

U.S.-instigated conflict threatens humanity

By Joe Piette

Tens of thousands of essential workers lost their lives during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many were exposed when they were put in harm's way to do the work providing the goods and services, so that corporate owners could continue to gather their billions of dollars in profits.

The print press and online media reporting devoted to praising the nurses, postal workers, meat-packers, grocery and other workers, and the wage increases they were given, was fleeting. As the pandemic seems to be waning, companies are eliminating COVID-19 wage increases and spending hundreds of millions of dollars attempting to halt workers' movements

for union wage and health protections.

Troops in harm's way

U.S. troops are inculcated with propaganda and given training in arms and combat, but the most effective way in which a group of recruits is made into a fighting unit is by creating esprit de corps. Once they have that, they can be sent anywhere, and they will fight to defend themselves as they follow deployment orders.

The Pentagon depends on strict discipline to follow orders and that common loyalty to each other as comrades, so that when U.S. troops are dropped into harm's way anywhere in the world, they have no choice but to defend themselves against the people trying to remove the U.S.

invading force.

Just like the nurses during the pandemic, the corporate press praises those soldiers willing to be put in harm's way to supposedly protect "our way of life." In reality, U.S./NATO soldiers, sailors and Air Force members are the shock troops—the imperialist enforcers—for corporate exploitation of natural and labor resources around the world.

Ukraine put in harm's way

Over a trillion dollars in NATO arms and facilities have been thrust into Eastern European border nations next to Russia. For eight years, since the U.S.-backed

coup in Kiev, Washington has supported the neofascist-backed regime in Ukraine with billions of dollars in weapons and other resources, while the Ukrainian regime's army relentlessly shelled the Peoples' Republics of Lugansk and Donetsk, killing thousands of people in the Russian-speaking Donbass region. U.S. imperialism has now succeeded in drawing Russian President Vladimir Putin into committing its military forces into defending Russia's interests by sending troops into Ukraine.

One could say that U.S. strategists, war planners, corporate media and politicians

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**U.S.-NATO war
More on 8-11**

Unions rally for Alabama Amazon workers

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Bessemer, Alabama

The weather was cool in Alabama on Feb. 26, but the Amazon workers' spirits were hot!

A crowd of hundreds gathered in front of a stage built by local International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) members. A banner with the faces of scores and scores of Amazon workers who had voted no in the first 2021 Bessemer election but now are voting "YES!" formed the stage backdrop.

The Bessemer Amazon struggle is being led by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU).

Speakers from supporting unions and labor federations, including AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, were plentiful and strong in their solidarity with the historic Bessemer union organizing campaign against the corporate power of Amazon.

A message was delivered from Ruben Cortina, president of UNI Global Union, with affiliated unions in 150 countries representing 20 million workers: "I come

from Argentina, and I speak on behalf of my brothers and sisters from around Latin America. I can tell you now, everyone knows where Bessemer, Alabama, is

because of @BAmazonUnion workers."

Most electrifying were the messages delivered by Bessemer workers themselves, rousing applause and loud cheers from the crowd.

While a number of unions had good representation, the largest presence came from United Mine Workers retirees and active strikers from Brookwood, Alabama. For the last 11 months, these miners have been in a hard fight against the Warrior Met Coal company and megafinance corporation BlackRock.

The miners have shown in practice what union solidarity really means in on-the-ground struggle, as they continue to "hold the line."

Bessemer Amazon workers have until March 25 to turn in their ballots and reject Amazon's ongoing union-busting tactics.

The closing chant "Vote Union Yes!" was led by the red RWDSU T-shirt-wearing Bessemer workers. □



Bessemer, Alabama, Feb. 26.

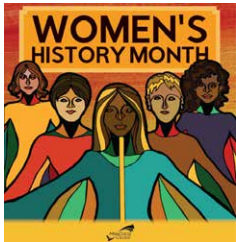
PHOTO: BAMAZON UNION

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San Francisco

Haiti Action Committee protest

By Dave Welsh
San Francisco

To the beat of the educated fingers of Tacuma King on congas, the Haiti Action Committee led a protest at the Federal Building in San Francisco Feb. 26, to denounce the last 18 years of neocolonial occupation of Haiti. Armed forces from the U.S., France and Canada invaded the island and overthrew Haiti’s overwhelmingly elected popular government on Feb. 29, 2004. They kidnapped President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and flew him and First Lady Mildred Trouillot Aristide to Africa on a U.S. military plane, beginning seven years of exile. Three months later the invading soldiers were replaced by United Nations troops, to continue the U.S.-led occupation of Haiti by other means.

Death squads still terrorize Haitian towns

Since then the U.S. has backed a series of corrupt and brutal regimes, which have brought Haiti nothing but misery, death-squad violence and further impoverishment. Tens of thousands of workers took to the streets of Port-au-Prince in late February demanding a tripling of the paltry minimum wage, in an effort to keep up with the cost of living.

“Across Haiti, popular organizations are calling for the end of the U.S.-backed regime and the installation of a transitional government,” said the Haiti Action Committee. “Yet the Biden Administration continues to insist on its choice for prime minister, Ariel Henry, who has no mandate and no legitimacy.”

Speedy mass deportations back to Haiti

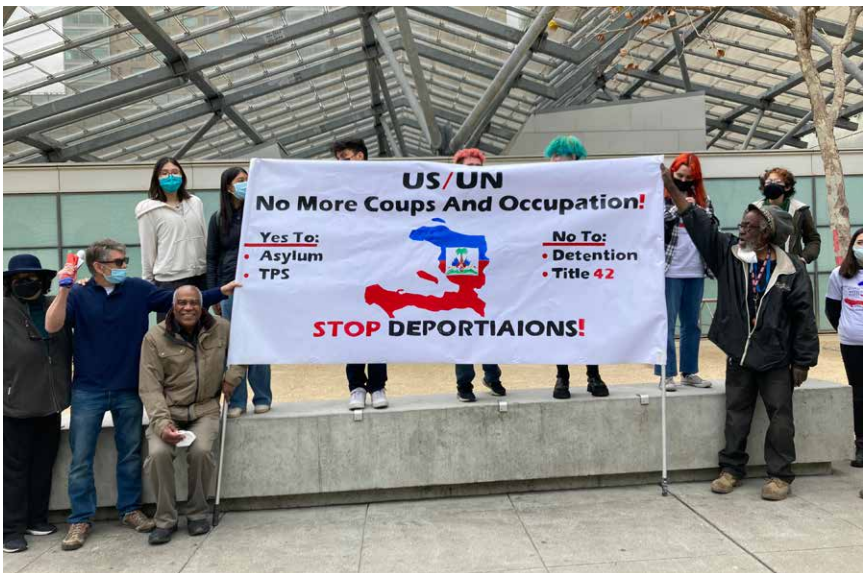
Meanwhile President Joe Biden has deported more than 20,000 refugees back to Haiti, in one of the speediest mass deportations in US history. “Having fled from conditions produced by U.S. policy in

Haiti,” said the committee, “they are now being sent back into the U.S.-created nightmare they fled.”

U.S. authorities did not follow the written procedures they are supposed to follow in dealing with political and other refugees, taking into account the real dangers they undoubtedly would face on their return. They simply rounded them up and flew them back to Haiti, in a careless and unfeeling manner.

The Haiti Action Committee is marking its 30th year in support of the fighting popular movement in Haiti, said co-founder Pierre Labossiere. Others participating in the rally included Students for Haiti Solidarity and Justice Vanguard, as well as Global Women’s Strike, Workers World Party, Black Alliance for Peace, Answer Coalition, Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines and the Coalition for Temporary Protected Status.

Bilal Ali, speaking for Black Alliance for Peace, said U.S. corporate brands like Old Navy continue to exploit the workers in Haiti’s sweatshops for poverty wages. A speaker from CHRP said the Philippines, like Haiti, has a long history of rising up against their oppressors, and in both countries the fighting people face U.S.-backed terror squads, with their unpunished killings and massacres in the popular neighborhoods. □



Haiti Action Committee protests in San Francisco Feb. 26. WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Racist murderer goes on shooting rampage

By Madison Johnson
Portland, Oregon

June Knightly, known as “T-Rex,” was a dedicated anti-racist activist. When she wasn’t assisting with progressive demonstrations, she was providing aid to many unhoused people of Portland, even while requiring the use of a cane to walk. She had a female spouse and a son and was beloved by those around her as a motherly figure. And now she is dead. Not from the cancer she was battling at the age of 60, but at the hands of a right-wing murderer.

More than 50 people showed up to Normandale Park Feb. 15. This author was one of them. We gathered there to march for justice for Amir Locke and Daunte Wright, two young Black men gunned down in Minnesota by the state’s notoriously trigger-happy and racist police.

The protest was led by a group called Justice for Patrick Kimmons, named for another young Black man who was fatally shot nine times by the Portland Police Bureau in 2018. His mother, Letha Winston, has been leading anti-racist demonstrations twice a week for three years to demand justice for her son.

We were less than a minute into the march when a series of gunshots rang out more than a block away. As we moved to the sidewalk, security ran ahead before reporting back that someone had been shot. Although none of us knew the nature of the shooting, Winston wisely chose to end the march rather than lead us into danger.

June Knightly, whose life was tragically ended by the gunshots, was not part of our protest. She and several other women, wearing dresses and high-visibility gear, were safety volunteers helping to redirect nearby traffic—something they’ve done frequently for many demonstrations.

A video taken by Dajah Beck, a volunteer who was shot in the attack, was described by a prosecutor from the district attorney’s office. In it, Benjamin Smith can be seen approaching them, yelling that they were “violent terrorists.” He used misogynistic slurs and threatened to shoot them and



June “T-Rex” Knightly was murdered while protecting an anti-racist protest.



Patrick Kimmons.

anyone else who passed by. The women tried to de-escalate, but he only became more aggressive. There was pushing and yelling, and that’s when he pulled out a handgun. (The Intercept, Feb. 23)

Knightly was reportedly shielding others when she was shot in the head. Smith shot four others, paralyzing one from the neck down. As they screamed for help, a nearby armed protester rushed to the scene and returned fire, striking Smith in the hip, ending his rampage and likely saving lives. An anti-fascist medic then provided medical attention to the bleeding Smith. After reviewing the footage, prosecutors found no reason to charge the protester.

Smith has been charged with murder, attempted murder and assault.

Violent and bigoted history

Smith, a white supremacist, was known for frequent threats of violence against marginalized people and leftists. He had been reported to the police multiple times for his violent behavior. His roommate, Kristine Christenson, told reporters that he liked to yell racial slurs and express his contempt for women. (OPB, Feb. 28)

“He talked about wanting to shoot people all the time, how much he hated Antifa and Black Lives Matter and ‘those damn commies,’” Christenson said. “Living with him has been getting progressively worse. I honestly have not felt very safe around him.” (New York Times, Feb. 22)

On Twitter, Smith wished for Proud Boys to shoot people, proclaimed his preference for Nazis over anti-fascists and made several anti-Semitic comments. (tinyurl.com/5x6ee5xe)

Far-right propaganda fans flames

Unfortunately, Smith is one of countless people becoming radicalized towards blood-soaked fascism. Smith was a fan of Andy Ngo, a former Portlander who has made a career propagandizing for the far-right. He’s a provocateur, who twists reality to incite violence. Ngo has been widely accused of helping fascists target journalists

and activists for murder. And with Smith, he may have just done it again. (tinyurl.com/yhubvatu)

Five days before the shooting, Ngo posted Twitter threads referring to Justice for Patrick Kimmons as a violent extremist group that attacks civilians. He posted numerous photographs of individuals, encouraging his followers to identify them.

