supporters donning red solidarity clothing for the group's organizing efforts. A community letter of support posted on DBRLWU's website has garnered over 700 signatures to date." (tinyurl.com/5n943nw4) □



# Western colonizers imposed anti-gay laws throughout world

By Leslie Feinberg

*The following is one installment of Feinberg’s “Lavender & Red” series on the intersection of LGBTQ2S+ and socialist history, which appeared Sept. 27, 2007, in Workers World newspaper. The 120-part series was published between 2004 and 2008 and can be downloaded for free at workers.org/books.*

Wherever class-divided societies overturned matrilineal-communal groupings, laws began to punish sexualities, gender expressions and bodies that did not fit the new patriarchal family models. The status of women, who had played a pivotal role in pre-class societies where the blood line was traced through females, not males, was degraded with the ascendancy of patriarchal class rule.

The ruling class mandated adherence to a father-dominated family unit, rather than the ancient mother-right gens, because it assured the transmission of wealth to male heirs.

As ruling classes grew stronger and expanded their territories by overthrowing neighboring communal societies by force of arms, they violently enforced their legal codes and social order on militarily conquered peoples.

European ruling classes exported laws against same-sex love all over the world as they established their colonial empires. European colonialism used Inquisition terror to enforce these laws against same-sex love and sex/gender variance. The violent legal restructuring of Indigenous societies — which affected economic organization, kinship, family/community organization, sexualities, gender and sex roles — served enslavement, exploitation and oppression.

These Indigenous societies under siege were diverse. For instance, the Gay American Indians History Project, first published in the germinal 1988 book “Living the Spirit,” lists 135 Indigenous peoples on the North American continent, who made room for many more sex/gender roles than the European nations did.

Midnight Sun (Anishnabe) provides a historical-materialist view of sex/gender systems in these varied Native societies in one of the book’s essays. Entitled “Sex/Gender Systems in Native North America,” it explains: “Social, and specifically sexual, life is embedded in the economic organization of society — an organization that gives rise to a variety of cultural forms.

“The cultural construction of gender and sexuality must be seen in terms of the sexual division of labor, subsistence patterns, social relations and male-female relations. Within this context, ideology is not an arbitrary, discrete force — rather, it serves to reproduce and perpetuate social forms, behaviors and individuals suitable to a particular mode of production.”

### The roots of Abu-Ghraib

European colonialism exported its domestic, counterrevolutionary Inquisition around the world, starting with Portuguese expansionism around 1500 C.E. The early epoch of direct colonial rule reached its zenith more than three centuries later with British domination of India in 1857.

Queer Heritage reports that in 1551, “Portuguese missionary Father Pero Correia, writing from Brazil, asserts that same-sex eroticism among Indigenous women is quite common, in fact as widespread as in Africa, where he was previously stationed. Native Brazilian women, he observes, carry weapons and even form same-sex marriages.”

In 1646, Portuguese colonial overlords expanded their laws against same-sexuality to include females, as well as males. The sentence was being burned alive at the stake.

Max Mejía states that with the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in the Western hemisphere, “An absolutist discourse enveloped homosexuality in the concepts of ‘infamous sin,’ ‘sin against nature,’ corruption of the soul and alliance with the devil. They punished the practice without distinctions, among both lay people and clerics.

“Furthermore,” Mejía concludes, “the conquerors treated ‘sodomy’ as a special Indian sin and hunted it down and punished it as such on a grand scale. They orchestrated crusades like the Holy Inquisition, which began burning sodomites at the stake as a special occasion, as in the memorable auto-da-fé of San Lázaro in Mexico City.”

During Vasco Núñez de Balboa’s colonial expedition across Panama, he “saw men dressed like women; Balboa learnt that they were sodomites and threw the king and

40 others to be eaten by his dogs, a fine action of an honorable and Catholic Spaniard.”

The Spanish colonial authorities in Cuba castrated those they considered “sodomites” and forced them to eat their own testicles coated with dirt.

When the Spaniards invaded the Antilles and Louisiana, “they found men dressed as women who were respected by their societies. Thinking they were hermaphrodites, or homosexuals, they slew them.”

Wealthy Dutch merchants imposed pre-Napoleonic Roman-Dutch common law, which criminalized “sodomy” and “unnatural sex offenses,” from Indonesia to South Africa.



Sodomy laws, imposed on India in 1861 by British colonizers, were still in force at the time of this 2013 protest.

The colonial legislation that the Dutch merchants brought with them to the Cape of Africa in the 17th century formed the basis of [anti-LGBTQ] laws in Namibia, Zimbabwe and Lesotho.

### Sun never set on British anti-sodomy laws

The British imposed on the people of Ireland a 1634 law that made same-sex relations between males punishable by death. Later, the 1885 British Labouchère Amendment was the law under which feminine homosexual writer Oscar Wilde was sentenced to hard labor [in prison].

Laws criminalizing same-sex relations in India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei all have the same name — “Article 377” — because the same colonial power wrote the law: Britain. The colonial-drafted legislation is misleadingly named the “Indian Penal Code.” Hindu law had not punished consensual sexual relations.

Historian Douglas Sanders explains: “Article 377 of the Indian Penal Code of 1860 made ‘carnal intercourse against the order of nature’ an offense.”

The British imposed this legislation in the Straits Settlements of Singapore, Penang and Melaka in 1872. By the late 19th century, Britain also enforced the law in Hong Kong, Fiji, the Malay Peninsula and Burma.

Korea Herald journalist Benjamin Jhoty quotes Utopia-asia.com, which offers information about the same-sexuality scene in Asia: “Asia has rich and unique homosexual traditions almost everywhere you look. The true enemy of homosexuality in places like Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines are antique colonial laws and homophobic non-Asian religions that bully citizens with skewed views of the natural world.”

Sanders noted [in 2007], “This provision, or something very close to it, is presently in force in all former British colonies in Asia with the exception of Hong Kong.” He adds: “Sri Lanka, Seychelles and Papua New Guinea have the key wording from 377, but different article numbers. Parallel wording appears in the criminal laws of many of the former colonies in Africa.”

Historians Kevin Botha and Edwin Cameron write, “The systems of law the colonial powers (both Dutch and later English) introduced significantly influenced the customary law of the African communities they subjugated.”

The British “Queensland Penal Code” of 1899 was

“adopted in Northern Nigeria in the 19th century, later becoming the basis for a uniform federal code in Nigeria in 1916. The Indian Penal Code had been used in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, but those laws were later replaced by drafts based on the Nigerian criminal code. Sudan used the Indian Penal Code. In 1960 Northern Nigeria enacted a separate criminal code, based on the Sudan code.”

Similar laws were forced on “British” Honduras (today Belize), Jamaica, Anguilla, the “British” Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Bahamas, Tobago, Turks and Caicos and St. Lucia.

The British also imposed anti-“sodomy” legislation on Canada in 1892, New Zealand a year later and Australia in 1788 and again in 1899.

### Capital offense in colonized North America

Civil liberties historian Tom Head explained: “As Spanish, French, Dutch and English colonists began to settle North America during the 17th century, they brought with them a catalog of highly specific laws proscribing various sexual acts. The purpose of all of these laws was to enforce monogamous, same-race, heterosexual marriage as a mandatory institution and to punish any and all sexual activity outside of that institution.”

