

# No sanctions, no nukes, no war!

By Sara Flounders

A seismic shift is sending shock waves through the global economy. The well-established capitalist disorder, dominated by U.S. imperialism and in place since World War II, is on shaky ground. Extreme economic sanctions imposed on Russia are dragging the whole world into a war that started long before the Russian intervention in Ukraine on Feb. 24. A big calculation is which countries will be forced to accept the onerous economic sanctions imposed on Russia by the U.S. Countries representing a majority of the world's population are not willing to tie their sovereignty to total Wall Street control. To the shock of U.S. war strategists, almost all of Latin America, the Caribbean, many countries in Africa, and

most of Asia have rejected the sanctions on Russia. The open defiance by so many countries and major trading blocs is a stunning confirmation of the weakening hold of U.S. economic power. **U.S. dominance challenged** It is well recognized that U.S. economic dominance in Europe, and globally, has been challenged by increased European Union trade with Russia and China. The growing integration of the Eurasian bloc of countries, stretching from China and South Asia through Central Asia and Russia to Europe, gives a huge economic advantage to the countries involved. The growing integration of EU trade and investment with Russia and China

## Part 1



PHOTO: UNIONE SINDACALE DI BASE  
Rally supporting rank-and-file workers of Unione Sindacale di Base at Italy's Pisa Airport who refused to load weapons destined for Ukraine, disguised as humanitarian aid. USB said: 'We strongly denounce this real fraud, which cynically uses the 'humanitarian' cover to continue to fuel the war in Ukraine.' More on Ukraine, pages 8-9.



At a Europa League Cup match in Belgrade, March 17, Serbian soccer fans lift banners condemning U.S. military wars and interventions since the 1950s, including with NATO.

threatens both the domination of U.S. corporate power in Europe and U.S. global hegemony. It is in the interest of corporate power in the U.S. to cynically provoke a conflict where it is the least affected, but doing so in a region where its capitalist rivals in the EU will carry the heaviest burden. **U.S. threatens nuclear war to get sanctions** The U.S. has instigated a crisis by encircling Russia with NATO bases, organizing constant military operations and supplying heavy weapons to Ukraine to fire on Russia's borders. The United States is the only country to have ever used nuclear weapons. It incinerated two entire cities — Hiroshima and Nagasaki — in 1945. The U.S. has refused to agree to a "No First Use" nuclear policy. By placing nuclear weapons in Europe

and setting up nuclear-capable weaponry on Russia's borders, it has been openly provoking Russia to strike in self-defense. The U.S. used the nuclear threat not only on Russia but to impel the European Union to impose harsh sanctions on Russia, even though it was against EU interests to cut economic ties with Moscow. With the EU, and especially Germany, unwilling to impose sanctions that would break all relations with Russia, the U.S. played hardball. President Joe Biden threatened the EU on Feb. 26, two days after Russia began its military operation in Ukraine, that the only alternative to going along with the U.S. sanctions "would be the Third World War." "You have two options. Start a Third World War, go to war with Russia, physically. Or, two, make sure that the country that acts so contrary to international law

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TEAR DOWN  
THE WALLS



'Never stop fighting'

Justice delayed,  
justice denied

Lolita Lebron's legacy



# Black Trans Lives Matter!

## The right to self-defense

By Leslie Feinberg

*This is part of an article published Dec. 7, 2012, in Workers World, in a series of articles by Leslie Feinberg on the local, U.S. and international campaign to “Free CeCe!” Trans woman CeCe McDonald was charged with murder for defending herself and friends when attacked by a white-supremacist mob in 2011 in Minneapolis. In June 2012, Feinberg committed civil disobedience and was arrested for spray-painting “Free CeCe!” on the walls and pillars of the Hennepin County Courthouse, where McDonald was to be sentenced. Sent to prison, McDonald served much less time because of the powerful campaign for her freedom. She was finally freed Jan. 13, 2014.*

At certain moments in history, the struggle of individuals to survive and organize against fascist attacks, police and prison terror sharply reveals the societal relationship of forces — between oppressor and oppressed, exploiter and exploited. These battles inspire unity and action that help shape and define political eras — like the demands to free the Scottsboro Brothers, Lolita Lebron, Leonard Peltier, George Jackson, Joann Little, Mumia Abu-Jamal.

The struggle to “Free CeCe!” is sparking a growing, broad united front against white supremacy and anti-trans violence. CeCe McDonald’s courage and consciousness — and the tireless and tenacious solidarity work by supporters in Minneapolis and the region led by those who are

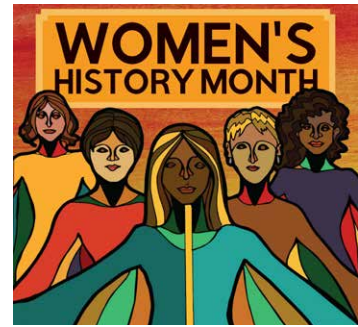


WW PHOTO: LESLIE FEINBERG  
CeCe McDonald and Leslie Feinberg, Hennepin County jail, Minneapolis, May 1, 2012.

oppressed — has widened and deepened the demand to “Free CeCe!” in cities across the U.S. and around the world.

Hundreds of thousands of people in the U.S. and internationally now know more facts about the attack on CeCe McDonald than the judge and prosecutor allowed a jury to know during her trial.

CeCe McDonald and her friends were assaulted in Minneapolis on June 5, 2011, by a group that announced its ideology as racist and fascist in words and action. The attackers shouted white-supremacist Klan language, transmisogynist epithets and a slur against same-sex love.



One of the attackers then assaulted CeCe McDonald with a weapon — smashing her in the face with a bar glass that deeply punctured her cheek.

In the fight that ensued, one of the attackers died. He had a swastika tattoo.

CeCe McDonald was the only person arrested by the police that night. McDonald has been punished ever since as the “aggressor” for defending her life and the lives of her friends — and surviving. Police, sheriffs, jailers, prosecutor, judge and prison administration have arrested her, locked her up and held her in solitary confinement for long periods.