When this author attended another Kimmons’ march earlier that week, I was told by a protest guard that they were on high alert for attacks provoked by Ngo’s tweeting.

Despite Ngo’s rhetoric, my experience with Justice for Patrick Kimmons has not reflected his propaganda. I saw a group of diverse people, who truly believed Black Lives Matter, as well as a community that loved them. People would come out of their houses to clap and dance as we marched by.

But that spirit was deeply wounded after the shooting. In a heartbreaking livestream two days later, Letha Winston pleaded, “I want justice; that’s all we’re trying to do. We’re not out here breaking windows; we’re not out here breaking cars; we’re not out here shooting. My son was murdered! My son was shot nine times in the back! Now T-Rex is dead! No more; enough is enough!”

Even after this tragic shooting, Andy Ngo sent out a flurry of tweets “doxxing” and blaming the victims. Showing how he fabricates narratives, he wrote, “It’s possible now the shooting happened because a homeowner had been shot upon by the #antifa extremists. The narrative by antifa that it was a far-right attack is falling apart and no evidence has appeared to support it.” And Ngo has repeatedly referred to the incident as an “antifa-involved mass shooting.” (tinyurl.com/36euct5n)

Incredibly, this isn’t even the first time Ngo has misrepresented at least one of the shooting victims, a fact he is proud of.

Police, media contribute to misinformation

Whether through malice or ineptitude, the Portland Police Bureau made several misleading statements about the shooting, which were then repeated by the media. Many pushed back against the dozens of articles that described the shooting as a “confrontation between an armed



Letha Winston, mother of Patrick Kimmons, at Portland rally demanding justice for her son, June 25, 2020.

homeowner and armed protesters.”

This line suggests that the incident was simply a man protecting his property from violent leftists, a favorite fantasy of conservative suburbanites. In reality, nobody on the traffic safety team was armed. The shooting happened far outside of Smith’s home. It was an attempted mass murder not a shoot-out, and Smith wasn’t even the owner of his home; he rented a nearby apartment.

The PPB stated in a press release that “Detectives believe a large number of people either witnessed what happened or recorded the incident as it unfolded” but left before they could be questioned, while a reporter for The Oregonian wrote that the shooter had no known political affiliation. (tinyurl.com/mr3a9eau)

The facts have been so obscured that some have confused the victims for the perpetrators. After reading the headlines, they’re convinced that 50 anti-fascists committed a mass shooting! This is how Ngo and the media both reinforce ideological hegemony.

The fact is that Portland, seemingly progressive on its surface, is institutionally rotten to the core. The especially bloodthirsty police have been proven to work with far-right street gangs. The city helps cover up their crimes. Local media are unconcerned with speaking truth to power, and the mayor condones the whole miserable, biased structure.

If Portland is to find a path toward dignity, it’s a path that must be forged by the people, not by business interests hiding behind fascist attacks.

T-Rex and Patrick Kimmons must have justice, and they must have it now. □

Federal jury finds

Ahmaud Arbery’s killers ‘guilty of hate crimes’

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

February 23: Today is Ahmaud Arbery Day, as declared by the Georgia General Assembly earlier this month. In their resolution, the legislators noted that the enslavement-era “citizens arrest” law was repealed and hate crimes legislation was passed, in response to the circumstances of his racist murder on this date in 2020.

In Metro Atlanta, Brunswick and other cities in Georgia, events honored Arbery and marked the date when the 25-year-old Black man was murdered. He was chased down, penned in and shot to death in Satilla Shores, a Brunswick suburb, by father and son, Greg and Travis McMichael and their neighbor, William “Roddie” Bryan.

On Nov. 20, 2021, the three men were convicted on state charges of murder and sentenced to life in prison. The

McMichaels have no possibility of parole; Bryan could be eligible for parole after serving a term of 30 years.

This second anniversary of Arbery’s killing came a day after a federal jury delivered hate crimes convictions for the three white supremacists in a Brunswick courtroom. This jury was composed of three Black people, one Latinx person and eight white members. The three killers now face federal life sentences on top of the state sentences.

After hearing 20 witnesses describe the killers’ racist attitudes and vile language in emails, texts and in-person conversations going back years, it only took four hours of deliberations for the jury to arrive at the unanimous verdict: Ahmaud Arbery was pursued and gunned down solely because he was a Black man.

While many people may feel some satisfaction with these legal convictions, it must

be noted that these three white vigilantes went free for months after they committed this murder two years ago. Until the videotape of the murder surfaced on May 5, 2020, prosecutors and police made no moves to arrest and charge them.

It should be stressed that an important factor in gaining the arrests and then convictions of the killers has been the dedicated and persistent efforts of Wanda Cooper-Jones, Arbery’s mother, and other family members, who brought local, national and international attention to this modern-day lynching. Members of the Black community and their allies kept up demonstrations for months, calling for “Justice for Ahmaud!” outside the

courthouse.

When asked about the significance of the court decisions, Cooper-Jones replied “Ahmaud rests in power!” As she has repeatedly said, nothing will bring her beloved son back, but he leaves a legacy of struggle and resistance. □



March to celebrate Ahmaud Arbery in Savannah, Georgia.

March 7, 1970

Historic International Working Women’s Day march to House of Detention

By Naomi Cohen

The following edited excerpt is from an article originally printed in the March 25, 1970, Workers World newspaper, “A day of struggle in New York City — Militant demonstration marks International Working Women’s Day,” written by Naomi Cohen.

The occasion was March 7, the first International Working Women’s Day rally in this country in many years. In this city and around the country, women took this day to revive the revolutionary traditions of a day that is truly for women in struggle.

1,000 rally in New York City

The day was marked here by over 1,000 women and supporters with a rally in Union Square and a militant march to New York’s Bastille—the Women’s House of Detention. The action was organized by the Women’s Caucus of Youth Against War and Fascism and included representatives from many women’s organizations. So that women with children could attend, men from YAWF staffed a childcare center at a nearby church during the rally.

When the rally ended, women poured out of Union Square Park and began a spirited march to the infamous Women’s House of Detention. They carried banners demanding equal pay for equal work, free and legal abortions, no job discrimination and freedom for Geraldine Robinson, a



YAWF banner leads march to Women’s House of Detention, 1970.

Black mother of five from Buffalo, who was framed up along with Martin Sostre for running a revolutionary bookstore in the Black community there.

Marching along the crowded streets, the women chanted: “Women, let’s unite and fight,” “Out of the house, out of the jails, out from under, women unite,” and “Free our sisters; free ourselves. Free Joan Bird; free Ericka Huggins.”

Speaking with jailed sisters

The march grew as it went; so that when it reached the prison, the demonstrators completely circled the building. Women prisoners waved and shouted out of the windows: “Free us,” “Power to the people” and “We want food.”

The demonstrators stopped at the back of the prison, where they could hear the women best, and shouted up to their

imprisoned sisters. “Hey, hey, ho, ho! The House of D has got to go” was picked up by the crowd. “Free Joan Bird” was raised again and again to demand freedom for the Panther woman now imprisoned there for almost a year on \$100,000 ransom as a result of the frame-up of the New York Panther 21.

The cops were ominously moving in, harassing the demonstrators, but no one was moving. The women stood with fists raised and shouted up to the prisoners. It was finally suggested that the demonstrators demand their right to see prison authorities with a list of demands. As the women marched on the front of the prison, police moved in to block their way.

The women refused to give way and stood at the entrance of the prison chanting “Free our sisters; free ourselves.” A handful of cops were nervously backed up

against the prison wall, confronted by an angry crowd of determined women.

Finally a squad of cops charged the demonstrators, pushing them away from the prison. Clubs started swinging, and the people were brutally assaulted. In the process three women and three male supporters were arrested. The three women are Sharon Eolis, a leader in YAWF; and Rita Freed and Pam Kirkland, longtime activists in YAWF and well-known to New York’s secret police. Three men, Mike Friedman, Steve Cagan and Jamie Fryer were also arrested.

Framed-up women and supporters

It took the cops two hours to decide to frame-up the demonstrators on very heavy charges. Sharon Eolis, Pam Kirkland and Steve Cagan are being charged with felonious assault on a cop in addition to first-degree riot, a felony. The defendants are also being charged with resisting arrest, harassment, obstruction of government administration and disorderly conduct.

The stiff charges make it clear that the women’s liberation movement can now expect the same kind of repression that the government has brought down on the Black Liberation and antiwar movements. Women’s liberation is spoken of as a joke in the capitalist press; but the moment women begin to struggle in militant actions, the repression comes down. □

In the U.S.A.

International Women’s Alliance supports Workers Power Day

The International Women’s Alliance (IWA) is an anti-imperialist global alliance of militant grassroots-based women’s organizations, institutions, alliances, networks and individuals committed to advancing national and social liberation and gender equality. The following statement was posted to IWA’s website at tinyurl.com/23433y9n. Go to facebook.com/IWA.grassrootswomenforliberation

The International Women’s Alliance extends its unwavering solidarity to Amazon and Starbucks workers around the U.S. on this Workers Power Day, Feb. 26, 2022.

In solidarity with workers waging unionizing campaigns around the world, we demand that workers carrying out this struggle not face harassment or unjust termination; that the Starbucks and Amazon corporations allow for fair and safe union campaigns and refrain from harassment and intimidation of workers; and that the Memphis 7 be reinstated and allowed to continue their unionization efforts.

The fight to unionize some of the country’s largest employers (Amazon as the second largest, and Starbucks as the twelfth) should not be taken for granted. This recent explosion of union organizing efforts and strikes across the U.S., led largely by women and people of color, follows the popular anti-racist mobilizations that erupted in response to the lynching of George Floyd by Minneapolis police in May 2020. The movement against white supremacy and the movement for fair and safe working conditions are intrinsically linked to the rights and welfare of the working class. On this 10-year anniversary of the murder of Trayvon Martin,

IWA raises a fist with all oppressed and exploited people suffering under U.S. imperialism, white supremacy and patriarchy.

While the salaries of CEOs have only increased during COVID-19 (Kevin Johnson of Starbucks raked in \$20.43 million in 2021 alone, while Amazon’s Jeff Bezos has boasted record-breaking profits throughout the pandemic), workers have been neglected by a government and health care system that have been slow to meet their needs as they struggle through a global pandemic. Workers have had to work in unsafe conditions; risked exposure due to profit-seeking quarantine policies; lost their jobs and their homes; and have been terrorized by law enforcement and ICE.

Seven workers behind union organizing efforts at a Starbucks in Memphis, Tenn., were fired — the company citing previously unenforced or minor company policies that historically have not resulted in termination. On this Workers Power Day, IWA demands that the Memphis 7 be reinstated and their right to unionize be honored, without retaliation.

Women lead the way

These burdens are felt especially hard by women, who have largely led the movement to organize unions in Bessemer, Ala., and Staten Island, N.Y. Women also make up a majority of Starbucks’ workforce, accounting for 69.2 percent of its total workforce in the U.S.

Women in these industries often hold many identities, such as Black, Indigenous and other persons of color; LGBTQ+, disabled workers, and migrants or immigrants. These women are on the frontlines demanding a worker-led movement for unionization and rights.