The earliest anti-“sodomy” legislation was passed in the Virginia Colony on May 24, 1610, and soon spread to all the colonies and later to all of the states.

Historian John D’Emilio wrote: “In every colony, sodomy was a capital offense — at least five men were executed during this era — and other homosexual acts, from ‘sodomitical practices’ to lewdness between women, were punished with whippings and fines.

“After the American Revolution, although the states reformed their criminal codes in the spirit of Enlightenment philosophy, revision of the sodomy statutes and the ‘crimes against nature’ laws came very slowly; North Carolina did not eliminate capital punishment [for sodomy] until 1869. Thomas Jefferson proposed that death be replaced by castration. Moreover, as time went on, legislatures and courts broadened the statutes to include a wider range of acts, such as oral sex between men and sexual activity between women,” D’Emilio concluded.

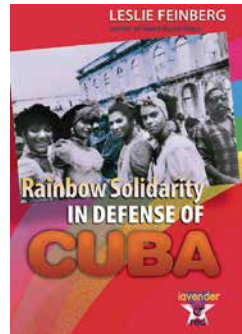
In the U.S., anti-homosexual and anti-miscegenation laws were also weapons of state repression against African and Native peoples, who became internal colonies. In 1898 U.S. imperialists also brutally enforced these laws in countries they subjugated militarily.

After seizing Puerto Rico as a colony in 1898, the U.S. imposed a law against same-sex love on

the island that was a carbon copy of the California state legal language. And in 1938, under U.S. domination, the Cuban Penal Code — the “Public Ostentation Law” — was enacted in that country.

*Unsourced accounts can be found in Feinberg’s “Transgender Warriors” (Beacon, 1996), the first Marxist analysis of transgender life and history.*

## Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba



**By Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues***  
This book is an edited compilation of chapters 86 to 110 from the Lavender & Red series in Workers World newspaper that began in 2004.  
  
Free PDF download available at [www.workers.org/books/](http://www.workers.org/books/)



# Philly Pride 2022

## Smash racism, transphobia and police brutality!

By **Betsey Piette**  
Philadelphia

Center City Philadelphia was awash with rainbow flags, as a sea of people turned out to celebrate the city’s 50th Pride march on June 5. This year’s event, with new organizers PHL Pride Collective and the Philly Dyke March, will go down as one of the most diverse events in Philly Pride history. Crowd estimates were in the thousands, with more people joining in along the march route.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

This year, Philly Pride was held as a march instead of a parade, to emphasize the ongoing fight for LGBTQ+ rights. The event kicked off with a rally outside the National Constitution Center, followed by a stop at the Federal Detention Center.

At 12th and Locust streets, demonstrators stopped to hang a fabric replica honoring Gloria Casarez, a Latinx founding member of the Philly Dyke March. After Casarez died in 2008, a mural of her was painted on the 12th Street Gym, but it was later covered over by developers, despite community protests. The march ended in the Gayborhood around Walnut and 12th streets with a street fair — free for all to attend for the first time in 30 years.

A key issue for organizers was the hundreds of bills introduced around the U.S. aimed at banning gender-affirming health care for LGBTQ+ youth and keeping trans kids out of school sports. There was also a broader focus on confronting racism in policing. A platform point of the new organizers was to not communicate, collaborate or coordinate with the police.

For the first time, Philadelphia Pride organizers are mostly Black and Brown activists dedicated to creating an event that reflects the demographics of this majority people-of-color city. The organizers stressed the inclusion of trans people, fat people, immigrants, Indigenous people, Muslims, people with HIV, Black women/femmes, people with disabilities and sex workers, and to create a space for youth and elders. More on the platform of PHL Pride Collective can be found on their website: [phlpridecollective.org](http://phlpridecollective.org).

It was clear from who turned out that their message was heard and well received.

This welcoming atmosphere was reflected in the diversity of contingents, including Philadelphia Asian & Queers, UNITE HERE, UFCW Local 1776, The Attic Youth Center and more. Many parents brought young children.

Groups leading the march included a contingent of motorcyclists, one wearing a shirt that read: “Arrest the cops who killed Breonna Taylor.” Contrary to prior years there were no corporate sponsors. There was no viewing grandstand to determine a “parade participating float winner.”

**Cops, racists, transphobes — not welcome here**

For decades until 2021, Philly Pride Presents ran the city’s LGBTQ+ Pride events. It suddenly disbanded in June 2021 following accusations of racism and transphobia, after the group ran a Facebook post that included a Blue Lives Matter symbol. In 2016, the group offered the title of parade grand marshal to a group of LGBTQ+ police officers. They had to back down following a backlash from LGBTQ+ people of color.

Philly Pride Presents also held their events on the same day as the Odunde Festival — the largest and longest-running African American street festival in the U.S. Organizers were justly criticized for being too centered



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

on the white, cisgender gay male experience. The final straw was a post from the group that referred to the fierce trans women who led the Stonewall Rebellion as “those dressed as women,” implying that trans women are not actually women.

With PHL Pride Collective in the lead — with their many organizers who have deep roots in ongoing community struggles — there is the possibility that Philly Pride will not just be a one-day-a-year event.

Smash racism! Smash transphobia! No to police brutality! Stonewall means fight back! □



## Pride in ‘the CLE’

In the first LGBTQ+ Pride parade since the COVID-19 pandemic began, and possibly the largest in Cleveland history, thousands marched through downtown June 4. Most of the marchers were young, with some carrying signs or wearing T-shirts in solidarity with trans youth.

On June 1, at 11:15 p.m., the Ohio House of Representatives snuck in an anti-trans amendment to an unrelated bill, HB151, originally written to revise the state’s Teacher Residency Program. The amendment not only bans transgender women and girls from participating in high school and college athletics, it mandates genital “verification” for athletes accused of being trans.

Parade-goers and onlookers cheered for Workers World Party signs that read “Defend trans youth by any means necessary.”

— Report and photo by Martha Grevatt

## No more rainbow capitalism!

By **Arjae Red**  
Buffalo, New York

At the Buffalo, New York, corporate sponsored Pride Parade June 5, members and friends of Workers World Party hit the streets to distribute literature on the radical history of Pride and the struggle of the LGBTQ+ community against police violence — especially against Black and Brown trans women — and to talk to our community about organizing to fight back!



WW PHOTO: ELLIE DORRITIE



WW PHOTO: ELLIE DORRITIE

Other organizations shared this message, and despite the corporate-run parade continuing, many across the city marched for racial justice and took a clear stance against white supremacy. We say it’s time to kick the cops and the banks out of pride! No more rainbow capitalism! Solidarity with everyone — person and organization — who came out to share that message! The first Pride was a #riot. □



# African famine: the role of sanctions

By G. Dunkel

Chad, in the middle of Africa, is a landlocked country with 16 million people. It is one of the three poorest countries in the world according to the U.N., with the lowest life expectancy (54 years).

With nearly half a million refugees living within its borders, Chad passed a 2021 law granting all these refugees the right to work, to move freely in the country and to access health care, education and justice. Chad was implementing its pledge at the Global Refugee Forum, held by the U.N. in December 2019.

