

Starbucks Workers United scores major victory

By Arjae Red

Starbucks workers across the country celebrated a major victory with three new stores voting in favor of unionization. The NLRB counted ballots March 9 for three stores in the Buffalo, New York, area, with a close but decisive vote in each case. This brings the total number of union stores from three to six, effectively doubling the size of the union in one day, with five in Buffalo and one in Mesa, Arizona.

A victory by any margin is an impressive testament to the determination and resilience of the workers, especially considering that in many stores around Buffalo the workforce has increased by more than 100% since the union drive began. The workers who were employed when the stores filed for NLRB elections made up less than half of those participating in the vote. This is especially glaring in the Walden-Andersen store, which was completely closed for more than two months after Starbucks became aware of pro-union sentiment.

The fact that, with most of the workforce replaced, Walden-Andersen still won indicates that even many new hires are well aware of the need for a union. This underhanded company strategy of



The Memphis 7, fired by Starbucks, in front of mural inspired by the city's 1968 sanitation workers strike.

PHOTO: STARBUCKS WORKERS UNITED

flooding stores with new employees to dilute the vote seems to have backfired, revealing to many workers who were formerly on the fence or even against the union what lengths Starbucks will go to in order to keep its workers from advocating for themselves. Rather than pacify or intimidate the workers, it has only fueled

the impassioned organizing drive.

Starbucks workers in Denver, Colorado, walked out on strike Friday, March 11, due to retaliation and intimidation from the company in response to union organizing. Workers plan to strike as long as possible until the company ceases its union-busting activities. This comes just a few days

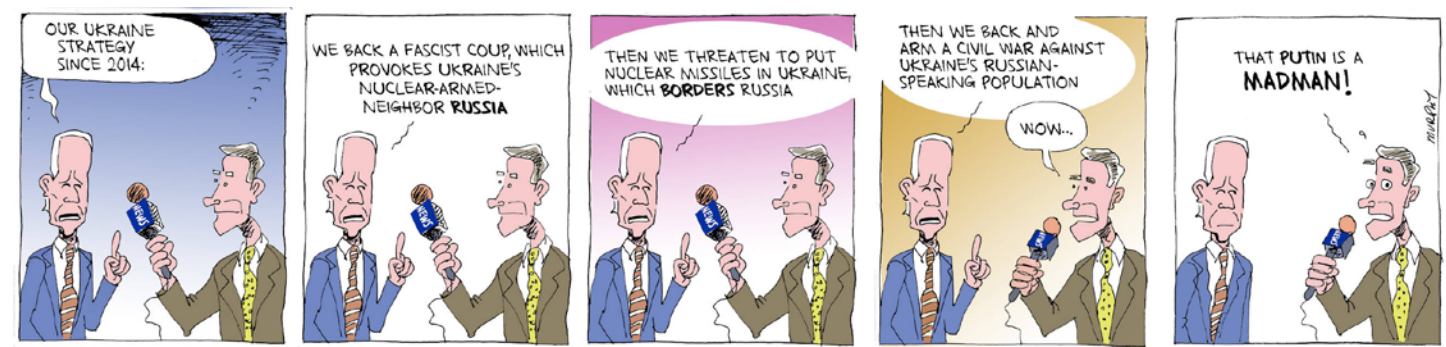
after Starbucks workers in Buffalo filed a new round of Unfair Labor Practice charges against the company, more than 20 in addition to the earlier ULPs alleging illegal anti-union conduct.

Reverend William Barber marched alongside Starbucks workers in Memphis, Tennessee, March 9, to demand the rehire of the Memphis 7 — the entire organizing committee that was fired by the company a few weeks ago. Buffalo workers have shown solidarity with the Memphis 7 by inviting members onto their bargaining committee. The first contracts are now being negotiated between the workers and the company, represented by professional union-busting law firm Littler Mendelson.

Starbucks workers will keep up the fight against the vicious union busting and for the rehire of the Memphis 7, as well as fired Buffalo workers Cassie Fleischer and Danny Rojas.

Workers World Newspaper will continue to cover the developing story and extends solidarity to Starbucks Workers United!

The author is a contributing writer for Workers World newspaper and a union committee organizer with Starbucks Workers United in Buffalo.



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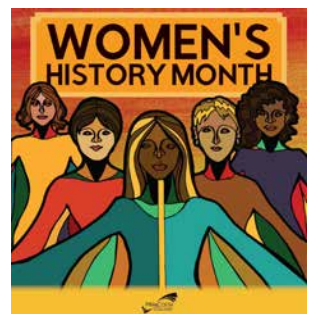
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Mark International Working Women’s Day! Support Workers World!

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.

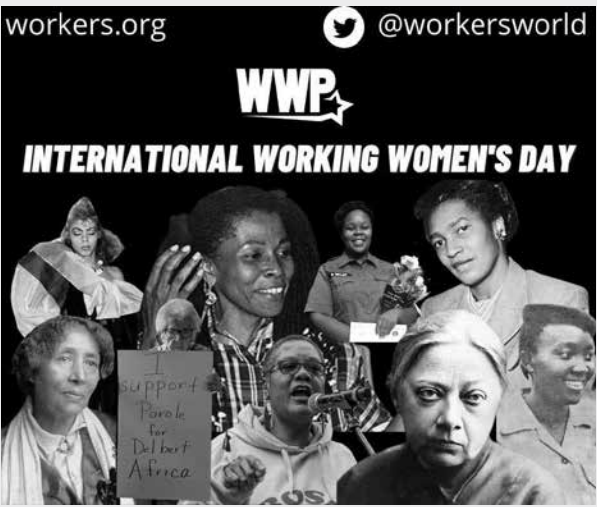
We embrace the mothers whose children have been killed by racist police and vigilantes, from Sybrina Fulton, Trayvon Martin’s mother, to Wanda Cooper-Jones, Ahmaud Arbery’s mother.

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! □

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Letters from our incarcerated family

Dear Workers World,
I'm writing to you in hopes to start to receive this paper. I would like to understand more of what's happening in other parts of the world, with protests, struggle, hopes — and good news in general would be great. I would like to thank you for your concern and kindness to a prisoner like me.
**Kenneth L.
Tennessee Colony, Texas**

What's with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections f*****g with our mail again? What's up with that? Me and my nephew did not get papers — none! — between August and October! (Grievances attached.)
Get us outta here!
**Mr. Yul B.H.
SCI Dallas, Pennsylvania**

Dear Mr. Yul and all our comrades at SCI Dallas:
Thank you for alerting us to the repeated censorship of Workers World by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. We understand the limitations of the grievance system but greatly appreciate and respect you using it to protest this censorship. We are fighting this censorship on the outside and will be following up directly with the DOC. We'll send copies of our back issues in the meantime.
Solidarity,
TK

Peace, comrades.
I'm a prisoner in Forest State concentration camp. I'm housed in the Restricted Housing Unit (RHU). Staff in this administration are all corrupt. And it's evident.
I was transferred to Forest in October 2021. I'm unvaccinated. Medical is supposed to issue a quarantine protocol and nurses are to do temperature checks and wellness checks. Strangely, I wasn't quarantined upon my reception. I wasn't screened by medical staff. I was given a vaccinated cellie, Tariq. He wasn't quarantined or COVID-tested upon his reception in the RHU.
The RHU is J-Block. It has four pods with 24 cells on each pod. Personal laundry is never collected. Cell cleaning is said to be offered twice a week, but it's only allowed once. Strangely only 47% of staff are vaccinated, with 53% of unvaccinated staff working unrestricted throughout the prison. The variant is contaminating the fully vaccinated. And the



officials who run the RHU allow guards to house the COVID-infected prisoners amongst the unvaccinated and vaccinated alike. It's a serious health risk yet, strangely, the central office approves this due to the RHU being deemed a special unit.
The pandemic is still in effect and the prison is still locked down. The prisoners in the hole are abused. Guards use pepper spray to intentionally harm a prisoner and all prisoners are affected due to the poor ventilation.
Racism is evidence. Ninety-eight percent of the prisoners in the RHU are African or Latino. The administration associates both these races as gang members to warrant the abuse. Suicide attempts are alarming. These men are tortured until they are broken. And the grievance system is a joke — all grievances are denied.
I'm a victim of guard brutality. I was physically assaulted while at Frackville, by two guards while handcuffed. I'm still spitting up blood. I've lost over 30 pounds.



Guards stole \$285 of my commissary, my wedding band, and my legal work.
I'm strong due to situational circumstances. I came from the struggle. Hopefully you all will do what you can. I cannot combat injustice alone from behind enemy lines.
I learned while existing in this capitalist country that pain isn't an enemy. Just mere proof that one exists.
Peace,
**Comrade Nasir Ali
SCI Forest, Pennsylvania**

Greetings,
I'm writing to my Workers World family because I'm confined to a cold cell of mental torment. My soul cries for help. As guilt flooded my heart, knowing that if I don't bend, these four walls of cement will destroy my beautiful spirit. Because all forms of incarceration are inhumane.
I would like to receive the Workers World newspaper, please.
This criminal justice system is against any and all African Americans.
**Mr. Jeffrey T.
Fort Worth, Texas** □

‘What is it that needs to be done?’ A conversation with anti-apartheid freedom fighter Lassy Chiwayo

This excerpted interview was conducted by Workers World correspondent Ted Kelly at Robben Island, off the western coast of South Africa. Lassy Chiwayo is an African National Congress member, former political prisoner, uMkhonto weSizwe freedom fighter and former mayor of Mbombela, capital of the Mpumalanga province. He served as the consul-general of South Africa to the People's Republic of China until 2014. Read the entire interview at workers.org.

Workers World: How many times have you come back to visit Robben Island since your release in 1990?
Lassy Chiwayo: You wouldn't believe it. This is the very first time that I'm coming back.
WW: You're kidding. What does it feel like to be back?
LC: I'm completely overwhelmed with mixed emotions. It takes us back to the reasons we were here in the first place, something about which I have no regrets. We fought. We played our part. And I regard myself as one of those who are blessed to have been a former Robben Island prisoner. I think my own kids and many others to follow would honor and respect that we raised our hands to fight, that we were part of that march to freedom.
That's one part. But the other part that obviously comes to mind is a question: Was it worth it? And I would say, yes, it was. Insofar as we were part of that revolutionary chain of generations of prisoners that came here since the 1960s. We were the very last of that batch.

We came here in 1986 and 1987. We came from another generation completely, very different in that we were inspired by the elders of the 1950s and 1960s and of the 1976 uprisings. We are the ones who occupied streets in the mid-1980s, the

most militant of all these sections of our people who fought against apartheid. We are the ones who are remembered for using stones, self-made weapons, petrol bombs, anything we could lay our hands on, to fight for the freedom of our people.
We knew all the risks involved, including the fact that we might not live. Of course, a lot were killed. Some died in our hands. Others were driven to exile. We were arrested, and some of us spent time at Robben Island. We were not deterred. It was worth it.
It is out of the sacrifice of a lot of those who we spent time with, and others who didn't live to see it, that we enjoy the fruits of this hard-earned freedom. And I ask that question: whether or not it was worth it. Yes, it was worth it.
Regrettably, beyond Nelson Mandela's generation, I don't think there's an appreciation by most people of just what it took for us to be where we are. Those who were exposed to opportunities we thought were important to change the country for the better thought the change was their inheritance.
Unfortunately, a human factor of greed came to the scene. I don't think we can look back and be proud of where we are. We have not taken our people to the land of milk and honey, which is what inspired many of us to get involved in the struggle.
But it is not something we should moan about. It is rather an opportunity for other generations to look at how best to take

the struggle forward. Because we played our role; Mandela's generation played their role. Those who came after them played their role. We can't end now by complaining.