As workers are organizing themselves to form unions or other formations to improve their conditions, the



national leadership of unions such as AFL-CIO and SEIU are doing very little or next to nothing, clearly illustrating their true allegiances. Workers are becoming aware that the very institutions that were created to protect their rights and welfare are now doing more to protect the profits of their bosses.

It is for this reason that the IWA calls on all freedom-loving women and gender-oppressed people to raise the demand that the rights and livelihood of the working class be prioritized over profit. This situation is not unique to wage workers in the United States. In fact, workers around the world are experiencing increased exploitation while the bosses’ profits are prioritized over their livelihood. Workers all over the world have been organizing for their rights at increased rates during the last two years. We cannot give up the fight and must continue to grow our international solidarity in order to support the efforts of the working class everywhere for our rights and fair treatment.

Let’s continue to build this class-wide solidarity inside the U.S. and globally with International Working Women’s Day and May Day 2022! □

Global supply chain

Rail industry prioritizes profits over safety

By Betsey Piette

The global supply chain crisis, fueled by the COVID-19 pandemic, has laid bare systemic problems within global capitalism — when and where goods are produced to how they are transported and the growing disparity between the bosses’ wealth versus the wages and benefits paid to millions of workers throughout this process.

The latest crack in the capitalist infrastructure — rail transport — surfaced when 17,000 conductors and engineers on BNSF railroad called a strike for Feb. 1. Their specific concern was a new attendance policy made effective Feb. 1, penalizing rail workers for missing work for any reason and encouraging sick workers to report for work, regardless of their illness. Throughout the pandemic, the rail industry has shown little regard for workers’ health, but this latest assault took place in the midst of the omicron surge.

BNSF’s policy reduces the number of days workers can take off because of fatigue, from 84 to 22 a year, essentially leaving workers on call 24 hours a day. With 32,500 miles of track in 28 Western states, BNSF is one of the largest railroads in the U.S.

A strike by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) and the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers (SMART-TD) was temporarily stymied. A restraining order claimed a strike would violate the Railway Labor Act of 1926, but the struggle is far from over. Contract negotiations covering 115,000 U.S. rail workers at major Class 1 railways — defined as carriers earning revenues over \$900 million — are under-way this year.

Like millions of “essential workers,” railroad workers suffer from their bosses’ greed, escalated during the COVID-19 pandemic, and their suffering is exacerbated by cost-cutting measures implemented industrywide over the past decade.

Precision Scheduled Railroad-ing: ‘Just-in-Time’ for rail industry

Over decades of globalization, many transnational manufacturers developed the “Just-in-Time” system of production,

whereby goods were only produced to meet immediate demands in order to reduce inventory storage costs and taxes. This shortsighted measure, designed to boost corporate profits, has wreaked havoc as supply chain barriers are resulting in months-long delays in deliveries of everything from computer chips to cars and appliances.

The railway industry developed their own version of lean production — “Precision Scheduled Railroad-ing.” PSR’s cost-cutting measures, designed to increase profits, include cutting less-profitable routes and closing or consolidating railyards, plus running fewer but longer trains. Rail companies have laid off tens of thousands of workers and escalated speedups for the workers who remain. PSR has led to a higher number of accidents, more of them deadly.

Union Pacific, which cut 15,000 jobs, reported a 2021 4th quarter profit increase of 23% over their 2020 4th quarter. CSX, after slashing 15,500 jobs, had its stock prices rise astronomically by 1,526% and dividends increase by 1,850%. Across the Class 1 industry, which also includes Canadian National, Norfolk Southern and Kansas City Southern, 46,296 jobs were eliminated since 2000, reducing the current workforce to 114,499 workers.

Between December 2015 and December 2021, railroads cut up to 35% of workers on Class 1 railroads — carriers with revenues over \$900 million. From 2000 to 2020, there was also a 30% increase in the average tonnage carried by individual freight trains. The impact of these cuts leaves little room for error.

To ship by truck or rail?

Decades of government deregulations converted what were once well-paid, secure truck-driving jobs with union protection into essentially a gig economy. Today most truck drivers are forced to work 70-hour weeks, with no on-the-job protection and wages that average below the federal minimum. Many truckers complain they are treated as indentured servants.

Forty years ago, the Teamsters Union represented over 2 million truck drivers. Today their truck driver membership is around 70,000 workers — about 2% of

truck drivers.

In contrast to trucking, rail remains one of the most heavily unionized workplaces among transport workers in the supply chain. Unionized railroad jobs were once secure through retirement. The cost-cutting frenzy has made these secure jobs unbearable. Railroads have cut back on inspections and outsourced maintenance previously done by union workers. Conductors on ever longer trains have been cut from two to one.

In 2018 U.S. trucks moved 2.03 trillion ton-miles (a ton-mile is one ton of freight moved one mile) compared to railroads that moved 1.73 trillion ton-miles of freight.

The American Society of Civil Engineers’ 2021 “Report Card for America’s Infrastructure” rated freight trains overall more reliable and cost effective than trucking. With a single railcar able to carry 3-4 trucks worth of cargo, they determined that a single train could take 300 trucks off the road, lessening congestion and reducing deterioration of highways and bridges.

The industry’s Association of American Railroads claims rail transport is more fuel efficient and therefore more “environmentally friendly” than trucking. But is this actually the case?

Gas bomb trains

If one only compares the relative percentage of goods shipped and the cost of shipments, rail transport might look like the better option. Currently rail freight consists of bulk commodities, including grain and automobiles. Over 40% consists of mined ores — shipping 70% of U.S.-produced coal.

Rail companies, which made \$10.7 billion hauling coal in 2018, have a long history of partnering with and funding the climate change denial movement. As demand for coal diminished, rail companies increased shipments of other fossil

fuels, including crude oil, hydrogen chloride and liquefied gases.

In April 2019, President Donald Trump ordered the Transportation Department to permit liquefied natural gas to be shipped by specialty rail tank cars. In August 2020, 14 states, including Pennsylvania and New Jersey, filed a legal challenge to this federal rule, arguing that the proposed LNG “bomb trains” cut through residential neighborhoods in many cities including Philadelphia.

Trains carrying crude oil derailed in Quebec and North Dakota in 2013, resulting in deadly and destructive explosions. And a 101-car CSX train derailed in Philadelphia in 2014, close to an area with multiple universities and hospitals. Six of the derailed cars carried crude oil. These derailments happened before the massive layoffs of Class 1 freight workers and the speedups and cuts in safety measures that are bombarding the rail industry today.

Driven to maximize profits, the rail industry’s growing disregard for their workers, the communities their trains travel through and the health of the environment is a disaster in the making.

Solidarity between workers, their unions, impacted communities and the environmental movement could be the ticket that puts a halt to the railroads’ unsafe and anti labor practices. □



IWW ARCHIVES

On the picket line

By Marie Kelly

Twin Cities teachers

This month could see more than 8,000 teachers in Minneapolis and St. Paul in Minnesota leaving the classroom to walk a picket line. Teachers in both cities voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike which could begin in early March.

Teachers have spent the last two years struggling to maintain some sense of normality for the 62,000 public school students. Remote learning was difficult, and teachers spent valuable time caring for the social needs of their pupils — making sure they had food and were in a safe environment. Many students needed help getting internet access and school supplies.

A key union demand is for the district to provide much needed mental and

emotional health services for students struggling to catch up both academically and socially. Teachers want guarantees of classroom sizes that will allow for optimal learning.

St. Paul Federation of Educators President Leah VanDassor stated: “Just think about kids who left during the pandemic, as fifth-graders came back as seventh-graders, seventh-graders came back as ninth-graders; that’s a huge shift in their lives ... And there’s just not enough people in the school who are trained to recognize that and be able to even route children to correct resources that they need to help them with whatever that happens to be.” (tinyurl.com/5xmkyuct)

Sherwin-Williams workers strike

Workers at the Bedford Heights, Ohio, paint plant, members of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 14919, went on an Unfair Labor Practice strike Feb. 5, after working without a contract since October of last year. “Through our hard work and the dedication of its Steelworker

member workforce, the Sherwin-Williams Bedford Heights Plant has been profitable and greatly contributed to the success of the corporation,” said Local 14919 President Terrell Williams. “All we are asking for is a fair and just contract that keeps up with inflation and provides economic sustainability and security for our members.” (usw.org)

As USW points out, Sherwin Williams is spending hundreds of millions of dollars on a glitzy new headquarters in downtown Cleveland and a research center in nearby Brecksville, Ohio. Therefore, “Sherwin-Williams should be willing to invest in the employees [who] earned them the profits and enabled the company to make these expenditures.” (usw.org)

Hershey not sweet for workers

Workers at the Hershey Chocolate plant in Stuarts Draft, Virginia, are in the process of voting to join the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM). Ballots were mailed Feb. 24

to the 1,300 workers and will be counted later this month. Worker grievances include forced overtime and long hours; some workers reported that they worked over 70 days without a day off.

Older workers in solidarity with younger workers are calling for dismantling the unfair two-tier pay scale. Hershey has experienced record profits, and workers want more compensation for the profits they are generating. Hershey has retaliated against union organizing by hiring the union-busting firm Labor Relations Institute and forcing workers to sit through anti-union propaganda meetings.

Hershey has a history of anti-union tactics. In 1937, the Hershey company brutally suppressed a sit-down strike at its Pennsylvania plant. But two years later, Hershey Corporation signed an agreement with the Bakery and Confectionery International Union (now part of BCTGM), becoming one of the first American candy companies to unionize.

Since July 2021, BCTGM has struck Frito-Lay, Nabisco and Kellogg’s. □

Workers Power Day

Solidarity with Amazon, Starbucks workers

By Martha Grevatt

In solidarity with Starbucks, Amazon and all worker organizing, the Support Amazon Workers Network declared Feb. 26 a “Workers Power Day.” That day, the 10th anniversary of the racist murder of Trayvon Martin, was chosen to link the struggle for worker rights to the struggle against racism. Actions were held in multiple cities. Activists also opposed Washington’s push for war against Russia, some with the slogan: “Union contracts, not military contracts!”

Demonstrators protested the firings of seven Starbucks union organizers — most of them Black and Brown — in Memphis, Tennessee, and another organizer in Buffalo, New York, along with the racist arrest of three Black Amazon Labor Union organizers in Staten Island, New York. Starbucks sent a memo to U.S. employees denying that Cassie Fleischer had been fired from the Elmwood store in Buffalo — the first in the U.S. to unionize. But Fleischer recorded her own firing meeting and has exposed the company’s lies.

The Starbucks union drive continues to gain momentum with 100+ stores filing for representation elections and a big 25-3 vote for Starbucks Workers United at the

Jamie Wallace, president of Boston’s Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) chapter, came down on break from his skyscraper job to lead the crowd in chanting, “The power of the people is greater than the people in power!” Solidarity came from Harvard dining hall workers, Pride At Work, union baristas from the Darwin’s Ltd. and City Feed coffee shops, Boston School Bus Drivers USW Local 8751, Democratic Socialists of America-Labor Working Group, diverse elder and young socialists and disability rights activists.

The rally then turned itself into a union flying squadron, marching through Boston’s downtown streets singing “Solidarity Forever!” Throughout the route, hundreds of shoppers, tourists and store workers raised fists and honked to the demands “Raise wages, not war!” and “What do we want? Union! When do we want it? Now!”