As a point of comparison, the U.S. admitted slightly over 11,000 refugees in fiscal year 2021, with none of the above rights guaranteed.

Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger make up the G5 Sahel, a group which France set up in 2014 to disguise and justify its military intervention in West Africa and to hide how France intended to maintain its hold on these former colonies.

Currently, hunger in the Sahel is overshadowing the military priorities that France and its ally, the United States, want to impose there. The U.S. has set up the world's largest drone base in Niger.

Over 18 million people in the Sahel are facing starvation. A third of Chad's people are in urgent need of food aid.

The government of Chad officially declared a "food emergency" June 1. The head of the ruling Transitional Military Council, Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, called on "all national and international partners to help the people" and cited "constant

deterioration of the food and nutritional situation and a growing risk" of food scarcity. (africanews.com, June 3)

The big business press in the European Union, the U.S. and England tries to present the growing threat of an African famine — defined as people other than infants dying from hunger — as resulting solely from Russia's actions in the Ukraine conflict. The African press points instead to the effects of local insurgencies, the devastating drought, reinforced by global warming, and COVID-19.

The U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization has held to its position that global production of wheat will be slightly higher in 2022 than last year. The majority of the traditional wheat supply for West and North Africa comes from Ukraine and Russia. This trade has been seriously disrupted by the war. The question is who is behind the disruption.

**Leaders of African Union meet with Putin**

At a high-level meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on June 3 were Macky Sall, chair of the African Union and president of Senegal, along with Moussa Faki Mahamat, chair of the AU Commission, a former prime minister of Chad.

Sall and Mahamat both appealed to Putin to release the Ukrainian grain that is held up by a blockade Russia has established on Ukraine's Black Sea ports. Mahamat released a tweet saying: "We appealed for the suspension of sanctions against cereals & other key commodities, the need for their safe sea passage

to mitigate the devastating economic & socio-economic effects of a growing food & energy crisis."

"President Putin has expressed to us his willingness to facilitate the export of Ukrainian cereals," Sall tweeted. He added, "Russia was also ready to ensure the export of its own wheat and fertilizer."

However, Russia lifting its blockade, which Putin appears willing to do, will not by itself get the grain-loaded ships moving out of Ukrainian ports. The government of Ukraine would still need to give permission for the ships to sail, and that same government would have to remove the mines it has placed to block ship movement on its southern coast.

The most deadly factor working against

***The big business press in the European Union, the U.S. and England tries to present the growing threat of an African famine — defined as people other than infants dying from hunger — as resulting solely from Russia's actions in the Ukraine conflict.***

African Union appeals for help against the famine is the fact that the U.S. has actually placed sanctions on Russia to keep it from shipping the wheat and fertilizer



**When the crops fail after drought in Chad, as happened this year, people are driven to hunt for wild grain and fruit to survive famine, as here in 2016.**

it normally supplies to West Africa. The U.S. is charging Russia with stealing "Ukrainian" grain, even though the ownership status of the millions of tons of grain stored in southern and eastern Ukraine is unclear.

The U.S. and European bourgeoisie — who are cooperating to a degree in the sanctions directed against Russia — pretend that the impact of sanctions is limited to Russia alone. But many countries throughout the world are severely injured by the imposition of U.S. sanctions, including those against Russia.

The millions facing a shortage of wheat and starvation in Chad are among those suffering. In the current proxy war by the U.S., these millions are simply "collateral damage" in its drive for economic and military domination. If the food needed to avert famine starts to flow from Russia to West Africa, the U.S. campaign against Russia will lose a big propaganda point. □

# Profit-hungry company lures youth to guns

Continued from page 1

that attack advertised its weapons and appealed to people who were at high risk of criminal misuse of the gun.

**Daniel Defense: reputation for pushing boundaries**

Founded by owner Marty Daniel in 2000, the Georgia-based company Daniel Defense enjoys revenues ranging from \$10 million to \$50 million annually. Daniel got his break at a gun show in Orlando, Florida, in 2002, when he was approached by a U.S. Special Forces' representative and won a \$20 million contract to produce military combat rifle accessories. (N.Y. Times, May 28)

Since 2008, Daniel Defense has received over 100 Pentagon contracts totaling over \$13 million. On March 23, the company was awarded an additional \$9.1 million Pentagon contract to produce improved barrels for use in their weapons.

The New York Times' article notes that before 2000, "gun makers did not market military-style assault weapons to civilians." At trade shows, these guns were cordoned off from the general public. "That started to change around 2004, industry experts say, with the expiration of the federal assault weapon ban."

Starting in 2009, Daniel Defense began marketing military style assault weapons to consumers, featuring heavily armed fighters with the message: "Use what they use." Other ads had references to "Call of Duty" video games or featured "Star Wars" characters, likely to appeal to teenagers.

Some ads pictured children carrying and firing guns.

On the day the Uvalde shooter turned 18, Daniel Defense posted a photo showing a small boy with an assault weapon across his lap and the caption: "Train up



**As father looks on, a 7-year-old holds an AR-15 assault weapon at Houston NRA convention in May.**

a child in the way he should go. When he is old, he will not depart from it."

Daniel Defense made purchasing an AR-15 assault weapon easy. Customers can buy the \$1,800 AR-15 on an installment plan, making the expensive weapon more affordable. Salvador Ramos, identified as the shooter in Uvalde, had just turned 18 and was legally able to purchase an AR-15 from Daniel Defense.

After initially posting a statement sending thoughts and prayers to Uvalde, the company next posted a promotion for a sweepstakes to win \$15,000 worth of guns or ammunition.

Since 2000, assault weapons intended for war, manufactured by Bushmaster, Daniel Defense, Smith & Wesson Brands, Sig Sauer and Ruger, have flooded the domestic market, where they have been used to carry out multiple horrific civilian attacks. Collectively these companies are responsible for producing over 15 million weapons currently in circulation.

**Damage from a military assault weapon**

Following the Uvalde massacre, authorities asked parents of the children killed at Robb Elementary School to provide DNA

samples. All too few major corporate media outlets bothered to question why.

Bullets from weapons that fire one round at a time pass through a human body in a straight line and exit intact. Damage is not always fatal.

Daniel Defense's AR-15 is a combat weapon. Rounds fired by this gun travel at three times the speed of sound. Bullets fired from an AR-15 explode into pieces, creating massive internal injuries. Upon impact they smash and shred the bones and organs of their victims into unrecognizable pulp. A shot to the head or face makes physical identification nearly impossible — as was the case for the murdered children in Uvalde. There was nothing left to identify.

The beautiful pictures of the victims — the 9- to 11-year-old children and their teachers affixed to crosses outside their school — only served to hide the horrific damage these legalized assault weapons can cause. How much greater would public outrage be, if people were shown the actual damage?

The National Rifle Association's mantra is that "guns don't kill, people do." It conveniently ignores the reality that assault weapons not only kill — they pulverize their victims. Even the Uvalde police, criticized for failing to act to save the children, understood the power of these weapons.

**Biden and Democratic Party hypocrisy**

President Biden interrupted national TV stations May 30 to ask: "When as a nation will we stand up to the gun lobby?" The very next day he called for the U.S. to send more rockets to Ukraine — an unmistakable boost for weapons manufacturers.