Stop the war on trans women of color! □

## MUNDO OBRERO

# WORKERS WORLD

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## Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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# New York City Workers Assembly launches May Day organizing

By Monica Moorehead and Brenda Ryan

A powerful New York City Workers Assembly was held March 19 to plan for May Day. Speakers included workers involved in the Amazon Labor Union fight to win a union election, Starbucks workers organizing union drives at their local stores and migrant construction workers fighting for dignity.

The well-attended meeting was

organized by Workers Assembly Against Racism and held at the Solidarity Center in Manhattan. There was broad representation present from the International Working Women’s Day Coalition, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Laundry Workers Center, Amazon Labor Union, Teamsters Local 808, GABRIELA New York, Coalition of Labor Union Women, La Peña del Bronx and the International Action Center.

Earlier in the day, an International Working Women’s Day Coalition delegation marched from busy Penn Station to the Solidarity Center to attend the

assembly, calling attention with their signs and chants to the fact that “Every issue is a woman’s issue!”



Migrant workers speak out at May Day organizing meeting.

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN



WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

International Working Women’s Day Coalition on way to Workers Assembly.

# Philadelphia Residents fight to keep homes from gentrifiers

By Joe Piette

Residents of University City Townhomes, nearby University of Pennsylvania students and faculty members, and community anti-gentrification activists rallied March 19 to demand Brett Altman of IBID Associates LP stop plans to demolish the affordable housing structures.

Altman hopes to make millions in profits from “redeveloping” the 2.7-acre city parcel where the 40-year-old, low-income housing is located.

A community meal was made available to the 200 participants before and after a march in the streets around the complex. At the end of the short march, the crowd stood on Market Street where they heard Penn professor Chi-Ming Yang say: “Affordable housing is not a business deal; it is a human right!”

UC Townhomes resident Darlene Foreman explained, “Our lives have been turned upside down. There are women and children, elderly people, as well as disabled residents on this property. Where are we supposed to go?”

Resident Rashida Alexander said: “I’m fighting for affordable housing, to stop gentrification. They’ve taken everything,



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Residents march against profiteering gentrification, Philadelphia, March 19.

our children’s schools; all of Philadelphia is being gentrified, and people are being displaced. Homelessness is at an all-time high.”

Penn professor Krystal Strong emphasized: “The Townhomes are the literal last sign of Black people in this so-called University City. When we say ‘Save Townhomes,’ we are talking about saving Philadelphia for Black people.”

Black activist Dr. Walter Palmer explained how the original name for

what is now known as University City was “The Black Bottom.” (The area’s history and struggle against gentrification at theblackbottom.wordpress.com.)

Demands of the 69 families who live in UC Townhomes include:

Stop the demolition. In a city where 26% of residents live below the poverty line of \$24,600 and the city has no citywide plan for preserving or constructing low-income housing, putting Townhomes residents out of their homes should not be allowed.

Give residents more time to find housing past the eviction date of July 8. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the scarcity of low-income housing, many residents also have disabilities, poor credit or other barriers to contend with in finding new homes.

Make immediate repairs. Sewage leaks, rats, roaches, uncollected garbage and lack of repairs have all created unsafe and unsanitary conditions. Residents demand Altman meet with them to address these issues.

Provide just compensation. Brett Altman, having received the land for \$1 in 1982 and benefitting from 40 years of state and federal financial assistance in the form of tax credits and housing subsidies, now stands to sell the same land for up to \$100 million. Residents demand \$500,000 financial compensation per family, amounting to 35% of the total sale price.

One of the last speakers, longtime activist Pam Africa of International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, put it all together when she said, “It is our duty to stand up and fight!”

More on how to join this struggle at [savetheUCTownhomes.com](http://savetheUCTownhomes.com).

# Oakland, California

# Port and school workers map fight against privatization

By Dave Welsh

The movement to stop privatization of Oakland’s port and schools took a step forward March 16, when a crowd of 90 packed the Henry Schmidt Room at the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 hall.

The goal: to forge a fighting united front to defend public education in Oakland; and ensure that no port property is given away to private investors.

Chaired by Local 10 past President Trent Willis, the Action Planning Meeting opened with each person in the room doing a self introduction. Then people broke into five groups to brainstorm about a name and goals for this new coalition.

They discussed a proposal for a one-day Oakland port shutdown, possibly

on May Day. Other suggestions included running a labor/community slate for the Oakland School Board, as well as sit-ins and protests targeting pro-gentrification politicians like Mayor Libby Schaaf and Governor Gavin Newsom. Planning also focused on stopping businessmen like John Fisher, owner of Gap Stores and the Oakland Athletics baseball team, who is attempting to use Howard Terminal, part of the Port of Oakland, as a location for a new ballpark in West Oakland, which will cost ILWU union jobs in the port.

Attending the meeting were current officers of Local 10 President Farless “Pete” Dailey and Secretary-Treasurer Ed Henderson, teacher and organizer Divya Farias, as well as Moses Omolade, the community schools manager who recently ended a hunger strike to protest

the closing of neighborhood schools serving mainly Black and Brown students in East Oakland.

The next coalition meeting is March 30, 6:00 p.m., Westlake Middle School, 2629 Harrison Street, Oakland. □



PHOTO: CRAIG GORDON

ILWU’s Trent Willis chaired the community meeting in Longshore Hall, March 16.



# No letup in worker resistance at Starbucks, Amazon

By Martha Grevatt

Amazon night shift workers in Queens, New York, and Marlboro, Maryland, (near Washington, D.C.) walked off the job March 16 in the wee hours of the morning. The walk-outs — which involved roughly half the shift workforce in the three delivery stations — demanded higher pay and the restoration of 20-minute breaks that began during the pandemic but were later stopped by Amazon. These workers are on a “megacycle” shift from 1:00 a.m. to 12 noon.