Workers Power in multiple cities

An action at the Barclays Center in **Brooklyn, New York**, was co-sponsored by the New York City CBTU, Workers Assembly Against Racism, Amazon Labor Union and the December 12th Movement. ALU President Chris Smalls, joined by Amazon workers Brett Daniels and Jason Anthony, described their arrest by the New York Police Department as they were delivering free food to the workers. An election to determine if ALU will represent workers at two Staten Island warehouses will take place March 26-30. Charles Jenkins, Transport Workers Union Local 100 officer and president of the New York City Chapter of CBTU, chaired the rally.

Over 50 people rallied outside Whole Foods at 10th and South streets in **Philadelphia**. Participants included members and speakers from Temple Association of University Professors, Philadelphia Boricua, National Nurses United, Industrial Workers of the World, Workers World Party, Black Alliance for Peace (BAP), Socialist Resistance and DSA-Philadelphia. Chairing the event, Teddie Kelly of WWP read a statement from ALU president Chris Smalls on the union-busting tactics of Amazon management, leading to his and the other organizers’ arrests.

Scott Williams represented Workers Solidarity Network, which initiated the Feb. 26 action. He read a statement from Cassie Fleischer, the recently fired Starbucks organizer. Deandra Price from BAP voiced opposition to the latest U.S. war efforts against Russia, urging workers to be alert to the growing dangers of fascism. Michael Wilson, a retired postal worker, mesmerized the crowd with his account of the impact of poverty, gentrification and racism on the city’s working class. During the rally several workers from Whole Foods came by to voice their own interest in unionizing.

Activists in **Cleveland** gathered downtown, stopping at the local office of union-busting law firm Littler



WW PHOTO: BRENDA SANDBURG

Charles Jenkins, Transport Workers Union Local 100 and New York City Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.



WW PHOTO: BRENDA SANDBURG

Chris Smalls, leader of Amazon Labor Union, speaks at Brooklyn rally.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Philadelphia



PHOTO: MORE PERFECT UNION

Starbucks workers in Mesa, Arizona, wait for union election results, Feb. 25. Starbucks Workers United won 25-3.

Mesa, Arizona, store.

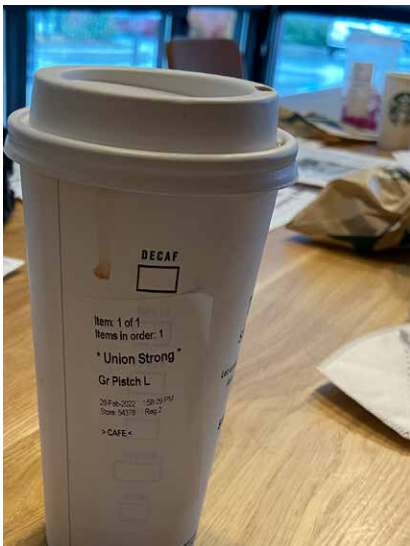
A spirited crowd filled **Boston**’s snow-packed City Hall Plaza, bringing song and solidarity to a powerful delegation of union-minded Starbucks baristas. Workers World Party youth leader Kristen Turgeon kicked off the rally with a rousing antiwar version of “Union Maid”: “Biden wants us for his wars ... Oh, you can’t scare me, I’m sticking with the Union!” dedicated to the fired Memphis 7 and Cassie Fleischer.

Jean-Luc Pierite, of the United American Indians of New England, placed this blossoming struggle against corporate greed squarely on Indigenous lands. Dr. Padma Balasubramanian of Boston’s South Asian Coalition stressed the global struggle for workers’ rights at Amazon. John Buonopane of United Steelworkers (USW) District 4 pledged his International’s resources to the fight. Anthony McWhorter, Young Black Panther Party, linked Trayvon Martin’s murder and the uprising of the Black Lives Matter movement with Starbucks’ targeted firings and the baristas’ fightback, demanding “Rehire the Memphis 7, now!”



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

Boston



Mendelson, which is representing Starbucks against Starbucks Workers United.

Starbucks workers are currently unionizing at three locations in **Portland, Oregon**. WWP’s local branch held a solidarity event for the ongoing union drive at the Cedar Hills Jenkins Starbucks store. One worker told WWP that the intimidation tactics used by management have not succeeded in breaking the resolve of the workers.

Actions were also held in **San Luis Obispo, California; New Haven, Connecticut; New Orleans; Hadley, Massachusetts; Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; and Virginia Beach, Virginia**. **Buffalo**’s action was postponed due to a massive blizzard.

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union rallied on Feb. 26 in **Bessemer, Alabama**, where Amazon workers are currently voting in a union representation election.

Despite the compromised environment of intimidation created by management’s dirty and illegal union-busting tactics, workers were able to connect in solidarity through all of these actions.

Steve Gillis, Danny O’Brien, Betsey Piette and Brenda Sandburg contributed to this article.

Oakland community fights school closures and cutbacks

By Judy Greenspan
Oakland, California

Teachers, parents, students, education workers and community activists are launching a multifaceted campaign to stop the school closures that have been mandated by the Oakland School Board and the Oakland Unified School District. All last-minute attempts to stall or postpone the closure actions of the school board have failed, leaving mass organizing, recall efforts and a possible teachers’ strike looming on the horizon.

While the two education workers at Westlake Elementary School have stopped their hunger strike, other community members are discussing the possibility of starting a new one. A major demonstration is planned for March 5 under the slogan: “No School Closures! Shut Down the Town!”

Community activists are petitioning for signatures to recall two school board members who voted for the school closures. District 1 School Board Director Sam Davis has recently been targeted by teachers in the Oakland Education Association and community members for recall. Davis ran as a “progressive” in the last school board election and had been endorsed by the OEA.

Community rally against school closures

There have been several protests outside Parker Elementary School, a predominantly Black public school scheduled to be closed at the end of this school year. On Feb. 21, a school holiday, a large crowd of parents, students and teachers rallied at a busy Oakland intersection a block away from Parker Elementary. The rally was led by students and parents, who have been the impetus behind most of the activism there.

Rochelle Jenkins, a Parker parent and community

member, called out the school board for pushing the closure of the school. She said the community was determined to keep fighting until they win. She ended her statement saying, “We believe that we will win!” Holding a sign that read “Reparations for Black students,” Jenkins led the crowd in the chant: “No school closures! No school closures!”

“I will not let them shut down my school, because this is where I grew up. This is where I found my voice,” said Jayvien Bolden, a high school student who went to Parker and has siblings currently enrolled there. Referring to the school board’s decision to close Parker, Bolden told WW, “I feel like they know what they are doing, because they see our siblings and our children as checks, instead of seeing them as getting their education.”

Oakland teachers have been holding weekly site meetings at their schools to discuss their campaigns and assess support for a teacher strike. A recent virtual special meeting of elected union representatives, who serve on the OEA Representative Council, was held to discuss strike readiness and possible community support.

Several parents from La Escuelita, a K-8 school slated to lose its middle school grades, and two schools that are on this year’s closure list, Parker Elementary and Community Day Elementary, were invited to speak at the Representative Council. All expressed strong support for a teacher strike to stop the school closures.

School closures, Port of Oakland privatization linked

A surprise guest at this meeting was Trent Willis, former president of Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. Willis expressed the support of ILWU Local 10 for the community effort to stop the privatization of the Oakland public schools. “We have demonstrated many times in the past to stand by the



WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

Jayvien Bolden, Oakland high school student, leads chants outside Parker Elementary.

OEA and the teachers’ struggle. We understand your struggle. We are absolutely opposed to the proposed school closings,” Willis stated.

Willis went on to explain how Local 10’s struggle to oppose the construction of a new Oakland A’s stadium in the Port of Oakland is the same as the campaign to stop the school closures. ILWU Local 10 recently organized a demonstration in front of Oakland City Hall to show the connection between the privatization of the port and the closure of Black and Brown public schools.

The ILWU leader said both actions are against the “gentrification” of Oakland. “Gentrification always means disadvantages for Black and Brown members of our community,” Willis stated. “The majority of the parents speaking here today are Black and Brown people (referring to the parents who addressed the Representative Council),” noted Willis. “They don’t need school closures. They need school funding,” Willis said.

Everything organized so far has been the result of grassroots community efforts; a rally scheduled for March 5 in East Oakland is no exception. There will be an opening rally at the site of Roots International Academy, a public middle school closed at the end of the 2019 school year after a long communitywide struggle to keep it open. Roots was another historically Black school targeted by the Oakland School Board and OUSD for closure. The gentrifiers won that battle, and the Oakland community is determined to not let that happen again.

The March 5 protest will march down International Boulevard to 29th Avenue, ending at the Cesar Chavez soccer field, where another rally featuring speakers and performances will take place.

There are several other events being planned this week at various school sites, including weekly Sunday community meetings to plan this united fight to stop the public school closures. Background materials for all of these campaigns are available at tinyurl.com/v6prz. □

‘Say no to UPS pay cuts!’

By Joe Piette
Philadelphia

On a cold morning Feb. 24, dozens of Teamsters union members and supporters rallied across the street from the Oregon Avenue United Parcel Service facility in Philadelphia to “Say no to UPS pay cuts!”

During the pandemic, UPS was forced to raise bottom-level wages to \$19 an hour, because entry wages were too low to keep workers from leaving. Now UPS wants to cut pay across the board and drop



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

workers down to the contract minimum.

UPS posted record profits two years in a row, with workers producing more wealth for the company than ever before. Profits over the last year are up 22.6%, yet UPS executives want Teamsters members to take up to a 27% pay cut.

Union officials, stewards and rank and filers plan to be at the plant gates in the coming weeks

circulating petitions as they continue the fight against wage cuts. □

Mark International Working Women’s Day! Support Workers World!

In the spirit of International Working Women’s Day, March 8, Workers World hails women workers and oppressed people around the world, as well as in the U.S. In 1910, the International Socialist Women’s Conference in Copenhagen declared March 8 International Working Women’s Day. People of all genders commemorate this special day worldwide.

But this newspaper doesn’t show this solidarity only on that date or in March, Women’s History Month, as proclaimed by Congress in 1987. Its pages relate the news and show whose side we’re on weekly: the multinational, multigender working class and those most oppressed by capitalism.

WW promotes the view that “every struggle is a woman’s struggle,” including the fights for affordable housing, jobs at a livable wage, unionization, free medical care for all with full reproductive health services, voting rights, a clean environment and an end to imperialist wars.

We embrace the mothers whose children have been killed by racist police and vigilantes, from Sybrina Fulton, Trayvon Martin’s

mother, to Wanda Cooper-Jones, Ahmaud Arbery’s mother.

Our paper decries the superexploitation of African American, Latinx, Indigenous and immigrant women who earn the lowest wages. WW expresses solidarity with these women workers and those subjected to racism, misogyny, bigotry, xenophobia, homophobia and transphobia.

WW coverage supports the Starbucks workers, mostly young women and LGBTQ+ workers, fighting to unionize stores owned by this global corporation. We applaud the Memphis 7, mainly Black and Brown workers, who were fired for daring to organize their Tennessee store.

This newspaper extensively covers the struggles of Amazon workers for safer, better-paying jobs and a union. While the corporation’s centibillionaire owner, Jeff Bezos, got even richer during the pandemic, women still comprise one-half of the lowest-paid workers, while two-thirds of them are Black and Latinx.