The manufacturers of guns for domestic use and weapons for wars abroad are essentially the same industry. His administration's \$9.1 million contract with Daniel Defense in March to produce weapons

parts for the Pentagon is solid proof of this.

The Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which shields companies like Daniel Defense from liability, was passed in 2005 with considerable support from Democrats, who still choose to focus on monitoring consumers instead of restricting the weapons manufacturers who profit from producing assault weapons.

While it is unlikely that Biden could get Republican senators, let alone his own party, to pass significant gun control measures, he could reverse an action by his predecessor Donald Trump that benefitted global arms producers.

In May 2019, Trump "unsigned" the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty, which the U.S. signed in 2013 but never ratified. This treaty, strongly opposed by the NRA, was considered the most comprehensive effort towards international gun control. Biden could return the U.S. to this treaty through an executive act which would not require Congressional approval. He has yet to do so.

The U.S. manufactures and sells more weapons than any other country. This trajectory can be traced back to U.S. settler colonialism and the organizing of European settlers into militias to attack Indigenous people. The Second Amendment protection of the "right to bear arms" goes back to this white-supremacist origin.

Workers World Party supports the right of workers and oppressed people to arm themselves in self defense against attacks from the capitalist state and its racist, white-supremacist, neofascist armed thugs. But we strongly oppose the production of assault weapons that are used by the military, police and white supremacists' forces against the working class and oppressed people in the U.S. and globally. □



# Cuba-China cooperation leads to vaccine breakthrough

By Sara Flounders

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.

News of the jointly developed vaccine is particularly exciting because of the two countries cooperative approach in a field that is highly competitive, secretive and totally profit-oriented in Western capitalist countries.

### Breakthrough in emerging virus protection

The Pan-Corona vaccine was announced to be effective against present variants of COVID-19 and thus of value in the current pandemic.

But its strength is that it could also be effective against the appearance of new pathogens belonging to this family of viruses, noted Eduardo Martínez Díaz, president of the state-owned BioCubaFarma Business Group. (tele-surenglish.net, June 3)

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). Dr. Gerardo Guillén Nieto, the center's director of Biomedical Research, explained the project arose at the request of the Chinese and had the approval of Cuba's Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment. The equipment and laboratories at the Yongzhou center were designed by Cuban scientific personnel. (Radio Havana Cuba, June 3)

The two countries focused on coronaviruses because of the global pandemic and because this is the family of viruses most likely to jump from animals to humans. This phenomenon, called zoonosis, was the cause of previous epidemics such as the 2002 SARS outbreak and the 2012 MERS infection — both serious respiratory illnesses.

### Capitalist research competes for profit

The cooperative approach used by Cuba and China does get debated as a research need by those practicing Western medicine.

But the capitalist pharmaceutical research industry is solely oriented to development of vaccines and medicines for the highest rate of immediate profit and the largest number of sales. A vaccine with a series of booster shots for each separate strain of the current coronavirus — and then the additional sale of entirely new vaccines for each emerging infection — means billions of dollars in

sales and profit for the pharmaceutical industry.

Cooperation for short-term or long-term solutions threatens the future of this for-profit industry.

The pharmaceutical companies in the U.S., the European Union and Japan — the major capitalist economies — are very willing to accept government funding to develop vaccines. However, control of the patents and resulting profits from that



A collaboration between the biotechnology sectors of China and Cuba has resulted in the development of the first patent for a Pan-Corona vaccine, being presented here at the National Intellectual Property Office in China.

research is always privately expropriated by the corporate stockholders.

Once the vaccines are developed through government funding, then the governments that backed the research have to buy back the products from the corporations — at high prices. Market control and private corporate ownership are the primary concerns.

Peoples Vaccine Alliance estimated in 2021 that the companies behind three of the most successful COVID-19 vaccines — Pfizer, BioNTech and Moderna — were making combined profits of \$65,000 every minute, \$1,000 a second. These companies have sold the majority of their doses to wealthy countries, leaving behind low-income countries with unvaccinated populations, gravely ill people and mounting death tolls. 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/29w8pdpa)

### Cooperation creates solutions

Economies based on social planning and public ownership of major industries have the ability to develop solutions through strategies impossible to be used by privately owned industries. Socialist countries have the capacity to seek common solutions to global challenges through cooperation and solidarity.

China has provided over 2 billion vaccine doses and an array of other supplies and assistance to more than 150 countries, regions and international

organizations during the pandemic.

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 and Chinese medical teams have maintained coordination in many developing countries and contributed jointly to the fight against COVID-19.

The U.S. corporate media has sought to discredit and undermine this solidarity and discredit the extensive medical treatment that is generously provided by these two socialist-oriented countries. But the capitalist U.S. cannot match their accomplishments. Instead it can only impose sanctions in a desperate effort to halt their steady progress.

The world needs far more cooperation and joint efforts to overcome the immediate pandemic and the environmental crisis and health problems of the future. Increasingly countries hobbled by U.S. economic sanctions see that cooperation is the way to survive.

### Decades of cooperation

The decades of cooperation between Cuba and China is summarized in a report jointly written by Carlos Miguel Pereira Hernández, of the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba to the People's Republic of China, and Huiyao Wang and Dr. Lu Miao, of the Center for China and Globalization (CCG) in Beijing. (PDF available at doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-8086-1\_20)

"Cuba and China, a Paradigmatic Partnership in a Changing World Context" outlines their potential to strengthen public health cooperation, promote health services and build production and trade of medicines. The report explains that mutual solidarity and support can turn the joint fight against COVID-19 into a new symbol of friendship and an example of both bilateral and global cooperation:

"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."

As the report summarizes, the connection between the two revolutions for socialism dates to September 2, 1960, when revolutionary Cuba broke relations with Taiwan and recognized the People's Republic of China.

In November 1960, an official government economic delegation led by revolutionary leader Ernesto "Che" Guevara visited China, where he was received by Chairman Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders. The governments of the two countries signed their first economic and technological cooperation agreement more than 60 years ago.

Today, many Chinese companies are involved in priority projects in Cuba, and many of these projects are linked to the construction and modernization of infrastructure, telecommunications, renewable energies and the tourism sector.

### Sharing biotechnology

The Joint Group for Biotechnological Cooperation Cuba-China reflects this bilateral cooperation in the biotechnology and biopharmaceutical sector. This has reached unprecedented levels, with both countries determined to continue expanding for the benefit of both peoples.

BioCubaFarma promotes cooperation and business with Chinese companies and institutions in the field of biotechnology and pharma industry. The relationship advances product development to gain faster registration approvals for its products in China. BCF is working with local Chinese governments in four cities: Chengdu, Yongzhou, Shanghai and Changchun, as well as with universities and institutes to foster innovation by setting up research-and-development centers and joint laboratories.

Three Chinese/Cuban ventures are making important contributions to human health and agriculture: Biotech Pharmaceutical in Beijing, Changchun

Heber Biological Technology in Jilin province and Shandong Lukang Heber in Shandong province. These develop innovative treatments for diseases of high incidence like cancer, diabetes and hepatitis and have transferred a total of 10 technologies to China thus far.