Amazonians United coordinated the walk-outs as an “escalation” of a multicity petition campaign, demanding \$2 an hour more for megacycle workers, accommodations for workers who cannot work the full 11-hour shift (such as parents and caregivers), company-provided Lyft rides and a return to the 20-minute breaks. (amazoniansunited.org)

In Bessemer, Alabama, Amazon warehouse workers are voting by mail in a second National Labor Relations Board-supervised election on whether to be represented by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. Ballot counting will begin March 28.

The NLRB ordered a second election due to Amazon’s illegal union busting during the first Bessemer election last year — but the company has not stopped its widespread practices of disinformation and intimidation. Because of high turnover due to intolerable and unsafe working conditions, half the workers voting in this election did not vote in the previous election.

Meanwhile, the Amazon Labor Union is gearing up for an NLRB election at a Staten Island, New York, warehouse taking place March 25-30. The ALU is organizing around an eight-point program of demands including better pay, safety, paid sick time, overtime, a dedicated shuttle service, restoration of 20-minute breaks and allowing the union to present its position at “trainings.” These mandatory meetings are where Amazon engages in intimidation and presents one-sided, anti-union propaganda. (amazonlaborunion.org)

From mass phone banking to solidarity rallies, ALU is



Amazon workers walkout, Queens, New York, March 16.

employing a range of tactics designed to win the election. UNITE HERE Local 100 and Workers Assembly Against Racism in New York City have made their office space available to ALU for the phone banks.

In Southern California, Amazon Flex drivers rallied outside an Amazon warehouse March 17 to demand higher pay to compensate for higher fuel prices. These drivers must use their own personal vehicles and pay all accompanying costs such as gasoline and tolls.

### More progress in Starbucks union campaign

March 18 marked another milestone in the Starbucks union organizing campaign, with the Westmoreland Starbucks in Portland, Oregon, becoming the 150th store to file for an NLRB election. One day later the Overland store near Kansas City was hit with an Unfair Labor Practice strike that kept the store closed all day. Strikers carried signs reading “Don’t let them grind you down” and “Change is brewing, feel the heat.”

This follows a one-day ULP strike at a Denver Starbucks March 11.

The NLRB has filed ULP complaints against Starbucks alleging illegal surveillance, threats, intimidation, firings and more. Starbucks has fired union organizers in Memphis, Tennessee; Buffalo, New York; and Phoenix. But workers are not intimidated — Starbucks Workers

United won three more union elections in the Buffalo area where the union drive was launched and is now headquartered.

Starbucks had closed one of these three stores for two months; the workers there who signed union cards had to transfer to other stores. Most of the workers voting in the representation election were hired after the filing for an election with the NLRB. But the union still won the vote!

Coffee shop resistance is not limited to Starbucks. Workers at Great Lakes Coffee in Detroit have been on strike since Feb. 16. Labor and community supporters have joined several solidarity rallies and marches, including the latest on March 20. “Comrades in Coffee” are fighting to be represented by UNITE HERE Local 24.

There are many strikes in progress across the country, including teachers in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, and Forest Park, Illinois; service technicians at Cummins in Concord, Massachusetts; musicians with the San Antonio Symphony; and United Steelworkers (USW) members at Sherwin Williams in Greater Cleveland.

The wave of working-class resistance, initially identified with the month of “Striketober,” shows no sign of letting up. We are running into a Labor Spring. □



WW PHOTO: ARJAE RED

Starbucks union organizers from Miami and Hialeah, Florida, and Buffalo, New York, meet in Florida.

## Rejecting Israeli occupation

# Palestinian American fired by elite school

By Betsey Piette

Athletic trainer Natalie Abulhawa, a Palestinian-American Muslim, held a March 16 press conference in Philadelphia to announce the filing of a federal charge of discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against Agnes Irwin School (AIS).

Abulhawa alleges AIS wrongfully terminated her after just 10 days of employment in early November 2021, using nearly decade-old social media posts as a pretext.

The complaint was filed on Abulhawa’s behalf by the Philadelphia Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR-Philadelphia), whose attorneys addressed the press conference. CAIR noted that AIS did not terminate similarly situated employees not in Abulhawa’s protected class for their previous or recent social media posts.

The prestigious, private all-girls K-12 school hired Abulhawa as a full-time athletic trainer after interviews conducted by several school officials, including the Head of School Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. She went through

multiple forms of vetting, including criminal background checks, fingerprinting and verification of employment, education and certification.

Abulhawa stated: “The [AIS] offer required that I leave a job I loved at an excellent school and with wonderful student-athletes. I made that sacrifice because of the incredible opportunity Agnes Irwin offered.”

On Nov. 1, 2021, the AIS Athletic Director informed Abulhawa that the school had received complaints from parents and faculty members because of a dangerously misleading profile published about her by Canary Mission, a known Islamophobic, anti-Palestinian hate website. She was given no opportunity to explain the nature of the widely discredited website and, after a short 10-minute meeting with Head of the School Sally Keidel, was told her employment was terminated immediately, based solely on the hate site content.

Abulhawa’s termination by AIS has damaged her career. She noted: “The athletic training community is small, and word gets around. Whereas I had no trouble getting a job before, I have been struggling to get interviews with prospective employers, despite a current shortage of athletic trainers. The harm to my reputation, finances, career and mental health has been enormous. I’ve been forced to reconsider my career path, including going back to school to develop another skill. I have been taking jobs as a freelancer, without the security of a salary, health insurance or other benefits.”