Take the struggle forward!

We must acknowledge that the struggle must continue, and the next generation has to take it forward to what our forefathers and foremothers envisaged. They estab-



Lassy Chiwayo in Nelson Mandela's prison cell.

WW PHOTO: TED KELLY

lished very important instruments for us that our people have used to fight, such as the African National Congress.
Whether or not it is relevant for us to continue under the umbrella of these organizations is immaterial. What matters is taking forward the dream of our people to become fully emancipated. It can come in different ways, in different forms. It can arrive in different vehicles.
We always associate liberation with an

organization. But what we need to bear in mind is that it's not necessarily linked to institutions. It is linked to a cause. The cause can continue beyond inclinations and sentimental attachments to an organization.
All that nature has taught us is that, in any instance, out of the old, anything that is born goes through a process of evolution that grows, that is nurtured, that reaches a point of maturity. It gets to a point where the old decays and dies, and something new must come out of that.
But what becomes important, as nature teaches us, is that the seed that is born out of the old should continue to germinate new life that blossoms into something new. Perhaps that is where the challenge of South Africa is.
Moments such as this, visiting Robben Island together, impose a need for us to look back and ask ourselves, "What is it that needs to be done?"
The narrative of liberation is a very important one. But I don't think it has really come to a point where we can say all that which inspired our people to sacrifice their lives has been realized. So there has to be a way where we look at the past way of taking the struggle forward.
I for one came here as a member of the ANC. I've known nothing else from age 13. I've known no other life outside of being a member of the ANC. But any other intervention that can really ensure what Mandela, what Walter Sisulu, what Ahmad Kathrada, what Joe Slovo and many others, fought and died for is not in vain, would still be a very important effort.

Read the Harare Declaration at tinyurl.com/34kv2ryc.

Boston community-labor rally for striking Machinists

March 7 — Leaders of the Greater Boston Labor Council and the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, along with powerhouse rank-and-file unionists like UNITE HERE Local 26 members, today joined 30 striking International

Association of Machinists Local 447 technicians in Dedham, Massachusetts.

The strikers have said “Hell No!” to the \$30 billion transnational Cummins corporation’s concessionary demands, which would turn hourly wages into 19th century piecework rates.

The lunch-break crowd of nearly 300 was outraged to hear IAM Chief Steward Rick Lipinsky tell how Cummins — a world giant of the military and industrial supply chain with 58,000 workers — wants to pay them like gig workers: by the job. For these technicians, who have worked underpaid overtime



Striking machinists, March 7.



Local 26 UNITE HERE in solidarity with IAM strikers.

during the pandemic to keep generators running at hospitals, nursing homes and factories, it was a unanimous vote to fight like David against their Goliath employer.

The union, with Teamster delivery drivers’ solidarity, has also shut down Cummins shops in Concord, New Hampshire, and Scarborough, Maine, since Feb. 12. Management’s only

response has been to illegally mail out insulting union decertification forms to strikers’ homes.

To support these frontline strikers in their fight against naked capitalist greed, donate to the strike fund at goiam.org/iam-strike-fund.

— Report and photos by Steve Gillis

Baseball lockout ends, players union lauds ‘significant progress’

By Martha Grevatt

The 99-day player lockout, imposed by Major League Baseball, came to an end March 10. The eight-member executive subcommittee together with player representatives from 30 MLB teams voted 26 to 12 in favor of accepting the latest agreement negotiated between the Major League Baseball Players Association and the team owners.

“Our union endured the second-longest work stoppage in its history to achieve significant progress in key areas that will improve not just current players’ rights and benefits, but those of generations to come,” said MLBPA Executive Director Tony Clark. “Players remained engaged and unified from beginning to end, and in the process reenergized our fraternity.” (mlbplayers.com)

A key gain was raising the minimum salary. This affects newer, younger players the most; 60% of the approximately 1,200 players represented by the MLBPA



are at the bottom of the pay scale. Their average career length is about four years, with salary increases typically starting in their third year of playing.

The owners were demanding an increased playoff season, involving 14 teams as opposed to the current 10. The new contract only raises the number to 12.

Other clauses in the contract begin to close the gap between relatively stagnant

player compensation and team earnings, which have risen enormously since the last collective bargaining agreement was signed in 2016. Nevertheless, the executive subcommittee voted unanimously to reject the tentative contract. The eight members, joined by four player representatives, reportedly believed the collective bargaining agreement did not go far enough in assuring players an equitable share of the value they generate for team bosses.

Clark had previously termed the lockout strategy “the ultimate economic weapon.” The struggle between MLB and the players demonstrates why every worker needs a union.

Efforts by professional baseball players to unionize go back to 1885. When the MLBPA signed its first contract in 1968, players had not had a salary increase in 20 years. The union’s first executive director, the late Marvin Miller — who helped win the players a 42% pay increase — was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame last year. □



In 1970 Curt Flood, pictured, sued Major League Baseball to end the “reserve clause,” by which teams forced players to play for them and not a team of the players’ choosing. Flood, with support of the players’ union, lost his case in the U.S. Supreme Court, but the union eventually won the right to free agency.

On the picket line

WHEN WE FIGHT WE WIN!

By Marie Kelly

Union Kitchen two-day strike

Dozens rallied at Washington, D.C.’s Union Kitchen stores, as workers there held a two-day strike in February to protest unfair retaliation against union organizing. Union Kitchen workers have formed the United Kitchen Workers union with United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 400.

One striker roused the crowd to cheers by asking “How many of y’all want to make a living wage so you can live in this freakin’ city?” And an even bigger cheer came after this: “How many of y’all want some job security so you can’t get fired for some bullshit?” (tinyurl.com/2wx-eaawu) Workers at three stores filed for a union election with the National Labor Relations Board Feb. 3.

Special Metals on strike five months

Workers at the West Virginia Special Metals plant are in their fifth month striking for better safety and

health care. The 450 workers are members of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 40. The plant is the largest of its kind in the world and the oldest employer in Huntington, West Virginia. The strike is impacting the local economy and U.S. military contractors, who rely on the Special Metals plant’s nuts and bolts used in navy ships and submarines. (tinyurl.com/2p83dzh4)



Union Kitchen strike, Feb. 5, Washington, D.C.

Retirees win health insurance battle

After a year-long fight against a proposed cost-cutting measure, New York City retirees were victorious and will not be forced to accept an untested privatized health insurance plan or pay almost \$200 per month to keep their current health insurance plan. For retirees at the lower end of the city’s pension scale, which bottoms out around \$15,000 a year, that cost threatened to become a significant financial burden. A judge ruled that as long as the current health care program exists, it must be offered to retirees free of charge. (cbsnews.com, March 3) □

Traditions of health: Black midwives and doulas against racism

By Marie Kelly

Midwifery on the African continent can be traced back to antiquity. The tombs of queens in Africa depict midwives assisting at the births of royalty. This is significant because it indicates midwives were held in the highest regard. Given the gender structure of ancient African societies, it would be women, not men, who practiced midwifery. These women would be educated and quite possibly able to read and write. The Kahun papyrus is an African gynecological text dating back to 1800 BCE. It is the oldest known document of gynecological concepts. There is even archaeological proof that ancient Africans used spermicidal plants for contraception.

Midwifery after enslavement

Midwives of African descent enslaved in the Southern states were not permitted to learn how to read or write. This necessitated their passing on expertise orally to the next generation of Black midwives. In this oral form, their body of midwifery knowledge was misconstrued as folk remedies or, worse, witchcraft instead of the science that it was.

By the 1740s chattel slavery existed in every North American colony; but after 1808, the importation of people for enslavement was prohibited by U.S. law. The practice of increasing the number of enslaved people for sale through rape and forced pregnancy became an economic incentive.

As a result of this diabolical development, the enslaved midwife was valued by the slave owner. Additionally, enslaved Black midwives, because of their child-birthing knowledge, often assisted at the births of white women.

Plantation owner and enslaver George Washington valued the Black midwife so much that he was willing to pay her. “In February 1776, Washington paid the enslaved woman Jane, who belonged to Penelope French, for delivering one of his enslaved women at Dogue Run Farm. In April 1783, Washington paid ‘Mrs Frenches Negroe Woman’ for delivering ‘Doll’ at Ferry Plantation. Washington paid ten shillings for each delivery, and they were both recorded in the cash accounts. The payments went directly to the enslaved woman . . .” (tinyurl.com/4y228kfj)

Midwifery and the medical establishment

Up until the 20th century, home births were the norm for the majority of women of color and immigrant women in the U.S. Midwives assisted the mothers through the labor phase and birthing. This began to change, in part, after women’s suffrage.

White middle- and upper-class women flexed their new political muscle through the U.S. Children’s Bureau and campaigned for passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act. This 1921 law was instrumental in medicalizing pregnancy and childbirth. Some 3,000 child and maternal health clinics were established across the country during the eight years the act was in effect.

On the surface, it was considered a valiant attempt to reduce infant mortality by providing medical care to mostly poor rural communities. However, the act made no provisions for eliminating underlying poverty.

The Sheppard-Towner Act ended up negatively impacting Black midwives in the South, who were maligned as a common denominator for infant mortality in their communities. Black lay midwives were mandated to attend classes and be certified as “safe” practitioners.

Capitalists found a new source of revenue through the adoption of the medical establishment model for pregnancy and childbirth. But the history of U.S. gynecology is linked to the Black women who suffered torture at the hands of a medical profession doing “scientific research” based on racist assumptions. Most notably, James Marion Sims experimented with various new gynecological surgical procedures by performing them on unanesthetized enslaved Black women.

In a 1952 Georgia Department of Health film, Mary Cooley, a Black lay midwife, narrates her typical work week. “All My Babies,” and Mary Cooley became well known for the film’s accurate depiction of midwifery. But one scene shows a white doctor chiding a group of Black midwives about their lack of cleanliness. (tinyurl.com/bdhaa94e)

Black midwives and public health nurses

The Tuskegee School of Nurse Midwifery in Alabama was one of a handful of schools to teach midwifery to Black public health nurses. The school, established in 1941, was separate from the historic Tuskegee Institute, founded by Booker T. Washington, but used some of its facilities. It was under the direction of the U.S. Children’s Bureau and the



A Black midwife delivering a baby in the 1950s in the rural South.

Alabama Department of Health.

The premise for the school was that Black women of childbearing age would accept care from Black public health nurses, trained as nurse-midwives, more readily than from white doctors. Nursing education was mostly racially segregated, and Black women were excluded from attending most schools of nursing. The National Association of Black Graduate Nurses reported in 1943 there were 23 Black nursing schools but only 15 nursing schools that admitted both white and Black students.