### Cooperation for the future of humanity

Cuba and China's practical cooperation has extended to fields of agriculture, biotechnology, biomedicine, neurosciences and nanosciences. It includes climate change, natural resources and environment, scientific and technological parks and programs to develop young talent.

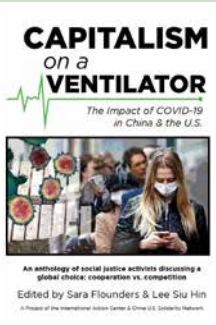
Capitalism's drive to maximize profits every quarter means that the system has no structure capable of overall long-term planning. The economic system itself requires ruthless competition. No matter how needed, cooperation is impossible.

The growing scientific cooperation of China and Cuba represents a hopeful future for humanity. Global problems can be solved. What is required is economic planning, cooperation and sharing of scientific knowledge and technology. □

## Capitalism on a Ventilator: The impact of COVID-19 in China & the U.S.

"What one learns from Capitalism on a Ventilator is that the economic and human cost of the pandemic was far from inevitable. An entire section of the book is devoted to China's solidarity with the rest of the world in the fight against COVID-19. After four months of difficult struggle, China successfully contained the pandemic and immediately diverted masks, testing kits, medical personnel, ventilators and other forms of assistance to countries across Latin America, the Middle East and Africa. The U.S. received generous donations of medical equipment from China during the first wave of the pandemic. China was also the first country to declare that its COVID-19 vaccine would be a public good."

— Danny Haiphong in a review for *Black Agenda Report*



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# LGBTQ+ for socialism: ‘We want to live!’

Continued from page 1

children.

This vital health care is a necessity for continued survival for many trans people. Florida’s DeSantis administration—the same administration that vetoed mental health funding for survivors of the Pulse mass shooting and passed the infamous “Don’t Say Gay” bill prohibiting school discussion of sexuality and gender—continues to attack LGBTQ2S+ people “legally.”

**Capitalism cannot be reformed**

Throughout the U.S., state legislatures have recently introduced or passed hundreds of laws that attack the lives and ability to survive of working and oppressed people. The laws criminalize abortion; some forbid it even in cases of rape or danger to the pregnant person’s life or threaten with prison those who choose or assist abortion. Some laws make it illegal to teach about

LGBTQ+ people; others prohibit teaching histories of resistance to enslavement, racism and exploitation. And on and on, the punishing laws pile up.

Meanwhile, white-supremacist “lone wolves” who gun down people of color are arrested without a scratch by cops, cosseted with water or hamburgers. Unarmed Black people, other people of color, disabled people are murdered by cops—as they sleep in their beds, day-dream in their car waiting for fast food, go to the convenience store for cigarettes.

The recent massacres, the hate legislation, the murders by cops—all this death-dealing—is a wake-up call for anyone who still thinks capitalist “democracy” is a system that can be reformed or somehow made “better.”

“Officer Bob” is not our friend. The police are not our friends. The Republican Party and the Democratic Party are not our friends. The capitalist state is not our

friend.

We who are workers and oppressed are at war—class war—with this system and all of its representatives.

Every day the capitalist state places all its authority and all its weight behind both the legal assault and the extralegal gun violence directed against us. Federal and state legislatures continue to refuse to pass laws that limit gun ownership or stop the sale of assault weapons in even minimal ways. On the contrary, legislation is passed to keep individuals from suing gun manufacturers for deaths and injuries caused by their guns—even as corporations reap obscene profits from domestic sale of weapons created for imperialist soldiers on the battlefield.

These tactics exist to hold in check and fragment the massive power of the people of the U.S.—the working people, the oppressed people of many nationalities, abilities, sexualities, genders—to keep

us from joining together and exerting our unstoppable grief and rage to make change. Which we have made before. Which we are still making now.

The collective power of working and oppressed people can overturn this system based on inequality, exploitation and death. We understand that repression is intensifying now, because new generations of people are rising up with a clear understanding that capitalism is killing us and that socialism is no longer a word but a world to be won.

As workers are “the union” when organizing at a job, so grassroots and direct organizing by working and oppressed people is the force that will ultimately overturn the capitalist death machine.

Our cry is for Pride in struggle: “We want to live! Down with capitalism. On to a socialist future.” □

# Uvalde children will go down in abolitionist history

By Julia Wright

As a member of our slavery-old abolitionist movement, I would suggest that a few elements about the Uvalde tragedy, still below the radar, would appear worth commenting on.

First, very few news reports have highlighted the importance of the fact that the Buffalo and Uvalde massacres were “sandwiched” in between the anniversary of George Floyd’s murder. Celebratory backlash? This is not to be excluded. There will unfortunately be more.

Second, we would have liked to have learned more about the dynamics of family dysfunction that were able to produce the “madness” of the shooter. For instance, only one source to date has highlighted the fact that the shooter has a sibling, a sister who serves in the U.S. army. We are also told that the shooter’s dream was to be enrolled in the Marines “to be able to kill people.” Although these

## COMMENTARY

allegations will take substantiation, the mind boggles. One sibling kills legally in the name of U.S. predatory foreign interests and policy and for all we know has been commended—the other kills illegally with legal guns and is shot down dishonoring the family. The center does not hold.

Another factor we would wish to see further explored and quantified is the link between the culture of U.S. mass shootings within, and the tradition of foreign imperialist wars without, from Iraq to Afghanistan—and the “chickens coming home to roost” syndrome, as violence is recycled.

However, most importantly, the gift of the children of Uvalde’s testimony to us is historical and immeasurable. Not only are we front-row witnesses to how rightest pro-NRA spins are trying to misinform the truth about Uvalde, we are now realizing that the children who died in that barricaded room left behind a series of 911 calls that will make abolitionist history.

The courage of these children in the face of bullets to engage with those they were taught to reach out to in times of emergency has left a glaring, indelible trace of the rotten state of police narratives in the U.S.

This is a historical moment when the coup de grace has at last been given to the pervasive hold police narratives have long had, not only on our everyday lives but on our criminal justice system, our schools, our culture, our way of dying. The 911 outcries left by the Uvalde pupils make them the star witnesses for the prosecution against a law enforcement that un-protects and disservices with impunity and total lack of accountability and transparency.

We have long known that our movements for social justice are born of the initiative and example of the youth. Just



PHOTO: ROBERTO MERCADO

Julia Wright

as Mamie Till Mobley’s decision to let the world see the faceless, mutilated body of her lynched child [14-year-old Emmett Till] in an open casket sparked the Civil Rights’ Movement, the tapes of the Uvalde children’s last 911 messages once released could spark a much needed human rights’ movement for a community police by the people for the people.

May not only the abolitionist movement but the whole nation listen to these children’s outcries as ultimate testimony to dismantle a culture based on racialized, predatory and elitist police narratives ... at last.

The writer is the daughter of the African American novelist Richard Wright and a longtime advocate for the freedom of political prisoners such as Mumia Abu-Jamal.

# Workers World celebrates LGBTQ2S+ Pride: ‘We won’t go back!’



A contingent from Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF), a youth affiliate of Workers World Party, at the 1974 New York City Pride march.

For over half a century, Workers World newspaper has covered the global struggle to end all forms of discrimination, persecution and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and gender-nonconforming communities.