### Canary Mission – website of hate

Jewish Voice for Peace condemns Canary Mission as a “malicious website that seeks to vilify principled activists for Palestinian human rights with targeted campaigns of misinformation, bigotry and slander. ... Canary Mission targets students and faculty because they criticize Israel — not because they have expressed anti-Jewish bias.” (JVP statement, May 13, 2016)

The Intercept says the list’s damning profiles are “often

based on quotes ripped out of context and wrongly conflate support for Palestinian human rights with support for violence or anti-Semitism.” (Nov. 22, 2018)

In its page on Natalie Abulhawa, Canary Mission listed social media posts she made in 2016 when she was in Palestine and witnessed Israel’s occupation firsthand. Other malicious “proof” used to discredit her was her membership in Students for Justice in Palestine at Temple University and the fact her mother is the distinguished Palestinian human rights activist and author Susan Abulhawa.

At the press conference Natalie Abulhawa pointed out: “The website which posted the misleading profile about me does not target actual racists or anti-Semites — such as neo-Nazis, KKK members or white nationalists. Most of its targets are students or individuals similarly vulnerable, with the intention of destroying their careers and livelihoods.”

Since first launched in 2015, Canary Mission has targeted over 2,000 individuals. However, it was Agnes Irwin which fired Abulhawa, not Canary Mission.

“It is unacceptable that Agnes Irwin treated me with such contempt and disrespect. Employment discrimination against Palestinian Americans and Muslim Americans is a real problem. AIS did not think twice before bulldozing my life, without even a pretense of due process. It only took a known hate site to profile me for them to derail my career,” Abulhawa said.

“I am telling my story today so that Agnes Irwin, which purports to empower women, can be held accountable for the ways in which they demeaned, humiliated and harmed me. Institutions like this often do not hesitate to harm people like me, because we are perceived to have no power. Rather than behaving ethically and fairly, they chose to bow to the whims and xenophobia of funders.”

CAIR has launched a letter-writing campaign on Natalie Abulhawa’s behalf. The link to the letter being sent to Agnes Irwin is [tinyurl.com/2s3t7ay2](https://tinyurl.com/2s3t7ay2). □



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Natalie Abulhawa with attorneys Timothy Welbeck and Ryan Hancock at March 16 press conference.



# U.S. wars, sanctions, economic austerity fuel global refugee crises

By Betsey Piette

The outpouring of sympathy for refugees fleeing the current war in Ukraine is nonstop. Continuous news feeds show pictures of damaged buildings, crowded trains, women and children packed into shelters — even a memorial of 100 empty, high-tech strollers symbolizing children who died.

Western media pundits claim this is the first time there has been a refugee crisis in Europe since 1945. They conveniently ignore the brutal U.S./NATO war in Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Or more telling, the 1.5 million refugees who fled Eastern Ukraine under intense fighting in provinces resisting the 2014 U.S.-backed right-wing coup.

Every war has a disproportionate impact on women and children. The major difference between this conflict and the U.S. and/or NATO aggressions in Asia and Africa is that the U.S. is trying to use Ukraine as a battering ram against Russia, making it useful to promote sympathy for Ukrainian refugees, who are the cannon fodder for the war.

Since most Ukrainian refugees are white Europeans, the corporate media in the U.S. and Western Europe use racism, white supremacy and class orientation in their propaganda campaigns.

## Racist media reports

Several racist media reports described Ukrainians fleeing war zones as “more civilized,” “more educated” and “more worthy,” compared to the 6.7 million refugees from the U.S.-driven conflict in Syria — commenting “they seem so like us.” (Daniel Hannan, The Telegraph, Feb. 26).

Al Jazeera English apologized for Peter Dobbie’s comment, that: “These are prosperous, middle-class people. They are not obviously refugees trying to get away from the Middle East or North Africa. They look like any European family that you’d live next door to.”

“We are in the 21st century; we are in a European city, and we have cruise missile fire as though we were in Iraq or Afghanistan. Can you imagine!” said a commentator on BFMTV, France’s leading news channel, during a live broadcast. (aninjusticemag.com, March 8)

These comments all ignore that the Middle East and Northern Africa had prosperous, educated workers and professionals before the U.S./NATO wars targeted and destroyed their countries.

## ‘Shock and awe’

The March 19, 2003, illegal U.S.-British attack, invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq began with “shock and awe,” a blitz bombing of Baghdad, destroying infrastructure and claiming tens of thousands of lives.

U.S. media avoided showing suffering Iraqis. Western reporters were tightly embedded within U.S. military units. Pentagon officials delivered “news briefings.” There was scant mention of the one-million-plus Iraqis who died as a result of this invasion and the decade of sanctions that preceded it and even less attention to the millions of Iraqi refugees forced to flee their homes or their homeland.

In the earlier 1991 Persian Gulf War, a U.S. aerial bombing attack targeted the Amiriyah civilian air-raid shelter in Baghdad, killing 408 Iraqi women and children on Feb. 13, 1991, and giving no advance notice for them to flee. No U.S. media highlighted this deadly



Fires rage in Baghdad as U.S.-led coalition forces attack the city, March 19, 2003.

catastrophe at the time.

Western media pundits actually cheered these wars, as they have so many other U.S. wars and occupations.

## White-supremacist ethnic cleansing

Since the first arrival of Europeans in the Western Hemisphere 530 years ago, genocidal policies have murdered nearly 56 million Native people. Since 1776 the United States has invaded 70 nations, including lands of numerous Indigenous peoples. According to Donald Fixico, Arizona State University professor of history, by 1900 Indigenous populations in the U.S. had been decimated from millions to around 230,300. (history.com, Oct. 25, 2021)

Millions of Africans died as a result of the U.S. and European slave trade from the 17th to the 19th centuries. Many perished in the “Middle Passage” — the voyages enslaved Africans endured in the holds of slave ships crossing the Atlantic. Millions more died under the unspeakably brutal conditions of enslavement.

In 1948, global imperialism encouraged and allowed Zionists to violently uproot 90% of Palestinians from their land, wiping out over 500 Palestinian towns and villages and creating over 750,000 refugees who were permanently barred from returning to their historic homeland. The world bourgeois media has remained silent where the crimes of Israel are concerned.

Since 1950, the U.S. has invaded over 50 countries on every continent except North America, creating countless refugees, those fleeing war as well as the impact of U.S. economic sanctions — war by another name.