The Tuskegee School of Nurse Midwifery was in operation until 1946 and graduated 31 Black nurse midwives. The accomplishment of these women in reducing the Black infant mortality rate is exemplary, considering segregation and other racist practices of 20th century health care.

Black people were often excluded from hospitals serving a white clientele. Hospitals for Black people were inadequately equipped and staffed. In 1941 there were just 110 Black hospitals—serving a Black population in the U.S. close to 14 million. Most of the hospitals were in urban areas, so Black rural populations were even further underserved.

The U.S. Public Health Department statistics for infant mortality in 1946 for Black infants was 74 deaths per 1,000 births, contrasted with 43 deaths per 1,000 births for white infants. The maternal mortality rate among African American women was three times that of white women.

The Tuskegee nurse midwives worked alongside the Black lay midwives and taught classes required under the Sheppard-Towner Act for lay midwife certification. Despite the ever present root causes of systemic racism, there was a noticeable decrease in Black infant mortality credited to the Tuskegee nurse midwives. Unfortunately, poor working conditions and underfunding forced the school to close after only five years.

Racial disparity in infant mortality today

The infant mortality rate signifies the likelihood that a newborn will die before they are a year old. It is a grim and heart-wrenching statistic.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services cites the overall rate of infant mortality in 2018 in the U.S. as 5.7 infant deaths per 1,000 births. However, Black infants were over two times more likely to die, at 10.8 deaths per 1,000 births, than their white counterparts.

Additional racial disparities surrounding maternal-child health include these facts: Black infants are four times as likely to die because of low birth weight complications. They are twice as likely to succumb to sudden infant death syndrome than white infants. Black mothers were twice as likely to receive late or no prenatal care as white women. (tinyurl.com/eaabhzw) Prenatal care is a widely recognized necessity for screening expectant mothers early for potential health problems that may complicate either the pregnancy or the birth process.

From the tortures of enslavement to the Jim Crow era of segregated hospitals to the current underfunding of social services and health care in Black communities, the U.S. state and individual state governments have institutionalized the oppression of Black people regardless of their



vulnerability or tender age.

About 71% of children living in poverty are people of color. (tinyurl.com/2p9564yk) Food insecurity, inadequate housing, lack of safe water and poor air quality are consequences of poverty and negatively impact maternal-child health. These conditions could be eliminated, if resources were adequately provided rather than wasting them on imperialist warfare and lining the pockets of megacapitalists.

Instead for centuries the ruling class in power has propagated the racist myth that Black women are neglectful caregivers and therefore to blame for health disparities.

Lifting the stigma off Black mothers

There is a movement among progressive Black health care workers to debunk fallacies around Black motherhood, by acknowledging systemic racism as the root of the problem of health disparities.

Black nurse midwives and doulas cannot solve Black infant mortality, and that should not be the expectation. What they can provide to Black mothers is care and respect during their pregnancy and childbirth, while acknowledging their struggle within an oppressive system.

Dr. Michelle Drew is a nurse midwife, family nurse practitioner and director of the Ubuntu Black Family Wellness Collective in Delaware. Dr. Drew’s mother and grandmother are midwives, who trace their ancestry to an enslaved midwife.

The Ubuntu collective, established in 2019, pushes back the narrative blaming Black women for the racial disparity in infant mortality. Dr. Drew and her colleagues point to the systemic racism creating poverty and poor health care and inflicting harm on Black mothers and their infants as the root cause. (tinyurl.com/mrytn27e)

The Birth Sisters of Charlottesville, Virginia, provide guidance and support throughout pregnancy and childbirth, as well as postpartum and lactation support, for Black, Brown and Indigenous peoples in their city and surrounding counties. These doulas of color have shared experiences with the women in their care. They deny that race is a factor in infant and maternal mortality disparities. They point to dismantling systemic racism as a permanent solution. (tinyurl.com/bdf78uws)

The Peer Doula Program at Logan Correctional Center in Chicago pairs a trained incarcerated doula with an incarcerated pregnant person. The goal is to reduce the isolation and harm that incarceration has on mother and baby. (tinyurl.com/bdrp6mvm)

Recognizing the injustice and inhumanity of the carceral system and how it destroys families is a small step toward abolishing prisons and providing communities with the resources necessary to tackle the material conditions at the heart of Black infant mortality.

The tradition of Black midwives committed to the health of children and birthing mothers continues in the fight to dismantle systemic racist and gender oppression.

Ellen Cohen, a retired midwife, contributed to this article.

WW COMMENTARY

‘Save our children’ – from bigotry and hatred!

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Right-wing forces are generating legalized hatred and bigotry in the U.S. under the banner of “Save Our Children!”

In Texas, parents arranging medical and mental health support for their trans children can now be prosecuted as “child abusers.” In Florida, teachers and school systems with a curriculum of LGBTQ+ sexuality and gender issues can be sued by parents under a “Don’t Say Gay” state law. In Idaho, a pending bill would sentence medical professionals to life in prison, if found “guilty” of providing gender-affirming care to youth.

In the first months of 2022, over 151 pieces of state legislation were introduced to restrict health care or access to athletics to trans youth, permit “religious” organizations to discriminate against LGBTQ+ adoptive or foster parents and ban LGBTQ+ curriculum and books in public schools. (tinyurl.com/yj695jc9)

The big lie – again

An anti-LGBTQ+ “Save Our Children” campaign in Florida in 1977 – fronted by Anita Bryant, a Miss America pageant runner-up – aimed to fire all gay teachers in the state on the grounds they were “child abusers.” That vile lie was just resuscitated by Florida’s gubernatorial press secretary, tweeting that opponents to “Don’t Say Gay” were “probably groomers” – trying to lure children into sex. (tinyurl.com/vu5b83ax)

These right-wing bigots – shouting “Save the Babies!” – have fought tooth and nail to deny reproductive rights to childbearing people since the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision by the Supreme Court. They have physically threatened people at clinics, bombed medical facilities and murdered doctors and clinic escorts. They have mounted a war on reproductive rights for 50 years.

Result? A vicious SCOTUS decision last December



Hillsborough High School walkout against ‘Don’t Say Gay’ bill, Tampa, Florida.



Massive high school walkout against anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, Winter Park, Florida.

favorable to Texas Senate Bill 8 banning abortions after the sixth week of pregnancy – no exceptions for rape and incest. The war on women and people who desire to terminate a pregnancy will have murderous results. The Guttmacher Institute estimates that, before Roe, one-sixth of all pregnancy-related deaths were caused by illegal abortions. (Workers World, Oct. 15, 2021)

Look at the actual voting records of those shouting “Save Our Children.” They reject progressive agendas to get food, shelter, education or any meaningful support to the most vulnerable families. The heaviest burdens fall on children of color and those from low-income families, often trapped in a profit making school-to-prison pipeline and condemned by racism to a life struggling against an “injustice system.”

Using “the children” to excuse and justify oppression is the most disgusting hypocrisy of a culture war created by the right-wing.

Histories of resistance

Legislative attacks demonizing people based on sex, gender, nationality, race or property status are consistent with the bloody history of U.S. nation building – under whichever political party.

Indigenous peoples had their children stolen from them in the name of white-supremacist “civilization.”

Genocidal U.S. wars on Native nations showed no mercy to the women, gender-nonconforming people or children, whom soldiers slaughtered.

Women of African tribes and nations kidnapped into enslavement in the U.S. were deliberately raped into pregnancy for children whom owners could sell away from them for profit.

The same right-wing forces are attempting to wipe out the history of racist injustice, by sponsoring anti-Critical Race Theory laws, and to shut down progressive curricula in public schools.

This amounts to a ban on histories of resistance by people against white-supremacist, woman-hating, anti-LGBTQ+ repression and more.

Fighting for their lives

Young people are fighting back, and they need stories of resistance to help win against the right-wing onslaught. The bigots are afraid that young people will discover the resistance of the past – and act on it!

As Emmy nominee Aunjanue Ellis said: “I went through 12 years of school. Went to a respectable college and majored in African-American studies. But did not have a day, not one day where I was taught anything about Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer [a Mississippi hero of the Black Freedom Struggle]! I was from McComb, Mississippi. Everybody was getting bombed there [in the 1960s]. Everybody was getting beat up. Everybody was getting shot at. ... We were a town of Fannie Lou Hamers! The older I got, I started hearing more, but through that grapevine of freedom-rights stories told at family functions.” (tinyurl.com/2t853nwj)

Coco Gauff, the talented African American tennis player and a Florida native, spoke out against the “Don’t Say Gay” bill, saying: “I think it was in 2019 or 2020, when I talked about the Black Lives Matter movement—I said it was important to have those conversations. Same stance on this. I think it’s important to have those tough conversations; and from the people that I spoke to who are part of the community, it definitely makes a difference when you don’t have to hide who you are.” (ESPN, March 10)

We call for histories of resistance to oppression to be part of public education. We call for the right of people to have self-autonomy with their own bodies – queer bodies, young bodies, disabled bodies, people of color bodies, childbearing bodies and bodies that choose not to bear children. We call for people to have collective determination as workers over their conditions of education, work and governance.

In Florida thousands of high school students walked out against the infamous bill, shouting “We Say Gay!” and waving Pride flags. STRIVE (Socialist Trans Initiative) of Florida said in “GAY IS HERE TO STAY!”:

“The ‘Don’t Say Gay’ bill is just the latest of the Florida GOP’s attempts on the lives of queer and trans kids’ lives. That’s what this is: a slow, painful and torturous attempt at killing off queer and trans kids. STRIVE condemns this bill and the many representatives and senators who passed it. The day will come where they will be made to answer for it. We must fight for that day to arrive. Love and solidarity with all queer and trans youth: They are terrified of y’all. Give them more reasons to be afraid.” (facebook.com/socialiststransinitiative)

Young people are fighting for their future. We must all be in this struggle with them.

In 1975 as a lesbian, Pratt lost custody of her young sons, ages 5 and 6, under the anti-LGBTQ+ “crime against nature” laws that were on the books in the U.S. until the Lawrence v. Texas decision by the Supreme Court in 2003.

Hyun Lee ¡Presente!

It was with great sadness that Workers World learned that Korean peace activist Hyun Lee died on March 7. The statement below was released by two organizations with which she worked.

Women Cross DMZ and Korea Peace Now! are deeply saddened to announce that our beloved colleague, mentor, teacher, friend and sister, Hyun Lee, passed away on March 7 surrounded by her family and closest friends after a long battle with cancer.

Hyun was a tireless advocate for peace on the Korean Peninsula. Every generation has its leaders who build powerful movements; she was among the giants of our time.

Beginning in 2018, Hyun served as the U.S. National Organizer, and then the Campaign Strategist, for Women Cross DMZ and our Korea Peace Now! campaign. Her ability to move an organizing and advocacy agenda was instrumental to building the Korea Peace Now! Grassroots Network, which consists of more than a dozen chapters across the country. This multigenerational, grassroots, people-powered movement that Hyun helped create is what led to the first congressional resolution calling for an end to the Korean War with a peace agreement.