WW consistently backed up our activist coverage with analysis. In the early 1970s, WW ran a series of articles that led to publication of “The Gay Question: A Marxist Appraisal” in 1976. Then in 1993, WW republished it as “The Roots of Lesbian

and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View,” with the first book’s original text and a new preface and afterword. (These and works below are available at workers.org/books.)

In 2004, WW managing editor and globally recognized transgender leader Leslie Feinberg began the “Lavender & Red” series, which ran until 2008 in WW. A group of 25 articles from that series was later published as the book, “Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba.” Notify us if you want a free paper copy.

In 2012 Feinberg engaged in civil disobedience and wrote articles defending Black trans woman CeCe McDonald, who was charged with manslaughter after defending herself from a racist, bigoted attack.

In 2022 WW extensively covered resistance to the current storm of right-wing “Don’t Say Gay” and anti-trans, anti-youth laws sweeping the U.S. WW articles built

resolve in the struggle for reproductive justice, pledging “We won’t go back,” and documented opposition to racist laws limiting the right to vote and the right to teach a people’s history of resistance to oppression.

WW reporters on the ground—from Buffalo, New York, to Portland, Oregon, to Brookwood, Alabama—celebrated the tremendous groundswell of worker organizing that won historic union victories against Amazon and Starbucks—victories fueled by the leadership and solidarity of young, multinational, queer, gender-nonconfirming workers.

**Your help is needed!**

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, and the PDF of the weekly newspaper has been displayed at workers.org. 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. Or 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, NY 10011. Put “Supporter Program” in the memo line. Or donate online at workers.org/donate/.

We are grateful for your help in building Workers World!



## Colombia elections

# Are peace and justice on the horizon?

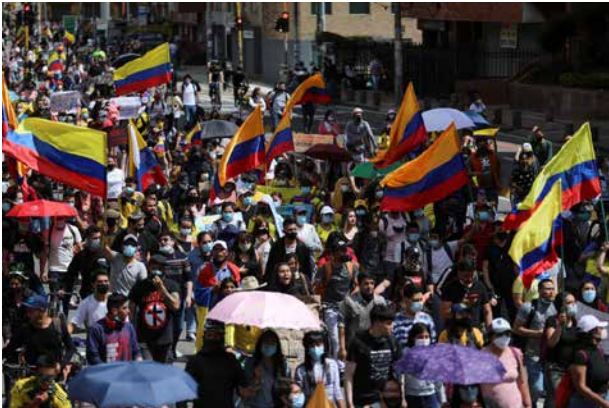
By Martha Grevatt

Presidential elections held May 29 in Colombia showed Senator Gustavo Petro, candidate of the Historical Pact progressive alliance and former mayor of Bogotá, coming in first with 40% of the vote. Two right-wing candidates, Rodolfo Hernández and Federico Gutiérrez, received 28% and 24% of the vote, respectively. Because no candidate received a majority vote, Petro and Hernández will be in a runoff election June 19.

Gutiérrez represents the party of current Colombian President Iván Duque and former President Álvaro Uribe. Duque became unpopular due to the growth in income inequality during his presidency, as well as his scuttling of the 2016 Peace Accords between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). These accords mandated sweeping economic, social and political reforms, along with the FARC decommissioning its guerrilla combatants. The FARC had fought the Colombian military for decades and controlled wide swathes of rural territory.

Gutiérrez’s third-place showing represents an unequivocal rejection of “Uribismo,” characterized by an alliance with right-wing paramilitaries who have assassinated and terrorized unionists, environmentalists, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities and human rights advocates.

While Hernández campaigned as an



March during a national strike that began April 28, 2021, and continued for months, Bogotá, May 9, 2021.

outsider, calling for change and an end to corruption, he is an extreme rightist sometimes referred to as the “Colombian Trump.” At one point Hernández spoke favorably of Adolph Hitler. Gutiérrez endorsed Hernández in the runoff.

Together the two right-wing candidates pulled over 50% of the votes. Nevertheless, polls show a possibility that Petro could be elected. This would make him the first left-supported president in Colombia’s history. His running mate, Francia Marquez, an Afro-Colombian environmentalist, would be the country’s first Black woman vice president.

The strong showing by the Petro-Marquez ticket follows a series of powerful nationwide strikes in 2019, 2020 and 2021. The strikes raised demands on a range of issues, protesting anti-worker legislation, austerity, economic inequality and the failure to achieve peace. Police and military killed and wounded protesters in 2019 and 2020.

Leftists and progressives in many Latin American countries have won elections

recently. Brazilian Workers Party candidate and former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is expected to beat current President and Trump protégé Jair Bolsonaro in upcoming elections. This trend could continue with the election of Petro.

### If Petro wins, what next?

Winning political office is not the same as winning political power.

If victorious, Senator Petro will face an uphill battle in bringing about the political and economic changes he advocates. His program includes jobs for the unemployed, free college tuition, subsidies for poor farmers and higher taxes on the rich. Petro wants to restore diplomatic relations with Venezuela.

Win or lose, the ultrarightists, whether Uribist or allied with Hernández, have used the elections to mobilize a formidable political base. The Colombian military is in the camp of Uribe. In the six years under President Duque, little has been done to weaken the right-wing paramilitaries; Petro and Marquez have received death threats, and Historical Pact candidates for other offices have been assassinated.

Petro will face opposition from the U.S.

government. Colombia is one of the largest recipients of U.S. aid, a large chunk of it military. The late Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez rightly called Colombia “the Israel of Latin America,” for its role in consistently upholding U.S. political and economic interests. (Venezuela Analysis, March 3, 2008)

On March 13 the general commander of the Colombian Military Forces, General Luis Navarro met with General Laura Richardson, commander of the United States Southern Command. Richardson expressed concerns that a Historical Pact win would affect the seven U.S. military bases in Colombia.

How far Petro intends to go to realize his economic program remains to be seen, given the obstacles. “The necessities of Colombian society are not based on building socialism but on building democracy and peace, period,” he stated last year. (El País, Sept. 22, 2021) But the right wing continues to demonize Petro as a socialist.

Real peace, democracy and justice cannot be won at the ballot box alone. Still, a win for Petro will be a big setback for the military, the paramilitaries, the oligarchs and their U.S. backers and a step forward for the working class. □

**Leftists and progressives in many Latin American countries have won elections recently. Brazilian Workers Party candidate and former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is expected to beat current President and Trump protégé Jair Bolsonaro in upcoming elections. This trend could continue with the election of Petro.**

## Mass opposition to Biden’s Summit gains momentum

By Lyn Neeley

President Joe Biden’s Summit of the Americas is being boycotted by most countries in the Western hemisphere, and it is opposed by two large coalitions protesting Biden’s refusal to invite Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua to this year’s event. ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America), a coalition of 11 anti-imperialist Latin American countries, opposes Biden’s unilateral actions against Venezuela and Nicaragua and the economic blockade against Cuba.

ALBA just held its 21st Summit of Heads of State in Havana to discuss independent trade agreements that build independence, solidarity and cooperation. At that summit, leaders of member countries, including Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, announced they will not be attending the Washington-led summit.

Fifteen CARICOM (Caribbean Community) countries are boycotting the U.S. president’s summit. Guatemala, Argentina, Bolivia and Honduras are not attending it because of their disagreements with the Biden administration.