The civilian death toll in the U.S. war in Korea (1950-53)

is estimated at over 3 million people. The U.S. implemented a scorched-earth policy, leaving few buildings standing on the land that is now the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. To this date there is no peace accord between the U.S. and the DPRK.

U.S. wars in Southeast Asia ripped apart Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in the 1960s and 1970s. The effort to dominate the region failed, but the massive destruction left 4 million dead, millions maimed and 2 million Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees desperate for resettlement.

## 84 million displaced people

The U.N. High Commission for Refugees estimates that in 2021, over 84 million people remained forcibly displaced worldwide, as a result of wars, violence and persecution. These numbers were double the totals of

the previous decade and an increase of 1.6 million over 2020. These statistics include 26.6 million global refugees and 50.9 million internally displaced people.

Many left their home countries because of environmental disasters fueled by global warming. Many made the painful but conscious decision to leave home to escape violence and in search of less oppressive economic conditions.

No Western media banner headlines or top-of-the-hour coverage highlighted these humanitarian crises.

U.S. and EU politicians made no calls for immediate intervention, even though the numbers of refugees were greater than the entire population of the most populous EU member, Germany. Many of these refugees were fleeing wars initiated or backed by the United States and its NATO allies, including France and Britain. The majority of these 84 million refugees were people of color.

## U.S. wars caused refugee crisis

For over a century, the U.S. has repeatedly intervened in countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean, including Haiti — creating an ongoing refugee crisis. In recent years U.S. economic sanctions drove over 5 million Venezuelans to leave their country, because of economic insecurity and shortages of food, medicine and essential services.

U.S. wars seeking to overturn governments in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya, Yemen and South Sudan are part of the “endless war” that President Joe Biden pledged to end when he issued his political platform in July 2019. Combined with equally deadly economic sanctions, they are responsible for the U.N.-documented surge of millions of refugees — mostly fleeing their homelands.

Almost half of Syria’s 23 million population was displaced by 11 years of U.S./NATO sanctions, their arming and financing of mercenary forces and bombing of infrastructure. There are currently 6.7 million Syrian refugees.

Over 3.5 million Afghan people have been displaced since the start of the U.S. brutal occupation in 2001. Despite a deepening humanitarian crisis, after U.S. forces withdrew in August 2021, the Biden administration seized \$7 billion of Afghanistan’s funds, which are needed to run essential government services.

Seven months of U.S./NATO bombing in Libya in 2011 destroyed the entire infrastructure of that modern African state. Two million Libyans — one-third of Libya’s pre-NATO intervention population — sought refuge in Tunisia.

South Sudan — the U.S. “creation” carved out of war-torn Sudan through a referendum orchestrated by the U.S. in 2011 — has the largest number of refugees in Africa. There are currently 4.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance including refugees and asylum-seekers. Over half of South Sudanese refugees are children.

The U.S. has played a pivotal role in the genocidal war in Yemen since 2014, supplying weapons and military assistance to Saudi Arabia. As of 2021 over 4 million people in Yemen have been internally displaced in one of the poorest countries in the Middle East.

Numerous U.S. spokespeople, including President Joe Biden, are calling for Vladimir Putin to be charged with “war crimes” by the International Court of Justice — the World Court. However, the U.S. asserts that its own governing officials or military commanders — clearly guilty of multiple war crimes — cannot be prosecuted by the court because the U.S. withdrew from the court’s “compulsory jurisdiction” in 1986 — after the court ruled the U.S. owed Nicaragua war reparations.

Few countries in Europe willingly offered refuge to those fleeing the U.S./NATO wars in Africa and the Middle East. European states closed their borders to millions fleeing conflicts. The U.S. built walls on the border with Mexico to stop the mostly Central American refugees from entering and appealing for asylum.

Imperialist war created the conditions that caused refugees to flee. This gigantic wave of forced migration — from the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Central and South America to Europe and the U.S. — has resulted in the largest dislocation of humanity since World War II.

The opportunist sympathy for Ukrainians — expressed in racist terms — does nothing to remove the imperialists’ responsibility for this crisis. □



## Released after 46 years

# Bradford Gamble exposes medical abuse



By Ted Kelly

Bradford Gamble is holding a cell phone to his ear with one hand, his other elbow resting on the arm of his wheelchair. On the wall behind him, beside a mantelpiece with an electric fireplace, is a series of decorative wreaths arranged like letters to spell out the word “home.” He is sitting in the living room of his nephew Shaquan J. Jordan’s West Philadelphia house, a place Bradford just started calling home.

This cozy environment might as well be on a different planet compared to where he was a week before — 150 miles away, shackled to a hospital bed at Geisinger Medical Center. Despite the fact that Gamble uses a wheelchair, despite the fact that he has Stage 4 metastatic cancer, despite the fact that he is dying, only a week ago he was still a prisoner of the Pennsylvania Department of

***‘I’m a human being. And I deserve to be treated as a human being. I want you all to know that there are things going on behind closed doors. People like me are not being treated as human beings. We’re being treated like cattle. We’re being treated like nonfunctional robots. The DOC medical department is 100% wrong in their way of treating us. We need people to know and understand that.’***

**— Bradford Gamble**

Corrections — in whose “custody” he had been for the last 46 years.

In 2021, Gamble was taken to the medical wing of State Correctional Institution Coal Township, where he had been imprisoned, and was told he was getting a routine colonoscopy. What he did not know was that medical staff at the prison performed a biopsy and extracted a length of his intestines. Their test confirmed that he had colon cancer. For eight months, no medical staff,

no prison administrators — no one — relayed this diagnosis back to the patient, whose worsening abdominal pain and other unexplained symptoms were being treated with two Tylenol a day.

Finally, Gamble learned he had undergone a medical test without his knowledge or consent after a member of the medical staff casually inquired as to whether he got the results from his biopsy. He told this purported health care worker that he didn’t know anything about any biopsy. “Oh,” came the reply. “Well, it’s probably cancer.”