In addition to her organizing skills, Hyun was an expert on Korea and a brilliant analyst and strategist. She was among the rare leaders who can speak cogently on a range of complex issues, from the necessity of stopping the joint U.S.-South Korea military exercises to the need to lift the ban on U.S. citizens traveling to North Korea. She was equally adept at addressing members of Congress as she was speaking to grassroots activists, always delivering her thoughtful message of peace with poise, calm and passion.

Hyun served as a bridge between people, organizations, communities and movements. She was completely bilingual in Korean and English and used this skill to help strengthen relationships between social movements and policymakers in Korea and the United States.

All of us at Women Cross DMZ and Korea Peace Now! are absolutely devastated, but the seeds of peace and



Hyun Lee at an anti-war rally in Philadelphia, January 2020.

justice which Hyun sowed will continue to sprout for generations to come. Her guiding light will continue to shine brightly, helping our movements continue the path to achieve peace in Korea. We will miss her dearly and will forever carry her in our hearts.

Family members report it was Hyun’s wish that any memorial tributes be made in the form of contributions to Tongil Peace Foundation.

Comrades, especially in the U.S., we need to seriously talk about what's going on in the working class

By Larry Holmes

“In the absence of organization, working people do not constitute a class but rather an incoherent mass, scattered over the whole country and broken up by their mutual competition.” — Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The Communist Manifesto

To all who consider themselves to be communist, socialist or leftist, no matter what issue you've been organizing around, no doubt you've taken note of the new level of activity in the working class starting six months ago with “Striketober.” The organizing drives at Starbucks and Amazon are the most prominent reflection of what's happening. But there are hundreds if not thousands of other examples of workers organizing nationally and locally.

This includes delivery workers, retail and food service workers, factory and warehouse workers, health care workers and workers in virtually every industry you can think of. Class struggle is not just in the workplace — it includes migrants fighting inhumane detention conditions; workers of color fighting racist cops; women, gender-oppressed and LGBTQ2S+ people fighting the patriarchy; and disabled people fighting for access. Young workers are leading the way.

The level of worker activism has not yet reached the level of an irreversible, massive worker uprising. Still many, including this writer, see analogies between today and the beginning of the workers' upsurge that brought tens of millions of industrial workers into the class struggle and into labor unions in the 1930s.

Why the analogy? Something is happening, something that's been long awaited and something that holds the potential of awakening the sleeping giant that is the U.S. working class — but also transforming its organizational and political character.

What drives class consciousness?

Karl Marx and other great theoreticians grappled with the question of how the working class could develop from a politically disunited and divided state, a state capitalists work hard to keep workers frozen in, to being “a class for itself.” Marx predicted that the material basis for the radicalization of the working class, as well as the capacity for workers to interact with each other and organize themselves on a higher level, would be dependent upon how the vast changes to the productive forces change the working class.

There have been profound changes in the productive forces beginning in the 1980s, with what Workers World Party founder and late chairperson Sam Marcy described in “High Tech, Low Pay.” The unionized industrial working class has been decimated by technology, while the service economy has exploded. This has changed the character of the working class to that of a low-wage, precarious, but multinational and multigendered class, now with greater numbers stuck in the “gig economy.” This creates conditions for broad class unity, but that unity won't emerge on its own.



Amazon Labor Union supporters rally in New York City outside National Labor Relations Board Oct. 25, 2021, after filing for a union election.

The conservatism of dead-end, narrow-minded, class-collaborationist business unionism poses an ever-present threat to the working class reaching its revolutionary potential. The new unity in the U.S. ruling class against Russia could have a negative impact on worker activism.

Nonetheless, all caution aside, now is the time for the left, especially the left that is not trapped in the Democratic Party, to turn toward the working class and help this latest development in the class struggle — which is the motor force of history — along. Nothing is more important.

Role of U.S. working class

What those of us who are politically conscious do in this country is especially important. This is not because the U.S. working class is better than workers elsewhere on the planet. Rather, our view is based on the worldwide revolutionary aspirations of great revolutionaries like Vladimir Lenin, who, more than a 100 years ago, prophesied that the awakening of the U.S. working class would be the crucial link in the global struggle for social-revolution.

In Lenin's time the U.S. was the rising worldwide imperialist power. A lot has changed since then, but the U.S. remains the center of world imperialism, even while its ruling class is in a desperate struggle to hold on to that position. When significant sections of the working class in the U.S. break with U.S. imperialism, the historical tide turns toward world revolution.

The Ukraine war crisis illustrates the urgency of doing all that we can to foster the continued development of an independent U.S. working class. To complete the acquisition of the countries of the former Soviet Union, U.S. imperialism and its European allies are ready to flirt with and even risk a third world war between nuclear powers.

This is not in the class interest of U.S. workers and of the workers of the world. But the working class will not be able to effectively assert its independent class interest unless it undergoes the revolutionary transformation that recent developments make possible. This is possible if those who know best do our part.

For too long, revolutionaries have been marginal to the working-class movement in the U.S. This problem

goes back to the anti-communist witch hunt of the 1940s and 1950s, when communists were banned from positions of leadership in the labor movement. Over the 70+ years since then, leftists, to a large degree, have tended to leave their politics at home in order to function inside the labor movement.

Pushing back “business unionism”

There are of course many splendid examples of revolutionary rank-and-file unionism. But those examples have not been enough to buck the tide and push back those whom revolutionaries have called the “labor lieutenants of capital.”

That is until now.

For reasons not of their own making, but rather a product of reactionary times and a labor movement that is moderate and tied to the Democratic Party, many young activists have no experience with working-class organization.

In part, the process that's underway right now as workers are beginning to fight back, is one of many young activists, including veterans of the Occupy Wall Street struggle and more recently the Black Lives Matter uprising, starting to look at the workers' struggle as the next logical step in their political evolution. This is a welcome and vitally necessary development, but it must be intensified.

Even the capitalist media has had to admit that the incentive to unionize among Starbucks workers has not been entirely due to working conditions, but also the radicalization of young workers who became politically aware during the Bernie Sanders presidential campaigns and the street protests against racism, sexism and anti-LGBTQ2S+ bigotry. What's so important about this? To build a new kind of workers movement, it will take workers who are not only interested in fighting for their immediate needs but in wider political and ultimately revolutionary goals.

May Day a springboard

I propose that, as a movement, we look at May Day, International Workers Day 2022, as an occasion to take concrete steps on a wide basis to intervene in this incipient upsurge of workers.

As we do so, it must be clear that we are not merely interested in bringing back what some in the labor movement like to call the “good old days,” when there existed for a section of the working class a peace agreement with capitalism. The terms of that agreement were: As long as you stay loyal to U.S. imperialism and do not attempt to break away from the political control of the capitalist political parties, we will allow some of you to be in unions and enjoy a comfortable living standard.

About 50 years ago, the capitalists ripped up that peace agreement. President Ronald Reagan's breaking of the air traffic controllers union in 1981 was a turning point but not the opening shot in a war against workers and organized labor that in the 1970s included Nixon's wage freeze and the concessionary terms of the Chrysler bailout.

As we find ways to support the Starbucks and Amazon workers and millions of other workers, we must declare that there can be no going back to any class peace agreement.

We must see the upsurge of worker activism as an opportunity to build a new classwide movement. That is to say, a movement that is not dominated and limited by business unionism. That also means a movement that is inclusive, militant, more deeply class conscious and anti-capitalist. The transformation of the labor movement today to a revolutionary, classwide movement that knows no geographical or circumstantial boundaries will take a long and very hard political and organization struggle. But we only have a chance if we embrace this struggle fully.

This transformation will of necessity require new forms of workers' organizations. We will need workers assemblies, workers councils and rank-and-file committees. There is no reason why a worker, who is ready to fight the class struggle, should not have a working-class organization to belong to.

Finally, realizing the potential of a revolutionary transformation of the working class in the direction of a truly inclusive classwide movement will be impossible without an expanded conception of working-class solidarity — locally, nationally and internationally. We cannot win without mass workers solidarity.

It is the stepping stone to world socialist revolution.

The writer is the First Secretary of Workers World Party.

Philly protest

Biden – carry out your immigration promises!

Migrant groups protested outside President Joe Biden's meeting with Democratic Party officials in Philadelphia on March 11. About 75 people came out on short notice to criticize Biden and the Democratic Party for failing to act on immigration reform that could legalize 11 million migrants and refugees in the U.S.

Speakers from JUNTOS, Shut Down Berks, MILPA, New Sanctuary Movement, Woori Center and other groups spoke for 45 minutes, with one speaker saying both parties have not made a difference: “It's the same circus, different clown” when it comes to immigration reform.

As Biden's limo and car convoy

drove into the Hotel Hilton venue, drumbeats and chants “welcomed” him loudly.

— Story and photo by Joe Piette



U.S. racist hypocrisy on refugee crisis

By Betsey Piette

The disparate and often racist treatment of refugees of war is starkly apparent as the crisis unfolds in Ukraine. With 24/7 coverage, Western media has not missed an opportunity to garner sympathy for the nearly 2 million disproportionately white Ukrainians currently fleeing the war. No one is denying that their situation is devastating and heartbreaking. What is in question, however, is why the same Western media gave little to no coverage of the 1.5 million other Ukrainian refugees forced to flee their homes to escape bombing and shelling by their own government following the 2014 U.S.-instigated, right-wing coup d’etat. The U.N. reports that at least 14,000 people have died as a result of internal conflicts inside Ukraine since 2014, but little was reported on this by corporate media. The United States’ 20-year war in Afghanistan left that country in devastation and displaced one in 10 Afghan people. Yet Western media paid scant attention to the 2.6 million Afghan refugees. Nor did they have much sympathy for the 6.7 million refugees forced to flee Syria, as the result of 10 years of civil war, largely fueled by the U.S. arming forces to oppose President Bashar Assad. In

describing the media attention focused on Ukrainians, one racist NBC News correspondent actually said: “These are not refugees from Syria; these are refugees from Ukraine ... They’re Christian; they’re white; they’re very similar.” The U.S. continued racist treatment of refugees seeking to escape the results of neoliberal policies in Latin America and Haiti has resulted in the deportation of tens of thousands of predominantly Black and Brown people. Congressperson Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., released a statement March 11 addressing this issue. She writes: “As a neighbor in a predominantly Black city [Detroit] and as a Palestinian American, I am deeply familiar with systemic racism and oppression, including segregation. As we know, the United States treats refugees very differently based on their race. In the past year, the Biden administration has deported more than 20,000 Black Haitian refugees. Our immigration system has subjected Black Cameroonian refugees to torture and deportation back to harm.” Tlaib addressed the plight of thousands of Black and Brown refugees, many Arab or African students, trying to flee Ukraine only to be denied transportation throughout Ukraine and turned away at the Polish border. She stated: “Blatantly

racist media coverage of the war and refugees has clearly shown how Black and Brown people are deemed less worthy of support and even of living.” Tlaib gave examples of mainstream news reporters who described Ukrainian refugees as “more civilized,” “more intelligent,” “more educated” and, because they are white, “more worthy” of concern than Arab refugees. These white-supremacist comments help explain the non-stop attention the U.S. and European media are giving Ukraine refugees. For the first time in recent history, the majority of those fleeing a war zone are European, white and therefore “worthy of attention.” ‘Callous acts are atrocious and reprehensible’ In a March 10 statement, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) expressed dismay over Ukraine’s racist treatment of Black families from the African diaspora and other people of color seeking to flee the war zone only to be pushed from trains and beaten by police officers. They note: “In these crisis moments, choosing citizenship over humanity is an atrocity. These callous acts are atrocious and reprehensible. As the world comes to the aid of Ukraine and

nations support the resettlement of people fleeing the nation, every individual must be treated with dignity and humanity.” They called on the Biden Administration and the United Nations to take action to protect the rights and to ensure the safe passage of all persons fleeing the war zone. “The NAACP will do everything in its power to fight racist, cruel acts such as these — no matter where they are happening.” On March 9, the NAACP and partner civil rights organizations sent a letter to Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, addressing these concerns and calling on that body to take “swift and proactive action to ensure the fair and humane treatment of all refugees with special attention to nondiscrimination.” Signers included the NAACP; Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; National Action Network; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.; National Coalition on Black Civic Participation/Black Women’s Roundtable; National Council of Negro Women, Inc.; and the National Urban League. The following is a link to the letter: (tinyurl.com/thy97es9) □

Harriet Tubman, a woman called General Moses

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

Harriet Tubman was born on a Dorchester, Maryland, plantation sometime during March 1822 and died March 10, 1913, at her home in Auburn, New York. Workers World celebrates the 200th anniversary of her birth with this commentary, first posted Feb. 18, 2007, on Mumia Abu-Jamal’s “Radio Essays.” (tinyurl.com/4cdr5ev8)

She has been gone for almost a century; and still her name is on millions of lips, her memory sacred among those who love freedom.