Clayton Boylan, an independent U.S. political analyst, told the Global Times it is obvious that the U.S.-led Organization of American States, with its imperialist undertones, is losing popularity among Latin American countries. He said, “Everyone knows that it primarily acts for U.S. interests, and with the U.S.’ disturbing history of meddling in Central and South American affairs, many people see the organization as just a lingering shade

of U.S. interventionism.” (June 2)

Two coalitions are building opposition to the U.S. State Department-sponsored summit: The Workers’ Summit of the Americas in Tijuana, Mexico June 10-12 and The People’s Summit for Democracy in Los Angeles June 8-10.

### Workers’ Summit: End sanctions! No recolonization!

Momentum is building for the Workers’ Summit, organized by workers, leftist and socialist organizations from Mexico, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba, Honduras, Haiti, the U.S. and Canada. The conference and workshops will be held at the University of Tijuana.

An impressive list of delegates will attend from countries under sanctions imposed by the U.S., Canada and the European Union. Venezuela’s representatives include: members of the Federación Bolivariana de Trabajadores del Transporte — Sectores Afines y Conexos (FBTTT) and La Central Bolivariana Socialista de Trabajadores (CBST), and Cuban delegates include members of the Central de Trabajadores de Cuba (CTC). A focus of discussion will be the impact of these sanctions on people in the affected countries.

The Workers’ Summit’s website states that a main goal of their coalition is to “combat the violence applied to our people, mostly by U.S. and Canadian imperialism,” and to organize against recolonization, as demonstrated by growing racism, poverty, unemployment and job insecurity, environmental

deterioration of the territories and criminalization of migration.

Their assembly will discuss structural racism and violence against Indigenous, Native- and Afro-descendant peoples. Other topics to be taken up are assaults on trade unionists and social activists, gender violence and sexual and cultural diversity.

Sessions of the Worker’s Summit will be streamed by Alliance For Global Justice (AFGJ.org) and picked up by many other organizations.

### People’s Summit: for sovereignty and solidarity

The People’s Summit for Democracy is a coalition composed of over 200 organizations from the U.S. and Latin America. Event organizers are receiving a growing number of endorsements from major unions, immigrant rights organizations and prominent figures from the U.S. and around the world.

While Washington is using its summit to further U.S. imperialism’s interests

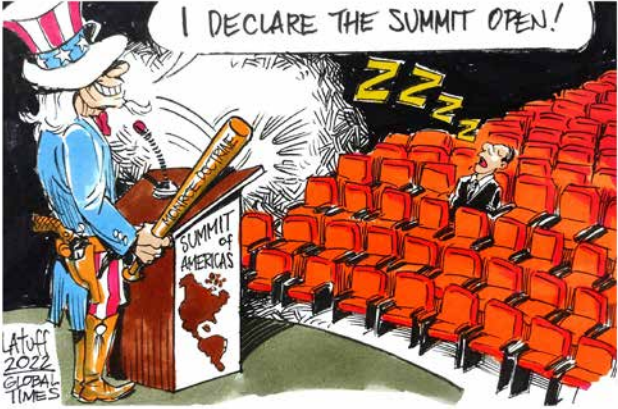
in the region, the People’s Summit’s program firmly states: U.S. out of Latin America and the Caribbean!

And unlike the U.S.-led summit, the People’s Summit supports the rights of immigrants, women and workers, the rebuilding and protection of democratic norms and the security of families. Its program calls for peace, freedom and prosperity for all people of all countries.

The Los Angeles Police Department refuses to issue a permit for the People’s Summit march scheduled for June 10, when protesters plan to march to Biden’s Summit. Organizers applied for a permit in February and say the LAPD is stalling by blaming the U.S. Secret Service and the federal government for the delay. But they assert this demonstration is protected by their First Amendment rights to free speech and peaceful assembly, and they plan to march anyway without a permit!

Manolo De Los Santos, an organizer of the People’s Summit, said at a press conference May 31 that the U.S. has an “arrogant attitude toward what it considers its ‘backyard.’” He said, “Biden’s summit has already failed because they refused to practice actual democracy. ... We are not voiceless; we have voices, and we are going to raise them in our People’s Summit.” (People’s Dispatch, May 31)

More information is at [workerssummit.org](http://workerssummit.org) and [peoplesummit2022.org](http://peoplesummit2022.org). □







Protesta en Washington, D.C., tras la masacre de estudiantes en Parkland, Florida, en febrero de 2018.

## Solidaridad con Uvalde

Traducción por Deborah Rodriguez.

El Partido Mundo Obrero ofrece nuestra más profunda solidaridad, amor y condolencias a Uvalde, Texas, especialmente a los que perdieron a sus seres queridos en la masacre del 24 de mayo de 19 niños de la escuela primaria y dos maestras. Esperamos que los 17 heridos se recuperen. Pero sabemos que ellos, y todos los afectados por esta tragedia, están traumatizados de por vida.

No podemos imaginar el dolor que se siente en esta comunidad de clase trabajadora de 16.000 personas, casi un 80% de latinos y no muy lejos de la frontera con México.

Al trauma se sumó la conducta deploable y racista de los 100 agentes de policía federales, estatales, locales y escolares presentes en el lugar. Mientras el tirador estaba dentro de la escuela, la policía permaneció fuera durante una hora, esposando, abordando, rociando con gas pimienta y electrocutando a los padres que intentaban entrar y recuperar a sus hijos. Los policías que entraron se quedaron en el pasillo fuera de las aulas afectadas, negándose a intervenir a pesar de las repetidas llamadas al 911 de los niños que estaban dentro. Después de casi 70 minutos, un policía de la Patrulla Fronteriza de Estados Unidos entró en el aula y disparó mortalmente a Salvador Ramos.

El mensaje enviado es que las vidas de los niños mexicanos son prescindibles.

Sorprendentemente -o tal vez no, teniendo en cuenta el fascista que es- el

gobernador de Texas, Greg Abbott, elogió el “increíble valor” de la policía. Sus declaraciones descaradamente falsas fueron igualadas por el director del

Departamento de Seguridad Pública de Texas, Steve McGraw. Ahora estos dos están intentando por todos

los medios retractarse de sus extravagantes comentarios.

El abuso de unos padres desesperados vuelve a hacer estallar el mito de que la policía está “para proteger y servir”. Son parte del aparato estatal represivo que bajo el capitalismo reprime a la clase trabajadora, especialmente a los más oprimidos. El estado militarizado emplea la violencia más impensable, en Estados Unidos y en todo el mundo, para mantener su control hegemónico sobre el trabajo y los recursos del mundo.

La violencia omnipresente en la televisión y el cine sirve para crear una cultura que normaliza y legitima los actos violentos. Los jóvenes -con problemas, maltratados, explotados y alienados- están saturados de esta cultura a una edad temprana.

Al mismo tiempo, muchos niños son objeto de burla y acoso por parte de sus compañeros si no “encajan”, es decir, si no están a la altura de un estándar de belleza racista, patriarcal y capacitado. Otras son maltratadas por sus padres dentro de la estructura de la “familia tradicional”, que es como un microcosmos del lugar de trabajo capitalista: el jefe principal es el padre. Algunas experimentan ambas formas de agresión psicológica.