After months of Gamble filing numerous grievances with the prison administration and petitioning the prison medical staff with demands to see his own medical records, one day a guard walked past his cell and, without breaking stride, dropped a narrow piece of paper on the floor within reach. It was a medical slip with only a sentence or two printed on it, which confirmed the diagnosis of colorectal cancer, as well as the news that this prognosis was terminal as a result of metastasis. The cancer had spread to his lymph nodes.

### Gradual reform isn’t ‘compassionate’

In Pennsylvania, in order for an incarcerated person to even be considered for “compassionate release,” they must be too sick to walk and have proof from a medical doctor that they are going to die in less than a year. (The Morning Call, July 26, 2021)

The laws that determine whether a person can be freed from prison because of failing health vary from state to state, but a trend toward establishing procedures for this kind of “compassionate release” has emerged since the First Step Act was passed by Congress and signed by President Donald Trump in December 2018.

Even so, over 20,000 elderly and dying prisoners sent petitions for compassionate release between January 2020 and June 2021. Only 3,608 were granted. (U.S. Sentencing Commission) During that same 18-month period, 2,715 prisoners died as a direct result of the COVID-19, and an additional 400,000 prisoners contracted the virus and became seriously ill — including Bradford Gamble. (The Marshall Project)

There are over 300,000 prisoners in the U.S. over the age of 50. (Bureau of Justice Statistics) A 2018 report, “The

High Costs of Low Risk: The Crisis of America’s Prison Population,” says: “With an estimated 2.3 million people in confinement, one out of every 32 adults under correctional control or community supervision, and roughly one-third of all adults with some sort of criminal record, the U.S. surpasses all other countries in sheer numbers and per capita incarceration and criminalization rates.

“By 2030, the population of people aged 50 and older is projected to account for one-third of all incarcerated people in the U.S., amounting to a staggering

abolitionist lawyers and activists assembled by Bryant and organized to advocate for Gamble’s release, including members of the Abolitionist Law Center, the Innocence Project and the Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party. “I tell everybody that I talk to, family members, friends, when they ask me, ‘How did you get out?’ I say, ‘Bryant Arroyo.’”

### ‘We need help, it’s as simple as that’

“I didn’t make it out here just to say, oh, I’m home. Family, friends, it’s lovely. It’s beautiful. But I got more to do.”

Bradford Gamble says health care workers in the U.S. need to understand how much rampant neglect and abuse that their purported colleagues are committing in prison medical facilities. And he believes they have an obligation to intervene on behalf of prisoners who are suffering and dying as a result of this ill treatment.

“I’m a human being. And I deserve to be treated as a human being. I want you all to know that there are things going on behind closed doors. People like me are not being treated as human beings. We’re being treated like cattle. We’re being treated like non-functional robots. The DOC medical department is 100% wrong in their way of treating us. We need people to know and understand that.

“And we need help; it’s as simple as that. We need help.

“You might say it’s not your problem. But if you had a loved one who was in the same position that I’m in, that I was in, and that people are in jails and prisons all over, you’d think different. So think different now. Don’t wait. Let us know that you love us, that you care about us.

“The word ‘care’ in your job description — health care — should mean a lot.

“We’re not ashamed of saying we’re begging for your help, because we need it. I’m out here now, but I never left the prison mentally, because a lot of the people I love are still there. And they need your help. Please help us.

“One thing Mr. Arroyo taught me is to never give up. Never stop fighting. If you can’t fight for yourself, fight for somebody else. I always told him, if I make it out of here — and we didn’t know, at that time, we really didn’t know — if I get out, I’m gonna touch somebody’s heart. And I’m gonna put them in a position to touch somebody else’s heart.” □



Bradford Gamble (seated) with prison abolition activists who worked for his release, March 13.

4,400% increase over a 50-year span.”

Gamble was only 20 years old when he was condemned to spend the rest of his life in prison. He’s now 66. No technology existed then that even resembled the mobile device he can now hold in his hand and hear the voice of Bryant Arroyo, an organizer, environmental activist and Workers World contributor.

At 50 years old, Arroyo himself has spent more than half his life behind bars for a crime he didn’t commit. But in addition to waging his own struggle for freedom and exoneration, Bryant fought a relentless battle to win compassionate release for Gamble, whom he calls “Bub.” After months of phone calls, letters, emails, petitions, legal dead ends, obstruction from prison officials, Gamble became one of only 17% of terminally ill prisoners in the country whose compassionate release petition was accepted. (U.S. Sentencing Commission)

“He was Godsent,” Gamble tells the half a dozen people who crowded on the couch in front of him after his release. They’re all

## Support readers behind the walls

Workers World is an independent, revolutionary communist newspaper circulated for over 60 years. We are committed to building solidarity among workers and oppressed peoples around the globe. For that reason Workers World has always provided FREE subscriptions and other radical printed materials to prisoners in the U.S. One in three subscribers to Workers World is a person who is currently behind bars — in hundreds of prisons across dozens of states. We need your help to provide even more prisoners with FREE subscriptions to Workers World!

We receive hundreds of phone calls,

letters and subscription requests from prisoners. In addition to the work we do fighting racism, imperialism, gender oppression and labor exploitation every day, we need the resources to keep operating. These resources also allow us to continue our daily work of organizing defense committees, coordinating prison visits, planning demonstrations and mass mobilizations for prisoners, and shedding light on prison conditions. Donating now is an immediate way you can help fight this racist, capitalist system and empower our readers to tear down the walls once and for all. Donate today at [patreon.com/wwp](https://patreon.com/wwp). □





# Rodney Reed: Justice delayed is justice denied

By Gloria Rubac  
Houston

On any day of the week, prisons are hell. Texas prisons are no exception. And for prisoners on death row, the hell never ends unless they are executed. The hell increases exponentially each day for those who are innocent and awaiting execution.