Her parents named her Araminta, the daughter of Black slaves in the Tidewater area of Maryland, perhaps in 1820 (or 1821 — no one is sure). As a baby, the slaves shortened her fancy name into the nickname, “Minty.” History remembers her by her married name: Harriet Tubman, freedom fighter. She began on the road to freedom as a child, for she wasn’t even 10 years old when she ran away from cruel slave owners, people who used naked violence against babies

and children to force them to do their will. Harriet was a tender five years old when she was forced to take care of a white baby, to keep house, to work day and night for others. She was all of seven years old when she got caught eating some sugar, food that only white people were allowed to eat. Threatened with a beating, the girl fled and, running so fast that her little legs gave out, she fell into a hog-slopping slough. Hunger forced her to return to the house of her “mistress,” where she was promptly and viciously flogged by the “master.” This child no doubt learned an important lesson by the violence, but doubtless it wasn’t what the slaveowning class wanted her to learn. They wanted to instill the seed of terror into the child, so that she never thought of running away again. Instead, it appears she learned that if she ran, there would be no return. She married a “free” man, John Tubman, who was free in name, and in law, but hardly in mind. When she talked about freedom, he shouted at her to stop it. “You take off, and I’ll tell the Master. I’ll tell the Master right quick,” he threatened. As she looked at her husband, a feeling of

disbelief washed over her, “You don’t mean that.” But, in her guts, she knew. He did mean it. Yet, she meant to be free. No doubt she learned another important lesson. Everybody can’t be trusted. She must be watchful, attentive and observant. When the time came, she left, walking through thick forests, over rivers and over hills. She avoided open roads. She followed the North Star; and when she got to Pennsylvania (a so-called “free” state), she noted: “I had crossed the line. I was ‘free,’ but there was no one to welcome me to the land of freedom. I was a stranger in a strange land; and my home, after all, was down in Maryland, because my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters and friends were there. But I was free, and they should be free! I would make a home in the North and bring them there!” She said it. She meant it. She did it. She returned repeatedly to the Tidewater and carried folks off, with cleverness, courage and determination. She returned to the plantation two years after her escape for John Tubman, but the “free Negro” had remarried, and thinking himself free, didn’t want to leave Maryland! Still, this wouldn’t deter her from her sacred mission: freedom. She carried a pistol, and once, while leading some 25 captives North, came within a hair’s breadth of using it. One of the men, bone-tired, hungry and scared, decided that nothing was worth this scampering through the swamps. He refused to be persuaded to move on, until she moved close to him and aiming the weapon at his head, said, “Move or die.” He moved. In several days they were in Canada. Harriet knew that a returned slave would be tortured until he told all he knew, thus endangering all who wanted to be free. To her, it was freedom or death. That simple. She would later say, of her upbringing and



Harriet Tubman in 1911.

of slavery itself: “I grew up like a neglected weed — ignorant of liberty, having no experience of it. I was not happy or content. Every time I saw a white man, I was afraid of being carried away. I had two sisters carried away in a chain gang — one of them left two children. We were always uneasy. ... I think slavery is the next thing to hell.” Her raids into the prison-states of the South led to the freedom of literally hundreds of Black people — including her own aged parents, Harriet and Benjamin Ross. It is thought her family originally came from the Ashanti people, a tribe which hails mostly from the West African coast. (The central region of Ashanti life would be modern-day Ghana.) Her life, from beginning to end, was one of resistance and struggle in freedom’s cause. There may have been 15 to 19 raids led by her into the South to free Black captives. In these raids, she liberated between 300 to 500 people. Recruited to aid the Northern forces during the U.S. Civil War, Tubman organized and led the Combahee River Raid in South Carolina, which netted some 800 slaves and caused thousands of dollars damage to Southern installations. She reported with glee the sight of so many

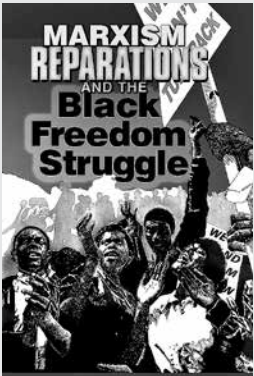
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Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

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

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

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COVER GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

Ukraine

Russia and China demand investigation into Pentagon-funded ‘biolabs’

By Richie Merino

On March 9, Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova demanded transparency from the United States on its military biological weapons program carried out in Ukraine and funded by the U.S. Department of Defense. (tinyurl.com/yeys4jj9) The Russian military previously claimed to have documentary evidence that Ukrainian authorities have been hastily destroying dangerous evidence of highly pathogenic bacterial and viral agents, which they allegedly kept in laboratories funded by the Pentagon. (tinyurl.com/cj5ar4jx)

Stressing that such laboratories were located near the border with Russia and confirming the presence of dangerous pathogens such as anthrax and cholera, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ruled out any peaceful use of the biological weapons programs in Ukraine.

The following day, Russian Defense Ministry Spokesperson Igor Konashenkov denounced the U.S. financed Ukrainian “biolabs” for carrying out experiments with bat coronavirus samples. (tinyurl.com/wvv6exw)

“According to the documents, the American side planned to conduct work on pathogens of birds, bats, and reptiles in Ukraine in 2022, with a further transition to studying the possibility of carrying African swine fever and anthrax,” Konashenkov said, adding that the researchers were looking into how to efficiently spread pathogens by migratory birds. “The purpose of this, and other Pentagon-funded biological research in Ukraine, was to create a mechanism for the covert spread of deadly pathogens,” he explained.

China’s foreign ministry has called on the U.S. to disclose information on the Pentagon’s biological weapons laboratories in Ukraine “as soon as possible.” (tinyurl.com/bdvkxwbf) Spokesman Zhao Lijian stated that according to data “released by the United States itself,” the U.S. Department of Defense controls 336 biological laboratories in 30 countries around the world, including 26 in Ukraine alone. (tinyurl.com/3dekk2mx)

Particularly alarming is that the “biolabs” are clustered on the borders of the Pentagon’s largest enemies: China, Russia and Iran. Zhao warned that the U.S. “has been exclusively obstructing” the establishment of an independent verification mechanism and that the biological

laboratories in Ukraine are just “the tip of an iceberg.”

U.S. confirms biological research facilities in Ukraine

While the U.S. corporate media denies the presence of U.S.-funded “biolabs” in Ukraine as “QAnon conspiracy theories,” Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland testified before a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing March 8 and confirmed “Ukraine has biological research facilities.” Nuland said the U.S. is “working with the Ukrainians on how they can prevent any of those research materials from falling into the hands of Russian forces, should they approach.” (cspan.org, March 8)

Nuland’s testimony begs the question: If the research the U.S. was funding in these Ukrainian biological laboratories is innocent, why is Nuland so concerned that this research material could fall into Russian hands? Russia is a world leader in scientific research, so much that they beat U.S. Big Pharma in the development of a COVID-19 vaccine. (tinyurl.com/yc7twhu5)

The only reasonable explanation for Nuland’s concern is that Russian forces could definitively expose the bioweapons research funded by the U.S. as a direct violation of the United Nations Biological Weapons Convention, which “effectively prohibits the development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling and use of biological and toxin weapons.” (tinyurl.com/2p88d5dv)

Nuland had played a key role in the U.S.-backed coup in Ukraine in 2013-14, where she gained notoriety for her statement, “Fxxk the EU.”

On March 7, Russian Armed Forces revealed they had found dozens of biological laboratories in Ukraine and had obtained documents that proved researchers were weaponizing anthrax, among other pathogens. Lieutenant General Igor Kirillov claimed that the only reason Kiev reportedly moved to destroy the materials was out of concern that Russian experts “will highly likely prove Ukraine and the U.S. have been in violation of the Biological Weapons Convention,” once they study the samples. (tinyurl.com/wvv6exw)

U.N. Security Council on Ukraine’s biological research

The U.N. Security Council gathered last Friday to hear Russia’s official statements declaring that Russian military forces discovered documentary evidence that the Kiev regime is urgently concealing traces

of a military biological weapons program, implemented under the direction of and with funding from the U.S. Department of Defense. (tinyurl.com/ywcu2dvz) Amassed documents reveal experiments funded and directly supervised by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency of the United States, which studied how deadly infectious disease could be intentionally spread by ectoparasites such as fleas, ticks and lice.

Russia’s Permanent Representative Vassily Nebenzia noted that after the 2014 Maidan coup, there have been outbreaks of rubella, diphtheria, tuberculosis and other diseases in Ukraine. By March 2016, a total of 364 people had died of swine flu alone in Ukraine. “While the U.S. itself shut down military-purpose biological research on its territory, due to high risks it posed to the American population, the Kiev authorities actually agreed to turn their country into a biological testing site and have their citizens used as potential test subjects.”

The documents revealed that the Ukrainian “biolabs” were directly supervised by U.S. private contractors, who were awarded diplomatic immunity.

Documents obtained by Russia reveal that the Pentagon instructed its Ukrainian “biolabs” to instantly accuse Russian Armed Forces of chemical weapons attacks, should another outbreak occur. Russia said they will soon submit these documents to the U.N. Security Council as official documents so that member states can also study and verify them.

Diplomatic immunity for private contractors in ‘biolabs’

Nebenzia’s statement accuses the United States of granting employees of the highly-confidential “biolabs” diplomatic immunity, which is normally reserved for consuls, ambassadors or government officials working on an international diplomatic mission.