En este contexto, unido a una infraestructura de salud mental inadecuada, un puñado de jóvenes arremete contra los más vulnerables y comete masacres.

Si encajan en el perfil de la mayoría de los tiradores de masas -blancos y varones y que abrazan la ideología fascista como Dylann Roof y Payton Gendrun- es probable que sean detenidos vivos y que se les conceda su día en el tribunal. Este no fue el caso de Salvador Ramos.

### La violencia genera beneficios

Si queremos entender el creciente número de asesinatos en masa “sin sentido”, tenemos que “seguir el dinero”. La fabricación, venta y reventa de armas, incluidas las armas de asalto utilizadas en los tiroteos masivos, genera miles de millones de beneficios. Los fabricantes de armas vendieron más de 11 millones de armas sólo en 2020. Cuanto más permisiva sea la ley, como en los estados de “portación abierta”, más dinero se ganará.

Escondida tras la Segunda Enmienda, la Asociación Nacional del Rifle es uno de los grupos de presión más poderosos de Estados Unidos. Aunque afirma que la mayoría de las contribuciones provienen de donantes individuales que se tragan su propaganda, la NRA recibe millones de dólares de los especuladores de armas.

Después de la masacre de Uvalde, la NRA siguió insensiblemente con sus planes de celebrar su convención en Texas. El ex presidente Donald Trump y el senador Ted Cruz -que actualmente representa a Texas- fueron los principales oradores.

La NRA, una organización descaradamente racista, nunca ha apoyado la

Segunda Enmienda cuando se trata del derecho de los negros, marrones e indígenas a la autodefensa contra los ataques racistas.

Y no son sólo los fabricantes de armas los que obtienen beneficios. Como dice el refrán, “la violencia vende”. Se ganan miles de millones en nombre del “entretenimiento”, con las representaciones más gráficas de personas y criaturas imaginarias que se embrutece y matan entre sí.

Pero los que más se benefician de la violencia son los capitalistas entrelazados con el complejo militar-industrial. Lo hacen con el apoyo bipartidista al abultado presupuesto del Pentágono, apoderándose del dinero necesario para la atención sanitaria, incluida la mental. Para vender sus rentables guerras de conquista, necesitan ganar la aceptación cultural de esa matanza, cometida en nombre de la “libertad y la democracia”.

### Detener a los proveedores de violencia

Merece la pena recordar las palabras del Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., que en su famoso discurso de hace 45 años, “Más allá de Vietnam - Es hora de romper el silencio”, llamó “al mayor proveedor de violencia en el mundo actual: mi propio gobierno”.

Había un eslogan popular en aquella época entre los jóvenes más militantes contra la guerra: “2, 4, 6, 8, ¡organízate para aplastar al Estado!”

Hasta que el capitalismo y su maquinaria estatal represiva sean derrocados, la violencia -de la policía, del ejército y de los individuos- seguirá cobrándose vidas, incluidas las de los niños. □

## ¡Basta ya!

¡Saquen los pañuelos!

Los jueces ultraderechistas no elegidos y nombrados para toda la vida del Tribunal Supremo de Estados Unidos corren el riesgo de ver heridos sus sentimientos, --esta vez por justos manifestantes decididos a proteger su derecho a decidir por sí mismos si llevar o no a un niño a término.

Según un informe filtrado el 2 de mayo, los jueces Samuel Alito, Amy Coney Barrett, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, Clarence Thomas y posiblemente el presidente del Tribunal Supremo, John Roberts, tienen la intención de quitarles ese derecho tan básico.

Prepárense para otra actuación lacrimógena de Kavanaugh, que recordará el testimonio de su audiencia de confirmación en el Senado en 2018, después de que la doctora Christine Blasey Ford hiciera pública la agresión sexual del futuro juez contra ella cuando tenía 15 años.

Ahora este odiador de mujeres y su familia, junto con todos los jueces y sus familias, tendrán seguridad reforzada a costa de los contribuyentes. En una repugnante muestra de “bipartidismo”, los 100 senadores de EE.UU. firmaron un

proyecto de ley -haciendo innecesaria una votación formal- para permitir la protección adicional después de que se produzcan protestas pacíficas frente a las casas de algunos jueces.

No sólo los conservadores, sino también los políticos “liberales” y los medios de comunicación declaran que las protestas son ilegales y erróneas. “Simplemente no es apropiado, ni es legal hacerlo en la residencia de los jueces”, dijo el gobernador de Virginia, Glenn Youngkin. (Washington Post, 12 de mayo) “El Presidente puede optar por calificar las protestas, los disturbios y las incitaciones a la violencia como mera pasión”, dijo el senador de Iowa Chuck Grassley. “Pero estos intentos de influir e intimidar a los miembros del poder judicial federal son una afrenta a la independencia judicial”. (CNN, 12 de mayo) Grassley y Youngkin son ambos republicanos.

Para no ser menos, el senador demócrata de Illinois Dick Durbin calificó las manifestaciones de “reprobables”. (New York Times, 12 de mayo)

El gobierno del presidente Joe Biden ha sido atacado por no denunciar las protestas directamente, limitándose a pedir que

sigan siendo pacíficas. Hasta ahora las protestas han consistido en vigiliadas con velas y piquetes con pancartas, sin que nadie haya puesto un pie en la propiedad de los jueces. No son actos amenazantes.

Estamos de acuerdo con la manifes-

***‘Podemos ser incívicos’, si el tribunal decide lo que las mujeres y las personas embarazadas pueden hacer ‘con el único hogar literal que tendremos por el resto de nuestras vidas, que es nuestro cuerpo.’***

tante Lacie Wooten-Holway, que ha estado frente a la casa de su vecino Kavanaugh: “Podemos ser incívicos”, si el tribunal decide lo que las mujeres y las personas embarazadas pueden hacer “con el único hogar literal que tendremos por el resto de nuestras vidas, que es nuestro cuerpo”.

Incluso si los miembros del tribunal tuvieran una razón para sentirse inseguros, ¿qué es eso comparado con el terror vital de volver a hacer ilegal el aborto? ¿Y

qué ha hecho la Corte Suprema para detener décadas de terror neofascista llevado a cabo por los “pro-vida”: los asesinatos de médicos y acompañantes de clínicas, los atentados, las amenazas violentas al personal y a los pacientes?

Mientras tanto, el mismo Senado que acordó por unanimidad “proteger” a los jueces de la Corte Suprema ha negado la protección de los derechos sanitarios básicos a las mujeres y a las personas no conformes con el género que pueden tener hijos. El 11 de mayo, los senadores votaron por 51 a 49 para eliminar la Ley de Protección de la Salud de las Mujeres, que habría dado protección federal a los proveedores de servicios de aborto, un derecho apoyado por la mayoría de la población de Estados Unidos.

Las mujeres y las personas con problemas de género tienen derecho a exigir justicia reproductiva por cualquier medio necesario: legal, pacífico, civil o de otro tipo. Estos “justicieros” tienen que rendir cuentas por sus acciones, que provocarán innumerables muertes.

Nuestros derechos están por encima de las falsas preocupaciones de seguridad de un alto tribunal dominado por alimañas misóginas, racistas, intolerantes y despreciables. □

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