Socialists have long recognized the only way to improve women’s lives is the struggle to overturn capitalism. WW newspaper

espouses this view and boldly states that socialism is the only system that can ensure real liberation for women, workers and oppressed people.

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.

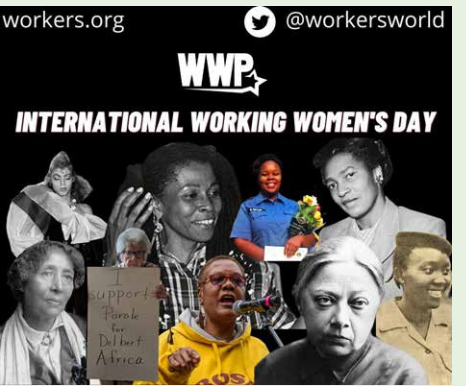
Since the early 1990s, the fund has helped sponsor the workers.org website. Throughout the pandemic when fewer print issues have been published due to staff health concerns, new articles have been posted daily, and the PDF of the weekly newspaper has been posted at workers.org. Not one online issue has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



Reflections on the crisis in Ukraine

By Sergio Rodríguez Gelfenstein

During a recent interview, journalist Carlos Arellano surprised me by asking me if the historical account given by Russian President Vladimir Putin in his recent appearance explaining the decision to recognize the independence of Lugansk and Donetsk was necessary.

Arellano wisely tried to find explanations for that decision and unravel the intricacies of the matter. With much respect for President Putin, I had to differ with his opinions blaming the Bolsheviks and Vladimir Lenin for what is happening in Ukraine.

When the Bolsheviks came to power, they not only had to form a government to rule Russia, but for the entire tsarist empire, which included around 100 nationalities, most of them incorporated by force. The creation of the Soviet Union, which eventually had 15 socialist republics, 20 autonomous republics, 125 oblasts, seven autonomous oblasts, 10 autonomous districts and seven krais, was an attempt to solve the national question and give each nationality the representation it deserved.

If this project became distorted, it was not the fault of the Bolsheviks, much less of Lenin. We must remember that all this was done in the midst of a siege by world capitalism that sought to destroy the nascent workers' and peasants' power as soon as it was born, within the framework of a generalized famine of the peoples.

"Peace, Land and Bread" was the Bolsheviks' main slogan at the time. The Soviet policy regarding nationalities allowed the Ukrainians for the first time to have their own national state. Whether that was a mistake, as President Putin put it, is quite debatable or at least necessary to debate, but it is understandable that there are differences between Lenin and Putin. The founder of the Soviet Union was a communist and internationalist revolutionary, while Putin is a Russian nationalist who set out to defend and safeguard the interests of his country when a bipolar world no longer existed.

Another aspect of the problem is the legal framework provided by international law. Knowing that this is an instrument that only poor, backward and underdeveloped countries are required to submit to, the truth is that Russia acted like what it is: a great world power that had only been overpowered as a result of Gorbachev's betrayal and Yeltsin's drunken incompetence. Putin came to power at the beginning of this century to recover the honor and dignity of Russia, which from the moment of the disappearance of the Soviet Union has been vilified and marginalized, instead of accorded its status as a power within the international system.

The main argument of the West regarding implementing sanctions against Russia was that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine were violated after the decision Putin made on Feb. 21; however, other world powers take this kind of action in all situations. Most of those decrying Russia's actions never made a fuss about the eight military invasions, the 11 "color revolutions" and the more than 20 countries sanctioned by the United States since the disappearance of the Soviet Union through the use of force, resulting in millions of victims all over the planet in violation of international law.

President Putin put forth Russia's strongest argument to explain its decision

when he reported that the measures taken were in order to prevent the continuation of massive violence or the carrying out of genocide. It must be remembered that the still valid and misnamed "Universal" Declaration of Human Rights of the UN established in Article 3 that "Every individual has the right to life, liberty and the security of his person." Russia acted in defense of the life and safety of 4 million citizens who have been in danger every day for eight years.

Ukrainian government born through fascist coup d'état

The current government of Ukraine is heir to a fascist coup d'état in which, under the leadership of the West, NATO and especially the United States, in the figure of Under Secretary of State for European Affairs Victoria Nuland, promoted the vandalism by neo-Nazi groups that burned synagogues under the complacent gaze of the United States and the complicit silence of Israel, which temporarily and conveniently forgot about the dangers of anti-Semitism.

Agreements, to which the United States and Europe have always attached little importance, without ever making the minimum effort to urge Ukraine to fulfill them. Now, the West has remembered the Minsk agreements, which after years of absence from the news media have begun to crowd the newsrooms and studios of television channels since yesterday [Feb. 22]. Even the French president, with total self-confidence, believed it valid to use the agreements as an instrument for his electoral campaign.

Finally, in the framework of the battered international order, what must be detected is whether a military intervention into a country takes place to promote mass killings—as the United States did against Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua—or to prevent them. The case of Cuba proves that international law is only a "salute to the flag," as shown by 60 years of blockade repudiated by almost all of humanity except two countries. Every president of the United States could have cared less about those UN General Assembly votes condemning the blockade.

is hardly going to be idle when faced with the possibility of losing hold of absolute power. Ukraine is just an instrument for the West in seeking to achieve its primary goal, which is to save capitalism at the moment of its greatest weakness.

Throughout history, the United States has shown that it has no qualms about sacrificing millions of lives, including those of its own citizens, to preserve the system. Its 800 military bases around the world and its 11 aircraft carriers are the most important instrument that the United States has for "solving" the problems posed by international law.

The great Eurasian space

Over the last five centuries (since Western hegemony over the globe began), world power has been based on control of the seas. This basis has begun to change, generating a quintessential transformation in which the United States is being left out. The creation of a great Eurasian space from the alliance between Russia and China establishes new parameters in the structuring of world power.

Keep in mind that it was Western thinkers like Halford Mackinder of Britain and the Dutch-American Nicholas Spykman who argued that control of Central Asia as a "continental heartland" or "pivot area" would lead to world control.

In recent years, the Russian-Chinese alliance, which reached the height of its strength after the joint declaration signed by the presidents of both countries in Beijing on Feb. 4, shows the completion of the first steps in the creation of a new world order. After defeat and retreat from Afghanistan by the United States and NATO, and after the failure of attempted coups in Kyrgyzstan in January 2020 and in Kazakhstan in January of this year, the United States' inadequacies and inability to dominate the global political scene have been highlighted.

The Eurasian alliance is supported by Russia's membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which proved effective in preventing the coup in Kazakhstan, in addition to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), in which China participates, with the aim of cooperating in political, economic and security matters. It is worth mentioning that India and Pakistan also belong to this organization, while Iran, Belarus, Mongolia and Afghanistan are awaiting approval for their entry.

The Eurasian Union is made up of five countries and constitutes the successful extension of economic and commercial ties in the widest land space on the planet.

Meanwhile, China has created the largest economic alliance in the world, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Association (RCEP), which includes 30 percent of the world's population. But the area with the greatest scope in the region and the world is the new Silk Road project developed by China. It has already distributed some \$900 billion to 72 countries inhabited by some 5 billion people—amounting to 65 percent of the world's population—according to Belgian journalist Marc Vandepitte in a Feb. 11 article. (tinyurl.com/yaymyf74)

Incorporation of Europe into Eurasian system?

The great danger for the United States and its system of world dominance is the incorporation of Europe and in particular



Map 2:
US Military and CIA Interventions since World War II
■ targeted countries ★ US bombings — US government assassination plots
Source: William Blum, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Intervention Since World War II*, 2004 and *Rogue State*, 2005. (<http://www.killinghope.org/>)
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It was precisely Nuland who, in a conversation with U.S. ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt in February 2014, while finalizing details on how to overthrow President Viktor Yanukovich, exposed the contemptuous mood that the United States feels for its "allies." Faced with an observation by Ambassador Pyatt that certain decisions of his country did not agree with the opinion of the European Union, Nuland blurted out an emblematic phrase that defines how little respect and consideration the United States has for its partners on the Old Continent: "Fuck the European Union." This same opinion is expressed today by the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, in less bold forms.

It should also be remembered that the birth of the Donetsk and Lugansk republics had its origin in the rejection of that coup d'état, given the racist, extremist actions by the Ukrainian administration that violated the human rights of the Russian minority inhabiting those territories. In this sense, the creation of these republics responded to the right of legitimate defense, enshrined in all documents pertaining to the subject within the framework of international law.

Eight years of continuous and permanent denunciations have occurred simultaneously alongside the ineffectiveness of the Normandy Format and the Minsk

In the 1970s, Cuba "invaded" Angola, helping to establish the country's independence. It made a huge contribution to the destruction of the disgraceful apartheid system that had coexisted under the complicit gaze of the West, on top of the lengthy dominance and slaughter of the Black population of South Africa. Can anyone object that it was a small, underdeveloped country that made the biggest contribution to bringing about the end of apartheid?

Who can have any faith in international law or the UN when the Sahrawi people have waited for 30 years for a promised referendum to define their political status? It has still not been carried out. Why? Because Europe, the colonial powers and the economic interests of the West have given Morocco permission to continue with mass killing, something that has only been curbed as a result of solidarity actions of other African states—Algeria in particular.

Where is international law?

Aside from these events, it is worth taking a look at what is really happening in the broad international arena, and the repercussions these events could have on the emergence of a new and different world order. Is the United States attempting to stir up a war to devastate Europe for the third time in a hundred years?

In the background, what is at stake are the interests of global capitalism, which

What workers should know about Ukraine/Washington’s warmongering and provocation

By Danny O’Brien

The U.S.-commanded NATO military alliance has spent 8 years funneling tons of advanced weapons and fascist armed groups into eastern Ukraine along the 1,200 mile border with Russia. The constant U.S./NATO backed attacks have resulted in over 14,000 deaths of civilians in Ukraine. These facts on the U.S./NATO military alliance’s criminal and provocative role in Ukraine must be exposed.

What is NATO? The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a military alliance under U.S. command.

NATO expansion: In 1990, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker promised leaders of the still-existing Soviet Union that NATO would not expand “one inch eastward” of a German state that included the former German Democratic Republic. NATO had 16 members in 1990; now

NATO’s 30 member states include former allies and even former republics of the Soviet Union that are now allied in NATO against the Russian Federation.

Ukraine: Historically Ukraine existed as a socialist republic; its economy integrated into the Soviet Union and closely linked to Russia, with a majority of the population east of the Dnieper River, the more industrialized region known as the Donbass, identified with Russia culturally and linguistically.

2014 Coup: In 2014, the U.S. heavily armed and funded groups of ultranationalists, neo-Nazis and fascists to overthrow the government of Ukraine and help install one hostile to Russia and tied to U.S. and European Union interests.

The Donbass: Following the coup in 2014, the people of the provinces of Donetsk and Lugansk, in the Donbass region, in a struggle against fascism and privatization from the new coup regime, declared themselves as independent

republics separated from Ukraine.

Russia’s fear: Every time NATO absorbs a former Soviet ally or republic, it threatens Russia economically and militarily. The U.S. funneled \$5 billion over eight years to feed the attack of the Ukraine regime on the Donbass and destabilize Russian trade.

Sanctions: Sanctions are economic warfare, an act of war. They do the most harm to the civilian populations of the countries targeted, including starving them and depriving them of medical care.