Dilyana Gaytandzhieva is a Bulgarian investigative journalist, who is best known for being expelled from the European Parliament for asking the Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of Health questions about the Pentagon-funded biological laboratories surrounding Russia, China and Iran. For years she has been on the ground investigating the diplomatic immunity granted to private contractors working in U.S.-funded “biolabs” in Ukraine and Georgia.

Gaytandzhieva’s investigation found that U.S. scientists were granted diplomatic immunity to research deadly viruses, bacteria and toxins and enjoy legal protection from prosecution in the event their work results in death or injury to local populations. (tinyurl.com/35brk9km)

U.S. false flag op in Ukraine

Principled anti-imperialists opposing the U.S./EU/NATO axis of domination must be on high alert for a coordinated false flag operation in Ukraine by U.S. intelligence agencies. It is ironic that Victoria Nuland warned that if a biological attack were to occur, everyone should be “100% sure” that it was Russia who did it. In reality, false flag operations come straight out of the Western imperialist playbook, a technique whereby the U.S./EU/NATO carry out violent attacks on innocent civilians and blame their enemy in order to justify invasions.

The war in Syria is a prime example. The media lied endlessly about the Syrian government and fabricated a narrative that Syrian forces carried out a chemical



weapons attack on civilians. We’re seeing Western imperialists do it again: The Washington Post has printed a story about a potential “Russian chemical attack in Ukraine.” This same narrative is being parroted by President Biden’s Press Secretary Jen Psaki, former CIA Director and Obama White House official John Brennan and the Atlantic Council’s Anders Aslund in a now-deleted tweet.

Anyone who dares exercise basic critical thinking skills and opposes the official Western narrative is smeared as a “Putin puppet” or “Russian asset.”

Information warfare

A major corporate media propaganda campaign is manufacturing consent for direct intervention in Ukraine by U.S./NATO forces. One of the most egregious examples is a story circulated by Western media outlets, claiming that Russia bombed a maternity hospital in Mariupol. But days earlier, Russia’s Permanent Representative Vassily Nebenzia had made a statement at a U.N. Security Council briefing on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, in which he reported that the same hospital had been emptied and was turned into a “firing site” by Ukraine’s Armed Forces. (tinyurl.com/bdzk6c7b)

It’s evident that we are in the middle of the most sophisticated, coordinated and powerful war propaganda operation we’ve ever seen. Any point of view that diverges from the official imperialist narrative is being restricted or outright censored. Big tech firms, including Facebook and YouTube, are censoring “Russian state media” from its platforms, while simultaneously encouraging calls for violence against Russian troops and even allowing their users to wish death upon Presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus.

What the ‘biolabs’ mean to you

While the COVID-19 pandemic has killed more than 6 million people worldwide, the U.S. government has refused to seriously investigate its origins, instead choosing to place all blame on China. How can humanity prevent another global pandemic from wreaking havoc on the poor and the working class when it still doesn’t know the true origins of COVID-19 (which is strange for a country so heavily invested in defense)?

The people of the world must know what experiments the U.S. government is funding abroad, especially when there is clear evidence they are experimenting with deadly viruses. The poor and working class must no longer be guinea pigs for biological warfare. □

Harriet Tubman, a woman called General Moses

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people escaping bondage.

Tubman would later recall the scene: “I never saw such a scene. We laughed and laughed and laughed. Here you’d see a woman with a pail on her head, rice-a-smoking in it just as she’d taken it from the fire, young ones hanging on behind. ... One woman brought two pigs, a white one and a black one; we took them all on board, named the white pig Beauregard (a Southern general) and the black one Jeff Davis (president of the Confederacy). Sometimes the women would come with twins hanging around their necks. It

appears I never saw so many twins in my life. Bags on their shoulders, baskets on their heads and young ones lagging behind, all loaded.”

Harriet Tubman left this life in 1913, living into her 90s. Her name has come to mean Freedom Fighter. It is a holy name, high on the altar of freedom.

Sources: Butch Lee, “Jailbreak Out of History: The Re-Biography of Harriet Tubman,” (Brooklyn: Stoopsale Books, 2000) and Ann Petry, “Harriet Tubman, Conductor on the Underground Railroad,” (New York: Harper Collins, 1955).

Mumia Abu-Jamal © 2007

Translating ‘No fly zone’

How to translate the slogan “No fly zone!” as some Congress members have applied to the Ukraine crisis into understandable English from Washingtonese?
Another set of three one-syllable words hits home: “World War III.”

Republican Sen. Roger Wicker of Mississippi and Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin, among others in Congress, have insisted that the U.S. military impose a “No fly zone” over Ukraine. People should hear or read, “World War III.” Manchin won’t fund the construction of infrastructure, but is willing to fund the world’s destruction.

Workers World rarely quotes Sen. Marco Rubio, a reactionary enemy of Cuba and Venezuela, but Rubio must have had a moment of clarity when he said this about a “No fly zone”: “That means the willingness to shoot down and engage Russian airplanes in the sky,” [to] “knock out the anti-aircraft systems that the Russians have deployed and not just in Ukraine but [in] Russia ... [It] means starting World War III.” (Rollcall.com, March 8)

The working class in the United States and in the rest of the world has no interest in accelerating the path to World War III. We must instead accelerate opposition to the steps the U.S. government, using NATO, has taken to provoke the conflict in Ukraine.

Yes, as WW has shown in its extensive coverage of the Ukraine crisis, it is this NATO military alliance the U.S. dominates that has used the people of Ukraine as a battering ram against Russia and provoked the battle there. Now the corporate media has carried out a blitz of propaganda to showcase the horrible consequences of this U.S./NATO aggression, without revealing its roots in U.S. imperialist strategy to make Russia submit to its hegemonic agenda.

Some Washington warmongers may have convinced some Ukrainian leaders they should demand a “No fly zone.” The Biden administration, while publicly tabling the call for a “No fly zone,” is moving in the same dangerous direction. The New York Times page one banner headline March 13 laid out Biden’s plans: “U.S. will send more arms, defying Moscow.”

These arms may kill more Russians. They won’t help people in Ukraine, and they too may lead to World War III. It is up to the antiwar movement in the U.S. and in all the NATO countries to combat the continued NATO aggression and fight, to oppose a “No fly zone” and to dissolve the aggressive NATO military alliance altogether. □

Pentagon wins, workers lose The ominous omnibus

A \$1.5 trillion “omnibus” spending bill, which President Joe Biden signed March 15, passed the House and Senate March 10. Over half the money in the Consolidated Appropriations Act — \$782 billion, a \$42 billion increase over fiscal 2021 — is going for Pentagon spending. Of course NATO, the Pentagon’s proxy in Europe, gets a piece of the pie.
On top of that, \$13.6 billion is slated to go to Ukraine — and not only for the propagandistic weapons of food and other “humanitarian” assistance. The U.S. is providing “assistance to the security forces.” Moreover, almost \$7 billion is set aside for various arms of the U.S. government — mostly the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines but also its international ideological arm, Voice of America — “to respond to the Ukraine situation.” (rules.house.gov)

And it’s not like the rest of the money is going to programs that benefit working-class and oppressed people. Tens of billions of dollars will go toward policing — from Customs and Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, to the FBI and CIA, to capitol police and local police departments. For the latter, policing reforms stipulated under the George Floyd Act, passed by the House, were scrapped.

COVID-19 funds cut

Congressional Democrats had proposed \$30 billion to continue the fight against COVID-19, then cut the amount by more than half under pressure from their Republican counterparts. After more progressive Democrats complained about the lowered amount, mainstream Democrats took the remaining \$14 billion out of the budget altogether — with a dubious promise to get it back in a separate bill. What had been earmarked for vaccine development and distribution along with mass testing is about

equal to what the Senate, in a 68-31 bipartisan vote, approved for the right-wing coup regime in Ukraine!
Billions more dollars are going to so-called “democracy programs,” supposedly to “counter disinformation propagated by malign actors, including the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation.” In fact it is U.S.-funded entities such as the National Endowment for Democracy that have spread disinformation and fomented dissent for decades against governments not subservient to U.S. capitalist aims. Another \$40 million is set aside to target Venezuela.
The Director of National Intelligence is required to report on China’s biotech industry and the Belt and Road initiative — which countries and entities are doing business with China — as well as “human rights” in Hong Kong and the effectiveness of U.S. sanctions on targeted countries.

The Israeli apartheid state, meanwhile, is in line for at least \$3.3 billion in U.S. assistance in the current fiscal year.

Robber barons of Capitol Hill

From the money left must come food and housing assistance, Medicare and Medicaid, education funding, family planning (with no federal money allowed for abortions in the bill), substance-abuse prevention, disaster relief, labor- and civil-rights enforcement agencies, mass transit and all the social programs the masses depend upon.
This is a massive transfer of wealth — value created by the working class — away from human services and into the coffers of the military-industrial complex. This ruling class thievery comes at a time when workers and poor people are struggling with inflation at a 40-year high and now extortionary, war-driven prices to fill their gas tanks and heat their homes. The bill hurts communities of color, women, gender-oppressed and LGBTQ2S+ people, youth, elders, low-wage workers, and people with disabilities the hardest.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York, called the Act “the strongest, boldest and most significant government funding package we’ve seen in a very long time.” (New York Times, March 10)
Schumer’s comment should shred any delusions that the Democratic Party is the party of labor and civil rights.
A mass, class-based war — not against Russia or China but against the capitalist system — is the only war worth fighting. Or funding. □



Arkansas billboard PHOTO: PEACEWINS.ORG

Haitians attempt to emigrate

By G. Dunkel

While the world’s attention focuses on the conflict in Ukraine that could quickly escalate, living conditions for the working people of Haiti are still festering.
Workers demanding their salaries be tripled have left the streets for the moment. Two out of five Haitians are still “food insecure,” which means they get less to eat than they need. Housing, jobs and health care are scarce. Hospitals and schools are closing. Criminal activity on the streets, particularly kidnapping, intensifies.
Tens of thousands of Haitians with skills and education, who had emigrated to find work in Argentina, Chile and Brazil, face a dilemma. Their work dried up, which drove them to try to cross the border from Mexico to the United States.
Between March 2020 and December 2021, the Department of Homeland Security expelled 13,783 Haitians, who border guards had caught trying to cross. The Haitians were denied their legal right to ask for asylum. Over 6,000 other Haitians, picked up elsewhere in the U.S., have also been instantly deported. (wola.org, Feb. 17)
Many of these 20,000 deportees are families — mothers, fathers,

children — put in chains, to be put on planes and sent willy-nilly to a Haiti that is in no way ready to receive them, that is in the throes of economic collapse.
Le Nouvelliste, a Haitian daily newspaper, reported March 8 that the DHS has set up an office in Port-au-Prince, Haiti’s capital.
Another stream of migrants coming directly from Haiti are predominantly youth, mainly men who face a future without prospects — even those with an education. The Dominican Republic, which some have tried to reach, has been strengthening its obstacles on the border. The United States is a more likely source of work.
A wooden coastal trader capsized in the Florida Keys March 6, with 356 Haitians on board. Some of them managed to swim ashore, where they were captured by the Coast Guard, which by March 11 had sent 200 of the survivors back to Haiti.
This is the fourth large-scale attempt to reach the U.S. by ship in the past four months.
Visits of top level U.S. diplomats
Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations Anne Witkowski was in Haiti March 7-9, followed by Deputy Assistant Secretary of