This is the extra hot hell that many innocent people on Texas death row are living 24 hours a day, seven days a week. One of them is Michael Gonzales, who just survived an execution date on March 8 and was granted a stay.

Another death row prisoner is Melissa Lucio, who is scheduled to be legally lynched on April 27 for an alleged crime. Robert Roberson, like Lucio, is accused of a crime that did not happen. Each of them is accused of killing their young child, But these children’s deaths were not caused by the parents; they were accidental.

Rodney Reed is another prisoner living on death row hell. He survived an execution date in November 2019 because Texas’ highest court, the Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA), issued a stay and ordered the trial court in Bastrop County to consider new evidence of Reed’s innocence.

The hearing in Bastrop was finally held in July 2021. Unfortunately, the judge’s



WWW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

**Sandra Reed, mother of Rodney Reed, speaks in Austin, Texas, March 4.**

opinion was almost word-for-word the same as the state’s opinion. The judge ignored all of the newly discovered evidence and recommended the CCA deny Reed a new trial.

The patience of Reed’s family, friends and supporters is running low. On March 4, in an attempt to give a nudge toward justice, Sandra Reed, Rodney

Reed’s mother, along with his spouse and dozens of supporters, gathered outside the CCA building in Austin.

Reed’s supporters put the court on notice that they were tired of waiting. They were tired of seeing their loved one behind glass in a cage and tired of taking time off from work to drive over three hours each way for a two-hour visit with him. And they were tired of worrying about another execution date.

Sandra Reed spoke of the family’s long journey trying to find justice: “We continue to hope and pray that the truth will come out.” Rodney Reed’s father, Walter, died a few years ago and did not live to see his son freed.

### Stop the executions!

The guest speaker was Juan Melendez, who is with Witness to Innocence, a national organization of exonerated death row survivors, active in the fight to end the death penalty. He traveled from New Mexico to Austin to show solidarity with Reed.

Melendez told the large crowd: “I spent 17 years, eight months and one day on Florida’s death row for a crime I did not commit, before I was finally exonerated and freed in 2002.” He told of the pain of knowing he was innocent and the anguish

he felt at being far from his family, especially his mother.

Other speakers included Delia Perez-Meyers, who expressed the constant anxiety of having an innocent family member on death row. She and her relatives constantly fight for her brother, Louis Castro Perez.

Perez-Meyers said, “He has been on death row for 23 years fighting to prove his innocence. It takes a toll on all of us, knowing our loved one is innocent, knowing the state could kill them. But we continue to fight.”

Lily Hughes, who is with Austin Abolitionists and a longtime supporter of Reed’s, chaired the press conference and rally. Every major news outlet in Austin, including the Houston Chronicle, turned out to cover the event.

When the truth is exposed about what happens in the jails, courtrooms and the prisons, it is clear that the real criminals are the cops, district attorneys, judges and prison officials who allow the racism, degradation and injustice — and the absolutely illegal and unconstitutional actions — to continue day after day. They are the real criminals under capitalism.

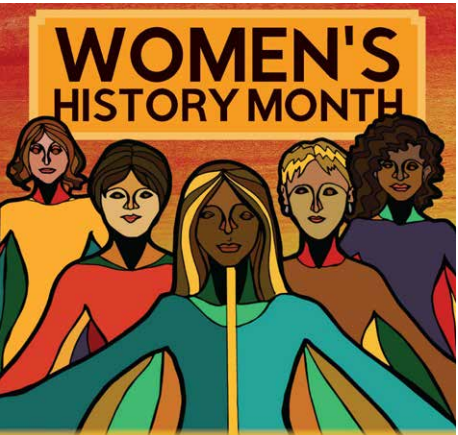
*Gloria Rubac is an organizer of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement.*

# Remembering Lolita Lebrón

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

*The following article was first posted Aug. 13, 2010, 12 days following the death of the great Puerto Rican independence fighter, Lolita Lebrón, at the age of 90. In honor of Women’s History Month, the article is being reprinted.*

Expressing the sounds of her beloved Puerto Rico, hundreds of people singing plenas and chanting about her valiant character accompanied independence fighter Lolita Lebrón to her final resting place in the Old San Juan Cemetery. She was buried close to her dear Maestro, Don Pedro Albizu Campos. As she had requested, the burial took place just over 24 hours after her death.



“Lolita Lebrón, ejemplo de valor” (example of courage) and “Se siente, se siente, Lolita está presente” (You can feel Lolita’s presence) were chanted mostly by women. On several occasions they took the weight of the casket from the men carrying it.

Not only pro-independence Puerto Ricans from all parties and organizations attended, but people of all political affiliations honored Lebrón. The breadth of support attested to Lebrón’s nurturing and humane nature and her relentless call for unity to defend Puerto Rican identity. She made friends across party lines.

Lebrón was as fierce defending independence as she was humble in appreciating all who fought for Puerto Rican values. One example was her friendship

with Norma Burgos, a pro-statehood senator, present at the funeral, who shared jail time with Lebrón for opposing the U.S. Navy occupation of the island of Vieques, which it used for bombing exercises.

Lebrón’s death immediately aroused a steady stream of heartfelt messages, poems, videos and songs across the internet. Both alternative and corporate newspapers ran obituaries, including an article in the Washington Post that spoke for the ruling class of the city where Lebrón was arrested in 1954. The Post’s author compared Lolita to revolutionaries like the Argentine/Cuban Che Guevara and Mexican Pancho Villa. The international community, especially Cubans and Nicaraguans, sent many messages.

Lolita Lebrón’s life, both personal and political, represents the history of Puerto Rico during the consolidation of U.S. colonial power on the island and the fight against that domination. Lebrón was born Nov. 19, 1919, in the city of Lares, where in 1898 people rose up against Spanish domination, in what is known as the Grito de Lares.