U.S. military track record: The U.S. military has carried out scenarios for unpopular, prolonged wars that ruin the victim countries and their civilian populations and end in no resolution.

European competition: Russia supplies oil and natural gas to the European Union at low prices, along with many other resources. By using sanctions to corner the European market, Washington will force EU countries to import

resources like natural gas from the United States. Prices will be much higher.

Nord Stream 2 pipeline: U.S. pressure disrupted plans to certify the completed liquified natural gas pipeline from Russia’s northwestern border to Germany for distribution throughout Europe. U.S. corporations and strategists oppose a close economic relationship between Germany and Russia.

Material consequences for the working class: Ukraine’s workers and farmers will have their country torn apart further by imperialist penetration. Russian workers could face hunger, increased poverty rates and lose access to medicines because of economic sanctions. Workers in the EU will experience a rise in inflation and poverty. U.S. workers will face rising gas prices, potentially lower wages, higher inflation, and a cultural uptick in racism, xenophobia and irrational patriotism. The tensions have the potential to degenerate into a major war. □

Haiti: misery breeds resistance

By G. Dunkel

Thousands of Haitian garment workers, mainly women, have hit the streets in February demanding that the government raise their minimum wage to 1,500 gourdes (about \$14) for a 9-hour day. They currently make 500 gourdes (about \$4.80) a day.

These low wages, and a bourgeoisie more than willing to intensely exploit workers, are what has drawn big companies like Gap, Old Navy, H&M, JCPenney and Zara to hire Haitian companies in duty-free “assembly zones,” which let them produce clothes cheaply with high profits.

A minimum-wage worker in the United

States is guaranteed to make \$7.25 an hour, which means that they make 50% more in an hour than a Haitian worker makes in a day.

All the Haitian clothing subcontractors, whether they were in Caracol near Ouanaminthe in the northeast, or SONAPI on the airport road in Port-au-Prince, or at other factories scattered about most major Haitian cities, have encountered a series of one-day or three-day walkouts.

On Feb. 21, the interim Prime Minister Ariel Henry responded to this strike wave by announcing that the minimum wages in a number of economic sectors — Haiti has different minimum wages depending on what kind of company you work for — were going to be raised by less than 40%.

The wages for garment workers, the majority of the workers on the street, would still be less than \$7.50 a day.

The police, called in by the bosses, responded with clubs, tear gas and bullets. Ayibopost, an online news site, quotes Jephthé Bazil, a Haitian journalist, who witnessed a police attack on Feb. 23. According to Bazil, one of the police officers said it is “journalists who are responsible if the demonstrators are still in the streets, since they are handing them their microphone.”

Shots fired from a car carrying police

license plates killed one Haitian journalist Feb. 24, and at least two more were seriously wounded.

The workers indeed stayed in the streets. Walking out in a country where only 30% of the people have a steady job is risky. The fact that so many women, waving the green branches that indicate they want their current situation uprooted, points to the hungry anger they feel.

Interim Prime Minister Henry’s raise offer wasn’t enough to keep up with Haiti’s high inflation. The workers want and need more. The cost of living, including food, schooling and gasoline, is going up. And rising as well is the fear of what tomorrow will bring — more corruption, kidnappings and assassinations. The government lies. Public funds are wasted. There is institutionalized thievery — deductions for health care, for example, are not turned over to hospitals.

Everything is increasing except wages. Their low wages are behind the food insecurity that 40% of Haitians face. In 2021, Haiti ranked 104 out of the 107 countries on the Global Hunger Index.



PHOTO: AYIBOPOST

Poisonous gas and bullets did not stop protests demanding Haiti’s minimum wage increase from a measly \$5/day to \$14.

According to the World Food Program, 4.4 million Haitians regularly didn’t get enough to eat.

The union coalition 1er Mai-Batay Ouvriye (May 1-Workers Struggle) issued the first call for a workers’ walkout Feb. 9. It is currently suing the prime minister’s office, according to its spokesperson, Télémaque Pierre, to postpone the official establishment of the new minimum wages and to get a list of all the police assigned to control the street protests. They want the rights of those injured by the cops protected. (tinyurl.com/38h9xx8b)

The textile workers in Haiti, mainly women, are taking the first steps in improving their lives. They deserve solidarity. □



PHOTO: KONBIT JOURNALIS

The workers, mostly women who spend over half their salaries on transportation to and from the factories, are demanding a raise.

Reflections on the crisis in Ukraine

Continued from page 8

Germany into this system. If this were to happen, the entire hegemonic structure built after World War II, which has its political support in Western-style representative democracy, the United Nations as its instrument of global control, and its military support in NATO, would inevitably collapse.

Blackmail, threats and the Bretton Woods system, constituted from Western control of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, are the pillars used to sustain its global hegemony. The subordination and control of Europe has been essential to sustain this model ever since the Marshall Plan was put into practice after the end of World War II.

The fundamental objective of U.S.

policy has been to prevent the initiation of energy integration agreements between Russia and Europe that could offer a mutually beneficial strategic alliance for both parties and which would also link Europe with China, leaving the United States unable to maintain energy supremacy in Europe. According to U.S. journalist Mike Whitney, the objective of the United States in unleashing the Ukrainian conflict is to prevent the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from being put into operation, as explicitly stated by Victoria Nuland and Joe Biden himself.

The idea behind the actions of the United States is based on the [Hillary Rodham] Clinton doctrine of foreign policy applied in Libya, summed up in her phrase: “We went, we saw and he died,” which the former Secretary of State said

after the assassination of Muammar Gaddafi. It cannot be forgotten that Ms. Clinton was secretary of state when Biden was vice president.

The real outcome will be seen when European citizens wake up from their lethargy and demand to know why the peasants of Spain, Portugal and Italy lost the Russian market that had bought their production of citrus fruits, olive oil, vegetables and other products, plunging them into an even more severe crisis. Why do they have to pay three and four times more for fuel, just to satisfy America? And if war breaks out, why do they have to tend to the dead and the destruction of their cities to please their political leaders, who have decided to subordinate themselves to Washington?

We hope that this does not happen and

common sense prevails. It is not worth dying for some mega-billionaires who, foreseeing the disaster they are generating on Earth, are accelerating the space race, assuming they will be able to escape the disaster they themselves created in their quest for endless profit.

Sergio Rodríguez Gelfenstein is a Venezuelan international relations expert. He was previously Director of International Relations of the Presidency of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, his country’s ambassador to Nicaragua, and an advisor on international politics for TELESUR. You can follow him on Twitter: @sergioroo701. This article was translated by United World International and edited by Workers World.

Misogyny again exposed in U.S. sports

Misogyny rooted in patriarchy has permeated every aspect of U.S. society from the time the butcher Christopher Columbus and his ilk arrived in the Americas hundreds of years ago.

Women and gender-nonbinary people have been viewed as less than cisgender men, when it comes to economic and political equality. Sports on every spectrum, especially on the professional level, play a significant role in reinforcing this inequality. During March — Women’s History Month — it is important to bring some of these issues to light, in terms of both setbacks and victories, to help raise awareness and solidarity.

Two of these instances involve storied teams in the National Football League, the number one professional league in the U.S. The first team is the Dallas Cowboys, dubbed “America’s Team.” Its white owner, Jerry Jones, threatened to dismiss players who took a knee during the playing of the national anthem in solidarity with former NFL quarterback, Colin Kaepernick, who protested racist police brutality in 2016. Two years earlier in 2014, Jones was sued for sexual assault that had occurred in 2009. The lawsuit was eventually dropped due to a five-year limit technically.

In 2015, four members of the Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders sued the team for voyeurism, when Richard Dalrymple, a Cowboys’ senior vice president for public relations and communications, was caught spying on the women in their locker room as they were dressing for a luncheon. Dalrymple had a security pass key to the women’s locker room. He claimed he mistakenly entered the locker

room, even though a “men’s” bathroom was close by.

Dalrymple was also accused of taking “upskirt” photos of Charlotte Jones Anderson, the daughter of Jerry Jones. An out-of-court settlement of \$2.4 million was made this February to the four women who had requested the NFL hierarchy do an independent investigation. The NFL refused the request stating the matter had already been settled.

Dalrymple was never forced to take an administrative leave during the investigation. He kept his position until he retired Feb. 2, around the same time that the settlement was made public, seven years after the incidents. Each employee of the Cowboys is “asked” to sign a non-disclosure agreement when management strikes settlements with former and current workers who allege workplace misconduct or wrongdoing. These agreements, which can amount to huge payments (really hush money) to aggrieved parties, are meant to cover up the despicable behavior of sports bosses like Jones and their minions like Dalrymple.

And there is the case of Daniel Snyder, owner of the newly renamed Washington Commanders. This boss has been accused of creating a culture of rampant misogyny in this multibillion organization. Tiffani Johnston, a former marketing and events coordinator for the team, along with four other female former workers with the team, presented testimony before the House Committee on Oversight and Reform on Capitol Hill in early February on the toxic culture toward women, based on their personal experiences. These witnesses put a lot of blame on the entire

NFL for allowing this sexist behavior to be tolerated.

Melanie Coburn, a former director of marketing for the team, told the House Committee, “The NFL is now complicit in this scandal. Ten months, more than 120 witnesses and nothing. [NFL commissioner] Roger Goodell’s claim that he was trying to protect us is outrageous and cowardly. The public optics of him caring is appalling. Goodell betrayed every woman who suffered harassment and abuse at the Washington football team.” (ESPN, Feb. 3)

Victory for women’s soccer team

On a brighter note, the U.S. Women’s National Soccer Team won a historic ruling Feb. 22 that guarantees equal pay with male soccer team counterparts, a major blow against gender discrimination. The U.S. Soccer Federation is legally bound to provide \$22 million in back pay to the USWNT over the past six years since the lawsuit was introduced. Despite the fact that these women have won multiple world titles, when the U.S. men’s team has won none, has not prevented this huge pay gap and deplorable treatment on the part of the USSF.

The lawsuit helped bring to light a number of sexual misconduct accusations within the USWNT in 2021, when five male coaches were forced to resign. Megan Rapinoe, a legendary soccer player, stated: “There is no justice unless



Megan Rapinoe takes a knee in solidarity with Black quarterback Colin Kaepernick against police brutality.

this never happens again. It’s all part of the same system. It’s part of a system of disrespect and of misogyny and sexism and inequality and discrimination. This is the first step, not the last step.” (Washington Post, Feb. 22)

A next step that Rapinoe is referring to, is to guarantee the same bonus checks for women soccer players who participate in the prestigious World Cup soccer games sponsored by FIFA (International Federation of Association Football).

Last year, women college basketball players exposed on social media the deplorable equipment in a weight room for them, compared to the state-of-the-art equipment for men during the March Madness tournament.

The fight against misogyny is not isolated within football, basketball or soccer but throughout all sports under class society, not just in March but 365 days a year. □

U.S.-instigated conflict threatens humanity

Continued from page 1

have created a situation where the people of Ukraine are put in harm’s way to serve the interests of Pentagon-armed corporate warmongers.

Contrary to media claims, Ukraine’s sovereignty is not the main issue. These forces were not placed there over the last quarter century to protect Ukraine. The U.S. and European imperialists have a larger goal in mind.

Powerful interests in the corporate world — the ones who U.S. presidents bow down to — have spent decades maneuvering NATO troops into strategic positions, where they now pose an immediate threat to Russia, a nation of vast natural resources.