Defense Daniel Erikson who visited Haiti March 9-11.
While Witkowski met with Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry and his coterie, as well as the director of Haiti’s national police, she went to Haiti to keep the lid on, to make sure that there’s no social explosion that would disturb its imperialist interests. Erikson met with leaders of Haiti’s Coast Guard to improve the coordination that they need to stop the flow of Haitian boat people.
Kidnapping, strike at the General Hospital
Crime statistics are inaccurate, with many crimes unreported or undercounted. Kidnapping is common; and from time to time, witnesses note that one or several of the kidnappers wore a police uniform. Press Lakay, a web news service, reported that a dozen kidnappings took place Friday, March 11.
The kidnapping of Dr. Martial Piard from the General Hospital

in Port-au-Prince, the biggest hospital in the country serving predominantly disadvantaged neighborhoods, is illustrative. Dr. Piard is a dental surgeon and anesthesiologist, known for using his bicycle to serve the poor. After hospital staff and neighborhood activists blocked roads with burning tires, he was released without a ransom.
His kidnapping took place a few blocks from the Presidential Palace.
Staff at the General Hospital have been on strike, demanding that management pay back-salaries and provide adequate resources for patients. Piard was part of the team providing emergency services during the strike. □



Banner translation: “No to kidnapping, no to violence against women”

Lockheed and Raytheon – today’s ‘Masters of War’

By **Betsey Piette**

“Come, you masters of war; You that build the big guns; You that build the death planes; You that build all the bombs; You that hide behind walls; You that hide behind desks; I just want you to know; I can see through your masks.” From Bob Dylan’s iconic song, “Masters of War,” released in 1963. It is all the more relevant today.

That the U.S./NATO-instigated war in Ukraine could result in a third world war is of major concern for all of humanity, especially workers and oppressed people who ultimately bear the brunt of any war. Yet for some global billionaires — today’s ‘masters of war’ — this conflict is seen as an opportunity to further boost profits.

Among those already reaping gains are companies involved in the production and sale of weapons, planes and other military hardware. This includes 14 of the world’s 20 largest “defense” companies headquartered in the U.S. Topping this list are Lockheed Martin, Boeing and Raytheon Technologies, which had combined arms sales in 2019 nearing \$100 billion.

On Feb. 24, the day Russia invaded Ukraine, the stock value of these arms manufacturers soared. Raytheon and Lockheed officials openly told investors the Ukraine conflict was “good for business.” In a company “earnings call,” issued Jan. 25, Raytheon CEO Greg Hayes described how they could benefit from the conflict. Similarly, Lockheed CEO James Taiclet told investors the “great power competition [between the U.S. and Russia] over Ukraine bodes more business for the company.” (The Wire (India), Feb. 28)

Two lobbyists for every Congress member

These fortuitous gains for arms manufacturing companies are no coincidence. Their buildup for this NATO/Russia conflict has been decades in the making. The industry currently employs two lobbyists for every member of Congress.

Since the end of the Cold War, weapon manufacturers have been the most aggressive lobbyists for NATO expansion. Their

potentially lucrative market included countries in Eastern Europe and former republics of the Soviet Union, disbanded in 1991. This, despite a 1990 promise by then-Secretary of State James Baker to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that if he allowed a reunited Germany to join NATO, the organization would not move eastward.

In 1997, Lockheed Martin Vice President Bruce L. Jackson headed the advocacy organization U.S. Committee to Expand NATO. Bell Helicopter, Lockheed Martin and other weapons manufacturers funded Romania’s lobbying for its bid to join NATO.

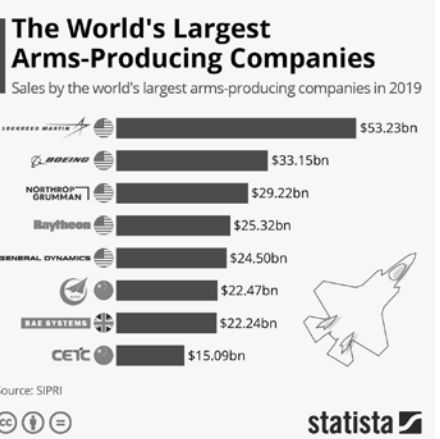
The New York Times covered Jackson’s lobbying of the Clinton administration to encourage NATO leaders to vote on expanding the alliance to Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic in July 1997. Clinton’s Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright attended one of Jackson’s lavish dinners to promote NATO expansion to the senators being wine and dined. (tinyurl.com/yey6tby9)

Lockheed Martin gave \$2.3 million to congressional and presidential candidates in the 1996 election. Always on the lookout for more opportunities to advance weapons sales, Jackson later became chairperson of the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq, which promoted the 2003 U.S. invasion during the George W. Bush administration.

In 1999, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic were admitted to NATO, despite U.S. and European Union promises to Russia that this expansion would never happen. Over the course of the next two decades, 14 Central and Eastern European countries joined NATO. In 2021, NATO extended membership offers to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Ukraine, all located on Russia’s eastern border.

More NATO members = more industry profits

According to a report from the Center for Responsive Politics released in early 2021, five of the biggest U.S. defense contractors — Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon Technologies and General Dynamics — spent a combined \$60 million lobbying to influence policy in 2020. This sum is in addition to \$2.5



U.S.-based arms makers sell more than half of weapons sold globally.

billion the companies spent for lobbying since 2000. (Military.com, March 7, 2021)

The Center’s website OpenSecrets.org notes that in addition to the significant portion of the Pentagon’s \$740 billion going to purchase weapons, U.S. arms manufacturers made \$175 billion in weapon sales to other countries in 2020.

As they joined NATO, new member countries were strongly encouraged to buy weapons from U.S. manufacturers. Unbeknownst to U.S. taxpayers, their money indirectly subsidized the arms industry through a series of Pentagon grants, discount loans and free leases.

As the arms industry predicted, the incorporation of former Soviet republics and formerly socialist countries in Eastern Europe into NATO drastically increased the potential for armed conflict between the U.S.-led NATO and Russia.

Arms industry’s revolving door

Perhaps reluctant to solely rely on lobbying to influence government officials, the arms industry encouraged former

government officials to become industry representatives. Over the past 30 years, nearly 530 members of the Armed Services and the Foreign Relations and Defense Appropriations subcommittees from both congressional houses left office for jobs as defense company lobbyists. By 2005, 80% of the highest-ranking Army generals retired to take jobs with arms makers.

The revolving door has worked both ways. Biden’s Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin sat on Raytheon’s board before joining the administration. In 2020, one-third of Biden’s Pentagon transition team came from agencies linked to the defense industry. Biden simply followed the practices of his predecessors.

Never mind Biden’s declaration in a foreign policy speech in July 2019 that “it’s past time to end the ‘forever wars,’ which have cost us untold blood and treasure.”

David Vine documents the history of endless U.S. conflicts in “The United States of War,” published in 2021. He quotes General Mike Holmes’ claim that the goal is “not losing. It’s staying in the game and getting a new plan and keeping your objectives.” Biden is now talking about prospects for World War III!

The sheer number of casualties from U.S.-instigated wars over past decades is staggering. Untold millions have been displaced as a result of conflicts driven by the profitability of war, including 1.5 million Ukrainians forced to flee between 2014 and the start of the current conflict.

Pro-war propaganda is deafening, but it is imperative that a unified global anti-war movement take on this challenge and strongly advocate for humanity. Workers have nothing to lose but our chains. □

El Sur Global rechaza la agresión de EE. UU. y la OTAN

Continúa de la página 12

Ucrania, que en conjunto suman un asedio militar.

“Ignorar durante décadas los fundados reclamos de garantías de seguridad de la Federación Rusa y asumir que Rusia permanecería indefensa ante una amenaza directa a su seguridad nacional fue un error. La paz no se puede lograr sitiando o arrinconando a los Estados. La historia responsabilizará a Estados Unidos por las consecuencias de una doctrina militar cada vez más ofensiva fuera de las fronteras de la OTAN, que amenaza la paz, la seguridad y la estabilidad internacionales”. (tinyurl.com/4e6b4ww9)

El representante de Nicaragua ante la ONU, Orlando José Tardencilla, culpó a los patrocinadores del golpe de Estado de 2014 en Ucrania y los ataques y bombardeos contra las poblaciones de Donetsk y Lugansk.

Los países del ALBA no fueron los únicos que se opusieron al voto de la ONU que condenó la invasión rusa de Ucrania. La resolución respaldada por Estados Unidos fue aprobada con 141 votos a favor, pero hubo cinco votos en contra y 35 abstenciones. Los abstencionistas incluyeron

a China, India, Irán, Irak, Mozambique, Pakistán, Senegal, Sudáfrica, Uganda, Vietnam y Zimbabue. La mitad de los estados que votaron abstenerse o no votaron en absoluto eran africanos. Bielorrusia, la República Popular Democrática de Corea, Siria y Eritrea votaron con Rusia para rechazar la moción.

Al analizar la votación, David McNair, Director Ejecutivo de Política Global, señaló: “De los 7.700 millones de personas representadas por gobiernos que participaron en la votación, solo el 42 % procedían de países que aprobaron la moción”. Muchos de los que se abstienen son países que han sufrido las paralizantes sanciones económicas de Estados Unidos, otro acto de guerra.

El trato racista de las autoridades ucranianas hacia los estudiantes africanos que estudiaban en Ucrania cuando intentaban abandonar el país dice mucho. Los países africanos sin duda se enfrentarán a la presión de Estados Unidos por negarse a condenar a Rusia. Pero eso no detuvo una manifestación en la capital de la República Centroafricana, Bangui, donde cientos de participantes pidieron el fin de la OTAN y el fin de la hegemonía y el imperialismo de Estados Unidos. □

If you care about Ukraine, disband NATO

By **Sara Flounders**

Long before the Feb. 24 Russian intervention, the 2014 U.S.-backed fascist coup regime had reduced Ukraine to the poorest country in Europe, and with the highest rate of migration, . The International Monetary Fund restructured the economy and demanded austerity measures that gutted the pensions and cut social spending. Mass privatizations of socially owned property brought economic ruin.

Now human trafficking in commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor, along with the buying of children from orphanages, is more widespread in Ukraine than any other European country. The largest surrogacy industry in the world is in Ukraine; surrogate mothers are paid \$15,000 per child. (tinyurl.com/5n7xyhex)

Ukraine, although flooded with NATO weapons, is so lacking in basic social services that it has the lowest European vaccination rates. Vaccination rates for polio, measles and diphtheria are at 53%. And only one in five Ukrainians have received a full course of COVID-19 vaccine, raising concerns of new COVID-19 variants arising under crowded refugee conditions outside Ukraine. (tinyurl.com/5dyas8st)

Ukraine: a NATO pawn

Ukraine, although not officially a member of the U.S.-commanded NATO military alliance, has received hundreds of millions of dollars in lethal military



Impoverished Ukrainians

PHOTO: RT

equipment from the U.S. Ukrainian troops served under U.S.-NATO command in Iraq and Afghanistan. As an “Enhanced Opportunity Partner,” Ukraine hosted joint military training exercises with U.S., British and Canadian troops.