Corporate leaders have been frustrated since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 because the dissolution of the world’s first workers’ state did not open up the world’s largest country, Russia, to their

exploitation. Wall Street CEOs are salivating at the thought of acquiring the profits possible from exploiting Russia’s large quantities of oil, natural gas, cobalt, chrome, copper, gold, lead, manganese, nickel, platinum, tungsten, vanadium and zinc, as well as profits from crop and livestock production and timber from the world’s largest forest reserves.

At a time of dire capitalist economic crisis, Russia’s resources beckon to the imperialists as the solution to their problems.

They’ve created a massive propaganda campaign preparing the U.S. and indeed much of the world’s working class to back up their goal of replacing President Putin’s government with a puppet government, subservient to global imperialist interests.

The risks extend far beyond Ukraine’s borders. Both Russia and the U.S. have nuclear weapons that can destroy the

Contrary to media claims, Ukraine’s sovereignty is not the main issue. These forces were not placed there over the last quarter century to protect Ukraine. The U.S. and European imperialists have a larger goal in mind. Powerful interests in the corporate world — the ones who U.S. presidents bow down to — have spent decades maneuvering NATO troops into strategic positions, where they now pose an immediate threat to Russia, a nation of vast natural resources. Corporate leaders have been frustrated since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 because the dissolution of the world’s first workers’ state did not open up the world’s largest country, Russia, to their exploitation.

world. It must be noted that the U.S. is the only country in history that has dropped nuclear bombs on another country, on

Japan in 1945. They’ve threatened to use nuclear weapons against Vietnam, North Korea and other nations since then.

The possibility of the current U.S.-instigated conflict with Russia in Ukraine escalating into a nuclear war is a fearful scenario.

It puts all the world’s people in harm’s way.

Capitalist leaders think Russia’s vast wealth makes it worth the risk.

Those of us on the other side of humanity — workers, environmentalists, youth, oppressed nations, all gender identities, the vast majority of the world’s population — have an urgent responsibility to put an immediate halt to their mad profit-driven war that can destroy the world.

Joe Piette is a Vietnam War veteran and was a member of the American Servicemen’s Union.

On Ukraine

Attack on the right to tell the truth

Dear Editors,

Facebook banned me for a month. Why? Cause I posted two pictures of Ukraine Nazis, armed by the U.S. and NATO. (tinyurl.com/2p8uc3ee) They are part of the Ukraine army that has bombed and attacked the people of Donetsk and Donbass and Lugansk, just like we have fascists in the U.S. military, police and national guard.

We know that Ukraine has lithium and titanium used to build batteries for electric cars and metal for jets. The U.S. and NATO

want those resources, including Russian oil. This is what this war is about. If you try to post opposition to the big lies in the media you get blocked. So much for freedom of speech or thought.

Build workers’ solidarity all over the world. We need a war against poverty and racism not World WAR III! Only the world working class of all races can end this violence with mass protests in the streets in the U.S. and Europe! Socialist solidarity! Build a workers’ world!

Signed Luis Lopez □

Camilo Cienfuegos: Celebrating the young revolutionary

By Devin Cole

Feb. 6, 2022, marked the 90th birthday of Cuban revolutionary Camilo Cienfuegos. One of the youngest of the leaders of the Revolution, Cienfuegos was first known to the people of Cuba through his fierce guerilla warfare, becoming a leading commander in Fidel Castro's forces. Following the Revolution Cienfuegos became a driving force behind agrarian reform in Cuba.

And then less than a year after victory, Cienfuegos, hero of the Battle of Yaguajay, quite literally vanished into thin air. It was the night of Oct. 28, 1959; and Cienfuegos, who was also a pilot, was flying from Camagüey back to Havana. While flying over the Straits of Florida, between the Florida Keys and Cuba, his plane disappeared.

An immediate search was launched, lasting for several weeks, but there was no sign of either Cienfuegos or the plane. It is generally accepted that he experienced some sort of emergency and crashed into the Straits, plunging his body and plane deep into the water. He was only 27 years old when he disappeared.

It is critical to study revolutionaries like Camilo Cienfuegos, who, dying at a young age, may not receive as much attention as longer-lived comrades. But they too are veterans — and sometimes martyrs — of the monumental revolutions that bring about a better world. As Fidel Castro influenced Cienfuegos; Cienfuegos influenced Castro. This brief look at Camilo Cienfuegos seeks to further reveal his significance.

'Cuba had to be free'

Camilo Cienfuegos Gorriarán was born in Havana in 1932; and from a young age, he was influenced by the personal as well as the political. His father, a working-class tailor, held left-wing political views, which he taught to Cienfuegos. As he got older, Cienfuegos harnessed an artistic ability that gained him entrance into a fine arts school in Cuba, but he was forced to leave due to the financial pressures facing him and his family. Shortly after he followed his father's path and became a tailor.

All the while Cienfuegos was slowly immersing himself in different struggles in Havana. His earliest political work was taking part in mass protests in the city against the rise of bus fares. This was in 1948; Cienfuegos was only 16 years old.

Early political action and education

Five years later he and a friend, Rafael Sierra, traveled to the U.S. on a 29-day visa in search of work. When the visa expired, Cienfuegos remained in the U.S., underground, living in Chicago, San Francisco and New York City, over a span of several months. While in New York, he joined a group of left-wing Cuban political exiles, Cuban Civic Action, who published a newspaper, "La Voz de Cuba" ("The Voice of Cuba"). Cienfuegos participated



in anti-imperialist study groups that discussed political theorists such as Cuban José Martí.

Cuban Civic Action was in solidarity with the early actions of Fidel Castro and the Cuban guerillas, including their 1953 attack on the Moncada Barracks, which is generally accepted as the beginning of the Cuban Revolution. The group regularly participated in demonstrations against Fulgencio Batista, Anastasio Somoza, Rafael Trujillo and other U.S.-backed, right-wing dictators in Spanish-speaking Caribbean and Central American countries.

While in New York Cienfuegos participated in a picket against Dominican dictator Trujillo, who was then staying in a hotel in the city. Violence erupted at the demonstration, and a crackdown on Latinx immigrants followed. Cienfuegos and Sierra fled briefly to Chicago and then moved on to San Francisco to find work. There Cienfuegos was arrested by immigration officials, after risking his safety to help another undocumented friend being detained. He and Sierra were both deported to Mexico and then returned to Cuba.

There Cienfuegos became active in the uprisings and protests against Cuban dictator Batista, including a demonstration in memory of Antonio Maceo, General of the Cuban Army of Independence of 1898. Cienfuegos was shot by soldiers of Batista at the protest and taken to a student hospital sympathetic to the Revolution.

Cienfuegos later recounted: "There I experienced one of the greatest emotions of my life, when more than a hundred people gathered in the entrance broke into cheers and applause when they carried me up. I felt such an emotion; I felt about to cry, and I yelled out, 'Viva Cuba!' I was most sure then that, whatever the cost, Cuba had to be free." (todayinlatinamerica.com)

Cienfuegos joins the Revolution

After recovering from his wound, Cienfuegos resolved to join the July 26th Movement. Named after the date of the Moncada Barracks attack, the Movimiento 26 de Julio was the Cuban vanguard revolutionary organization (and later political party) led by Fidel Castro.

At that time the Movement was exiled to Mexico. Cienfuegos had to travel there through the U.S., going from Miami to San Francisco undetected. He remained in San Francisco for three months, working and collecting money; and then in May 1956, he traveled to Mexico to officially join Fidel Castro and the revolutionary struggle.

Cienfuegos was one of the 82 guerilla fighters who traveled aboard the ship, the Granma, to return to Cuba in November 1956, when the battle for the Revolution reignited. He was one of 12 survivors of attacks on the July 26th Movement at Alegría de Pío by Batista forces in 1957. He and other surviving guerilla fighters wandered in the Sierra Maestra Mountains for 30 days, before finding

Castro and rejoining the revolutionary forces.

In December 1958 Cienfuegos, now a comandante, led a combined force of fighters alongside Che Guevara in the Battle of Yaguajay. In a decisive victory for Cuban revolutionaries over the soldiers of the Batista government, they forced that garrison to surrender on Dec. 30, 1958. A day later, Cienfuegos and Guevara, along with allied non-Castro forces, captured nearby Santa Clara. These actions were significant in causing Batista to flee Cuba on Dec. 31, leaving the communists and the Revolution victorious.

Remembering Camilo Cienfuegos

Cienfuegos became Chief of Staff of the Cuban Army, a close advisor to Fidel Castro and a close friend as well. Even after the Revolution, in the brief months leading up to Cienfuegos' disappearance, Castro sought advice and criticism from him.

One of the earliest slogans of the Cuban Revolution was "Vas Bien, Fidel!" or "You're doing fine, Fidel!" This saying began with Cienfuegos. At a rally a week after victory, on Jan. 8, 1959, Castro interrupted his own speech, turned to Cienfuegos and said "Voy bien, Camilo?" or "Am I doing all right, Camilo?" To which Cienfuegos replied, "Vas bien, Fidel!" (Georgie Anne Geyer, "The Untold Story of Fidel Castro," p. 201)

Cienfuegos took up the struggle of agrarian reform in Cuba, which was a massive undertaking, as it involved completely restructuring productive forces in Cuba, previously colonized by capitalism, into a nationalized system that could meet the needs of the people. In his last public speech before his disappearance, Camilo declared, "Even if it brings the sky down on our heads, agrarian reform is on!" showing his full agreement with the Revolution. (historyofcuba.com)

Every year since Cienfuegos' disappearance, a celebration is held Oct. 28 in his memory. On that day the children of Cuba toss flowers into the sea as they say: "A flower for Camilo." On the island, Cienfuegos is honored with many murals, art installations and schools named for him. He is not forgotten in Cuba.

When revolutionaries like Lenin and Mao are discussed, it is often stressed (as it should be) that they fought for decades for their respective revolutions, and that is true. Lenin was 47 years old when the Bolshevik Revolution took place, and Mao was 56 years old at the time of the Chinese Revolution.

Other revolutionaries lived long lives of righteous struggle but died before their nations smashed the imperialist chains of oppression. Such was Ho Chi Minh, who lived to be 79 but died six years before the defeat of the U.S. by the People's Army of Vietnam at the decisive Liberation of Saigon in 1975.

Camilo Cienfuegos was only 26 years old when he helped lead a triumphant socialist revolution just 90 miles off the coast of the U.S., center of imperialism.

To say that is an incredible feat is an understatement. Yet Camilo Cienfuegos accomplished that; and despite being lost physically, his actions, words and legacy still live on in the Cuban masses. □

Disband NATO!

Stop U.S./NATO war provocateur in Ukraine!

Workers World Party joins with the many antiwar and anti-imperialist organizations, here and around the world, urging an expose of U.S./NATO war provocations. We call for international emergency mobilizations for actions March 1-7 around this program to DISBAND NATO.

The corporate media have spoken with one voice in the period leading up to today's blaring headlines accusing Russia of "invading" Ukraine. For months, the bipartisan message from Capitol Hill and the White House has been to demonize Russian President Vladimir Putin as the aggressor for mobilizing troops within Russia near the border with Ukraine.