Weapons with tactical nuclear capacity, which could reach Russian cities within minutes, are being moved into place in Eastern Ukraine and in NATO countries.

The war in Ukraine could end today if the U.S. would stop pumping billions of dollars of lethal arms and thousands of U.S. military “advisors” and private military contractors — mercenaries — into Ukraine. This devastating war would never have started if these U.S.-trained and equipped forces hadn’t been shelling the 1,400-mile Ukrainian-Russian border for the past eight years, all while the U.S. and NATO have been encircling Russia with military bases in surrounding countries.

Ukraine is a pawn in this U.S. strategy against Russia. The only way toward peace is to disband NATO. NATO out of Ukraine! □



WW FOTO: BRENDA RYAN

Manifestación contra la guerra en la ciudad de Nueva York, 5 de marzo, Sara Flounders hablando para el Centro de Acción Internacional.

Luchar contra la xenofobia, una forma de guerra

El conflicto instigado por Estados Unidos y la OTAN en Ucrania tiene sus raíces en la búsqueda de saquear y sacar provecho de la vasta riqueza de Rusia en gas natural y petróleo. Este ha sido un pilar importante de la búsqueda del imperialismo estadounidense para reconstruir su imperio global desde el colapso de la Unión Soviética en 1991. Los imperialistas harán lo que sea necesario para ganar nuevos mercados para obtener ganancias, incluso con la amenaza global de una guerra nuclear.

Rusia ha tenido derecho a proteger sus fronteras, ya que el surgimiento de elementos neofascistas dentro de Ucrania ha sido una amenaza constante a su soberanía desde 2014, lo que resultó en la separación de Ucrania de las Repúblicas Populares de Donetsk y Lugansk.

Este conflicto, diseñado por los EE. UU. y la OTAN, se ha llevado a cabo en varios frentes. Rusia se ha convertido en su objetivo más reciente con hostilidades imperialistas sin paliativos que se extienden más allá de las sanciones, un acto de guerra, y otros ataques políticos.

Aunque ya no existe una Unión Soviética, la xenofobia se ha convertido una vez más en un arma en manos de Estados Unidos y sus virulentos socios menores anticomunistas en la OTAN.

Cualquier cosa o persona asociada con Rusia ha sido brutalmente demonizada y condenada al ostracismo. Este tipo de

etiquetado ha tenido un impacto especialmente devastador en los eventos deportivos internacionales que involucran a Rusia.

A los atletas rusos se les ha prohibido participar en los próximos Juegos Paralímpicos de Invierno en Beijing. Las patinadoras artísticas femeninas ganadoras de medallas de oro y plata olímpicas de 2022, Anna Shcherbakova y Aleksandra Trusova, han sido excluidas del próximo Campeonato Mundial de Patinaje Artístico a finales de este mes en Montpellier, Francia.

La FIFA (Federación Internacional de Fútbol Asociación) y la UEFA (Unión de la Asociación Europea de Fútbol) han suspendido a las selecciones y clubes nacionales rusos de todas las competiciones de fútbol.

Esto también significa que Rusia no puede albergar ninguna competición internacional de fútbol.

Rusia ha sido prohibida por las federaciones deportivas de la Federación de Hockey sobre Hielo, World Rugby y Rugby Europe, junto con la Federación Internacional de Baloncesto. Y debido a que Bielorrusia es un fuerte aliado de Rusia, sus atletas también han sido excluidos de muchas de las mismas competencias. Estos destierros son solo la punta del iceberg.

Castigo colectivo

La xenofobia no es una táctica nueva cuando se trata de aislar a grupos enteros de personas en función de su raza y

nacionalidad en aras de enriquecer el poder y las arcas de la clase dominante. A medida que la guerra imperialista entre EE. UU. y Japón se aceleró en 1942, más de 100 000 japoneses en EE.UU. fueron forzados a permanecer en 10 campos de internamiento desde 1942 hasta 1945. Los japoneses que habían emigrado a EE. UU. soportaron fuertes tratos de racismo y se les perfiló como “combatientes enemigos”.

Después de los ataques del 11 de septiembre de 2001, el gobierno de EE. UU. declaró una “guerra contra el terrorismo”, principalmente contra los musulmanes. La guerra incluyó la “Ley Patriota de los EE. UU.”, por la cual el gobierno de los EE.UU., incluido el FBI y la CIA, podía detener y torturar a cualquier persona sospechosa de un supuesto acto terrorista, especialmente si se originaba de cualquier país musulmán. A miles se les negó el derecho a un juicio y a un abogado. Burlas racistas, agresiones e incluso asesinatos se desataron con impunidad contra personas morenas o árabes. Se ignoró que quienes habían llevado a cabo el atentado del 11 de septiembre eran principalmente de Arabia Saudita, un aliado de Estados Unidos.

¿Qué pasa con la reciente guerra contra los asiáticos, que han sido víctimas desde la pandemia de COVID-19? El entonces presidente Donald Trump vomitó ante rabiosos partidarios de la derecha que China tenía la culpa del virus. Su diatriba racista estalló en un maremoto de agresiones, especialmente

contra personas de ascendencia china y coreana. En marzo de 2021, seis de las ocho personas asesinadas a tiros en spas del área de Atlanta en un asesinato masivo eran mujeres de ascendencia asiática, principalmente coreanas. Justo este enero, una mujer chino-estadounidense de 40 años, Michelle Go, murió cuando la empujaron hacia las vías de un tren subterráneo de Nueva York.

La xenofobia es uno de los tipos de división más viciosos de clases. Funciona en el interés de la clase súper rica de culpar a otro grupo marginado o nación oprimida por todos los males de una sociedad capitalista de supremacía blanca que pone las ganancias antes que satisfacer las necesidades de las personas.

La xenofobia y la amenaza de guerra imperialista van de la mano. China entiende que está igualmente en la mira del imperialismo estadounidense, si no más, que Rusia.

El imperialismo estadounidense y la OTAN no les importa los pueblos de Ucrania, Rusia, China o cualquier otro país cuando se trata de su verdadero objetivo geopolítico: colonizar otra vez el mundo, sobreexplotando a los trabajadores y sus recursos.

Esta es otra razón por la que el movimiento debe ser visible en las calles para exigir “¡Lucha contra el racismo, no contra Rusia!” y “¡Levanten la prohibición a los atletas rusos!”.

El Sur Global rechaza la agresión de EE. UU. y la OTAN

Por Betsey Piette

Mientras EE. UU. y la OTAN trabajan para avanzar en su guerra contra Rusia que ahora estalla en Ucrania, muchos países, que han experimentado la agresión imperialist —por parte de EE. UU., Francia, Gran Bretaña y otros miembros de la OTAN — están alzando la voz. Denuncian el impacto de las sanciones estadounidenses como actos de guerra y llaman a la OTAN una amenaza para la paz mundial.

La Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América — ALBA — es una organización intergubernamental de países de América Latina y el Caribe, basada en la integración social, política y económica. Muchos estados miembros han sido objeto de la intervención y las sanciones económicas de los EE.UU. con la intención de descarrilar a los gobiernos progresistas elegidos popularmente. Colectivamente, se pronuncian en contra de la agresión de Estados Unidos y la OTAN contra Rusia.

El líder indígena boliviano Evo Morales llamó a la OTAN “una seria amenaza para la paz y la seguridad internacional. Su historial de invasiones y agresiones así lo demuestra. Ahora su intento expansionista es una de las principales razones de la situación en Ucrania”. En 2019, el gobierno encabezado por Morales fue derrocado por un golpe de estado de derecha dirigido por los EE. UU. Un año después, el partido Movimiento al Socialismo



A las personas de color de África, India, Medio Oriente y otras regiones que viven en Ucrania se les negó el acceso al transporte designado para trasladar a los refugiados a un lugar seguro, se les dijo que solo se permitía a los ucranianos y se les hizo retroceder en algunas fronteras polacas. Aquí, los residentes africanos esperan en la estación de tren de Lviv, al oeste de Ucrania, el 27 de febrero.

de Morales fue restaurado en el gobierno en una elección popular.

El embajador de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, Samuel Moncada, quien se dirigió a la sesión especial de la Asamblea General de la ONU el 2 de marzo sobre Ucrania, se hizo eco de los sentimientos de Morales. “Lamentamos constatar que la actual escalada, con las dolorosas y terribles pérdidas de vidas que ha supuesto, tiene su origen en el incumplimiento de los Acuerdos de Minsk bajo el impulso de Estados Unidos de la expansión permanente de la OTAN hacia Europa del Este.

“Venezuela siempre ha condenado la perversa tendencia hacia visiones del

mundo unilaterales y hegemónicas, que desconocen los principios de la diplomacia, organizan invasiones con total impunidad en países como Siria, Irak o Afganistán, y promueven escudos mediáticos que limitan la libertad de expresión y manipulan opiniones y emociones para aumentar la xenofobia y el discurso de odio”.

El presidente de Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, llamó a conversaciones entre Rusia y Ucrania y repudió las sanciones económicas contra Rusia. Maduro denunció las campañas de los principales medios de comunicación que apuntan a los millonarios rusos como “oligarcas”,

preguntando cómo se llaman los millonarios estadounidenses. Maduro repudió la censura contra los medios rusos, citando una nueva era geopolítica que está tomando forma. “A pesar del intento del imperio de imponerse con el chantaje del dólar y el sistema financiero y comercial de imponer un mundo unipolar, ha nacido un mundo multipolar de nuevos polos de poder”. (tinyurl.com/yckmwzt8)

“Tuve una conversación telefónica con el presidente Vladimir Putin”, escribió Maduro en Twitter. “Confirmé la condena de Venezuela a las acciones desestabilizadoras de la OTAN. Reiteré una firme disposición a favor del entendimiento y el

diálogo como forma de preservar la paz”.

Maduro destacó la importancia de contrarrestar la campaña de mentiras y desinformación desatada por EE. UU. y otros países de la OTAN. Defendió la soberanía rusa sobre Crimea y apoyó la desmilitarización y desnazificación del estado ucraniano, para garantizar su estatus neutral y no nuclear. (tinyurl.com/ydp3vuay)

La periodista venezolana Patricia Villegas Marín, directora de TeleSUR, denunció la prohibición de la Unión Europea de Sputnik y RT, señalando: “en nombre de la democracia se están silenciando voces. Nosotros en TeleSUR hemos vivido [este tipo de bloqueo] muchas veces en momentos decisivos de la vida política de América Latina y el Caribe”.

Resistencia cubana a la agresión de EE.UU./OTAN

Dirigiéndose a la sesión de emergencia sobre Ucrania, el Embajador Pedro Luis Pedroso Cuesta, Representante Permanente de Cuba ante la ONU, declaró: “La determinación de EE. UU. de continuar la progresiva expansión de la OTAN hacia las fronteras de la Federación Rusa ha generado un escenario con implicaciones de alcance impredecible, que podría haberse evitado. Son bien conocidos los movimientos militares de Estados Unidos y la OTAN en los últimos meses hacia regiones adyacentes a la Federación Rusa, precedidos por la entrega de armas modernas a

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