For eight years, since the U.S.-backed coup in Kiev, Washington has supported the neofascist-backed regime in Ukraine with dollars and weapons, as the Ukrainian regime's army relentlessly shelled the Peoples' Republics of Lugansk and Donetsk, killing thousands of people in the Russian-speaking Donbass region.

Since 1991 the U.S. has aggressively expanded

NATO membership from 16 to 30, creeping toward Russia's borders and arming NATO air bases with supersonic bombers and rockets that can strike Russian cities with nuclear weapons within 30 minutes. NATO has held war maneuvers near Russia's borders and coastlines.

The U.S. has imposed multiple sanctions on Russia before this month and has just imposed new sanctions choking Russia's vital natural gas exports. Sanctions are an act of war.

A destructive war in Ukraine and Russia could be the beginning of a wider world war to assert total U.S. hegemony over the rest of the world — Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa, most particularly China.

Polls show that a majority of working-class and oppressed people here do not want a new U.S. war. They have nothing to gain. Only the corporations and their politician friends stand to benefit.

We say NO! Money for jobs, education, health care and human needs, not war! □



WW PHOTO: LYN NEELEY

Disband NATO demonstration, Portland, Oregon, Feb. 5.



Nueva York, 5 de febrero

MO/WW FOTO: BRENDA RYAN

¡Disuelve la OTAN! Paren a los EE.UU./OTAN: ¡Provocador de la guerra en Ucrania!

28 de febrero de 2022—El Partido del Mundo Obrero se une a las muchas organizaciones anti-guerra y anti-imperialistas, aquí y en todo el mundo, urgiendo a exponer las provocaciones de guerra de la OTAN y de los Estados Unidos. Llamamos a movilizaciones internacionales de emergencia para acciones del 1 al 7 de marzo en torno a este programa para DISOLVER LA OTAN.

La prensa corporativa ha hablado con una sola voz en el periodo previo a los llamativos titulares de hoy que acusan a Rusia de “invadir” a Ucrania. Durante meses, el mensaje bipartidista del Capitolio y la Casa Blanca ha sido demonizar al presidente ruso Vladimir Putin como el agresor por movilizar tropas dentro de Rusia cerca de la frontera con Ucrania.

Durante ocho años, desde el golpe de estado respaldado por Estados Unidos en Kiev, Washington ha apoyado al régimen neofascista en Ucrania con dólares y armas, mientras el ejército del régimen ucraniano bombardeaba implacablemente las Repúblicas Populares de Lugansk y Donetsk, matando a miles de personas en Donbass una región de habla rusa.

Desde 1991, EE. UU. ha ampliado agresivamente la membresía de la OTAN de 16 a 30, acercándose sigilosamente a las fronteras de Rusia y armando las bases aéreas de la OTAN con bombarderos supersónicos y cohetes que pueden atacar ciudades rusas con armas nucleares en 30 minutos. La OTAN ha realizado maniobras de guerra cerca de las fronteras y costas de Rusia. Estados Unidos impuso múltiples sanciones a Rusia

antes de este mes y acaba de imponer nuevas sanciones que ahogan las exportaciones vitales de gas natural de Rusia. Las sanciones son un acto de guerra.

Una guerra destructiva en Ucrania y Rusia podría ser el comienzo de una guerra mundial más amplia para afirmar la hegemonía total de Estados Unidos sobre el resto del mundo: Europa, Asia, América Latina y África, en particular China.

Las encuestas muestran que la mayoría de la clase trabajadora y la gente oprimida aquí en Estados Unidos no quiere una nueva guerra. No tienen nada que ganar. Solo las corporaciones y sus amigos políticos se beneficiarán.

Decimos ¡NO! ¡Dinero para trabajos, educación, salud y necesidades humanas, no para la guerra! □

Trabajadores haitianos exigen: ‘¡Triplicar el salario mínimo!’

Por G. Dunkel

Haití se enfrenta a una crisis de legitimidad gubernamental. Los únicos cargos electos del país a cualquier nivel cuyos mandatos no han expirado son 10 senadores. La fecha de expiración del mandato del presidente de Haití, Jovenel Moïse, habría sido el 7 de febrero de 2022, antes de que muriera asesinado el 7 de julio de 2021.

La importancia de esa fecha fue enfatizada por reportes sobre Haití publicados el 7 de febrero por el Washington Post, el New York Times, la BBC, así como el Miami Herald — el periódico burgués estadounidense con la más amplia cobertura de Haití.

Pero los trabajadores haitianos tienen otro problema que quieren abordar. El salario mínimo de los trabajadores del sector de la exportación de la economía del país no se ha aumentado desde hace tres años. La comisión que fija el aumento, que se basa en diversos factores, debe reunirse tres meses antes de que comience cada año fiscal, pero no se ha reunido desde hace más de tres años.

El salario mínimo actual en Haití es de 500 gourdes por una jornada de 8 horas, lo que se convierte en 4,83 dólares al día, o 60 centavos de dólar por hora en moneda estadounidense.

Los trabajadores entran en acción

Miles de trabajadores se manifestaron el 9 y 10 de febrero para exigir 1.500 gourdes por una jornada de ocho horas, 14,49 dólares estadounidenses. La acción laboral de

dos días cerró el principal parque de fabricación del sector exportador, Sanopi, en la capital, Puerto Príncipe.

Un responsable sindical, Pierre Télémaque, declaró a Haití-Liberté que la inflación había alcanzado el 26%. La alta inflación y el bajo salario mínimo explican bien por qué el 40% de los haitianos no tienen suficiente para comer y sufren inseguridad alimentaria. (tinyurl.com/bdht7zrh)

El jefe de la comisión que fija el salario mínimo emitió un comunicado el 8 de febrero en el que decía que la comisión enviaría una solicitud al Primer Ministro de facto Ariel Henry para que aprobara un nuevo salario mínimo. Los trabajadores han advertido que si el aumento no es suficiente, continuarán con sus paros.

Maniobras políticas

El 7 de febrero no sólo fue el aniversario del asesinato de Jovenel Moïse. En la misma fecha de 1986, el dictador Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier huyó del país en un avión suministrado por Estados Unidos. Muchas escuelas, bancos y negocios cerraron este 7 de febrero por temor a un estallido social.

Según la CNN, el juez de instrucción del asesinato, Garry Orélien, que ya ha dimitido, dijo que cree que el primer ministro de facto Henry es cómplice del asesinato del presidente Moïse, que le nombró primer ministro sólo dos días antes de que éste fuera asesinado.

“¿Crees que puedo tocar a Ariel (Henry) ahora?” dijo Orélien en una grabación que obtuvo la CNN. “¿Cómo voy a hacerlo? No podré dar (ninguna orden para acusarlo);



Trabajadores textiles haitianos protestan el 9 de febrero.

no verá la luz del día”. (edition.cnn.com, 12 de febrero)

Desenredar el papel que ha jugado Estados Unidos en la crisis gubernamental de Haití, en medio de los terremotos y huracanes que han azotado el país, es difícil de hacer. Pero los activistas haitianos consideran que Estados Unidos ha tenido un papel decisivo.

“Lo que está ocurriendo en Haití es en parte el resultado de las malas políticas exteriores de Estados Unidos, de décadas de apoyo a líderes incompetentes y corruptos. Estados Unidos sigue contribuyendo a crear peores condiciones en este momento”, dijo Marleine Bastien, líder y fundadora del Movimiento de la Red de Acción Familiar (FANM) de Miami, a la revista Time. (1 de febrero)

El primer ministro de facto y sus opositores, bajo una tremenda presión de Estados Unidos y de socios imperialistas como Francia, están maniobrando para llegar a un acuerdo para gobernar el país hasta que se puedan celebrar elecciones.

Es inconcebible que cualquier acuerdo de este tipo haga algo para reducir el sufrimiento y las dificultades de los trabajadores y campesinos haitianos. □

El ‘Día sin Inmigrantes’ exige ‘ciudadanía ya’

Workers World — Philadelphia

Inmigrantes, refugiados y simpatizantes participaron en una marcha y concentración en Filadelfia en el “Día sin Inmigrantes” nacional el 14 de febrero, para exigir que el presidente Joe Biden cumpla sus promesas de campaña y les conceda la ciudadanía ya. A pesar de las gélidas temperaturas, la protesta, que comenzó con unas 30 personas, superó el centenar.

Algunos participantes hablaron de haber asistido de niños al primer Día sin Inmigrantes en 2006, cuando millones de trabajadores inmigrantes cerraron negocios para mostrar su importancia en la economía estadounidense y exigir un estatus legal. Dieciséis años después, son un recuerdo vivo de los años que han pasado sin ningún avance legislativo en el Congreso.

Marchas similares tuvieron lugar en Boston; Houston; Nueva York; Washington, D.C.; Columbus, Ohio; y ciudades de Nueva Jersey, California, Arizona, Indiana y otros estados. El movimiento

fue iniciado por la personalidad de TikTok Carlos Eduardo Espina, que había participado en un Día sin Inmigrantes de 2017 como estudiante de secundaria.

En Filadelfia, donde viven 50.000 indocumentados, la marcha comenzó en Love Park, un lugar apropiado para el día de San Valentín, donde la organizadora principal, María Serna, dio la bienvenida a todos y explicó a la prensa por qué muchas personas se negaban a trabajar, ir a la escuela o comprar: para exigir a la Administración Biden que apruebe una legislación que lleve a la ciudadanía a los 11 millones de indocumentados que viven en Estados Unidos.

La mayoría de los oradores pronunciaron sus discursos en español, por lo que fue significativo que la marcha se detuviera ante dos estatuas en torno al Ayuntamiento que honraban a históricos líderes negros. En el monumento a Octavius V. Catto, Joe Piette, miembro del partido Workers World/Mundo Obrero, describió los esfuerzos de Catto por dar derechos a los

hombres negros en la década de 1870, antes de ser asesinado por su activismo el 10 de octubre de 1881. Piette señaló que, 150 años después, seguimos luchando contra las fuerzas racistas que no quieren que los votantes negros y morenos elijan a personas que puedan aprobar las leyes que sus comunidades necesitan.

En el lado opuesto del Ayuntamiento, los participantes se detuvieron en la estatua de Harriet Tubman, donde Melissa Robbins, de North East Against Racism, dijo: “La liberación, la libertad, la voluntad de sobrevivir, eso es por lo que luchamos cada día los negros y los morenos. Nuestra lucha es contra la supremacía blanca. Esa es nuestra lucha”.

Una docena de personas tomaron la palabra en la concentración final frente al Edificio de Servicios Municipales. Annaline Ceron Hernández, una de las organizadoras de la concentración, dijo: “Desde la pandemia, millones de inmigrantes indocumentados han estado en primera línea, trabajando para mantener a



MO/WW FOTO: JOE PIETTE

Ana Line Ceron Hernandez (izquierda) y María Serna (con pancartas) liderando la marcha por "Ciudadanía Ahora" alrededor del Ayuntamiento, Filadelfia, 14 de febrero.

la gente segura y sana. Ahora estamos aquí para pedir la reforma migratoria que Biden prometió realizar en los primeros 100 días de su mandato. Exigimos que cumpla su promesa”.

Varios oradores anunciaron su intención de organizarse para una marcha masiva el 1 de mayo. Ese día los participantes esperan estar en las calles en mayor número, llevando las mismas pancartas que dicen “Biden — ¡No más promesas vacías!

“¡No más promesas vacías! ¡Ciudadanía YA!” □