The event called “the Ponce massacre” marked Lebrón’s teenage years. On Palm Sunday — March 27, 1937 — colonial police surrounded a peaceful demonstration by members of the Nationalist Party in the city of Ponce. Under the direct orders of U.S.-appointed and U.S.-backed Gov. Blanton Winship, police opened fire, killing 22 unarmed people and wounding 200.

In 1941, leaving her daughter under her mother’s care, Lebrón left Puerto Rico for New York City. As did thousands of Puerto Ricans in the 1940s, she sought a job that was better than the unstable, poor existence facing them on the island. She worked in the garment industry and formally joined the Nationalist Party in New York, becoming an important leader. Lebrón was jailed for a brief period along with other Nationalists after demonstrations in front of the U.N. against “Free Associated State” status that the U.S. imposed on Puerto Rico in 1952.

In 1954 Nationalist leader Don Pedro Albizu Campos suggested an action

in Washington, D.C., to call international attention to the island’s status. The year before, the U.S. government had convinced the U.N. to approve a resolution that took Puerto Rico off the list of colonial territories. This resolution allowed the U.S. to withhold information about Puerto Rico from the U.N., clearing the way to intensify the island’s exploitation.

On March 1, 1954, Lebrón led the operation in the House of Representatives with Nationalist comrades Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores and Andrés Figueroa Cordero. Shouting “Viva Puerto Rico libre” and unfurling a Puerto Rican flag, she was the first one to shoot — at the ceiling.

Except Flores, who was able to escape, the other three were immediately arrested. Hundreds of Nationalists were arrested for “preventative detention” in New York, Chicago, Washington and all over Puerto Rico, including Albizu Campos. Lebrón was sentenced to 56 years in prison and the rest to 81 years for “assault with a weapon.”

In 1979 after a great deal of pressure — particularly from the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners Committee — President Jimmy Carter pardoned them along with Nationalist Oscar Collazo, who had been imprisoned since 1950 for the attack on Blair House. They were all freed unconditionally. Figueroa Cordero had been freed in 1978 because of ill health.

In an Aug. 4 interview with the Puerto Rican weekly Claridad, Cancel Miranda remembers Lebrón’s courage: “[S]he went up the stairs [in Congress], and I saw this woman; and I do not get tired of saying it, she was carrying not only our flag, but our dignity. ... There was this Puerto Rican woman from Lares, going up these stairs knowing that she was going to die, because she went to give her life [for our homeland].”

Once free, Lolita continued tirelessly



Lolita Lebrón in 1954

in the struggle to liberate her homeland: going on tours, giving speeches, writing poetry, but mostly joining others in demonstrations in Puerto Rico. She was a visible figure in the struggle against the Navy presence in Vieques and was arrested at age 81 for crossing into restricted shooting grounds.

In spite of great suffering during her incarceration in federal prisons in the U.S., where she was cruelly mistreated and mentally tortured, coupled with her own personal losses — both her children died while she was in prison — Lebrón kept unwavering commitment to the struggle for independence. Her contributions are many — writings, poems, but, above all, her work assuring that women are active participants and leaders in the struggle. She is an example of Albizu Campos’ famous pronouncement: “La Patria es valor y sacrificio” (Homeland is courage and sacrifice).

Lolita Lebrón, ¡Presente! ¡Viva Puerto Rico Libre!

*The writer participated in the movement to free political prisoners in Puerto Rico and was part of a team of progressive physicians who examined Lebrón, Cancel Miranda and Flores upon their return to Puerto Rico in 1979.*



# Librotraficante Movement plans to liberate books – again

By Gloria Rubac  
Houston

“They banned books. We made history!” This was the cry of the founder of the Librotraficante Movement — writer, activist and professor Tony Diaz on March 12. The Librotraficantes and supporters filled Casa Ramirez folk art shop to overflow capacity to celebrate the 10th anniversary of a 2012 caravan that took books banned from the Mexican American Studies (MAS) programs in the Tucson Unified School District back into Arizona.



During the 2012 Librotraficante caravan,Tony Diaz speaks in front of The Alamo in San Antonio.

The original organizers of Librotraficante — along with Diaz — were Liana Lopez, Bryan Parras and Lupe Mendez. Starting in 1998, they moderated a radio show on Houston’s Pacifica KPFT radio station called “Nuestra Palabra: Latino Writers Having Their Say.” When the group learned in early 2012 about the attack on MAS and the book banning in Arizona public schools, they went

into action. They decided to form a group of “book smugglers,” Librotraficantes, and smuggle what they called “wet books” across the border into Arizona — their resistant twist on a racist term for Mexican migrants. A big bus was rented, money and books were collected, and the caravan began. Along the way, thousands of additional books were donated from around the country, allowing communities to open four “underground” libraries that seemed to unleash a renewed interest in La Raza literary legacy. The caravan had book readings and rallies and press conferences in every city where it stopped. Caravanistas spoke to students of all ages, from young children to high school and college students. As activist professor Diaz said, “Tucson school district decided to ban Mexican American Studies classes and proceeded to remove all the books out of every classroom, even in front of the students. They banned our history. We decided to make more.” The banned titles included staples of Chicano and Mexican American Studies: “Re-Thinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years,” “Occupied America: A History of Chicanos,” and “500 Years of Chicano History in Pictures.”

### Liberating the books

The founders of the MAS program in Tucson and some of their students filed a lawsuit against the ban. When the case finally finished winding through the courts in 2017, Mexican American Studies won! The court ruled the ban was racist, decided that MAS improved the grades of all students involved and ordered MAS be reinstated. Diaz reacted to the victory, saying, “This demonstrates the power of this generation of Chicana and Chicano scholars, activists, writers, students and community members. We have the talent to write the books that were in the curriculum; we have the brilliant educators who devised the curriculum; we have the gifted scholars who researched the results of the curriculum; we have the civil rights lawyers who fought the case, the powerful students who stood up for their education, the powerful community that suffered the brunt of this cultural crisis, the Tucson familia who inspired us Tejanos and others from every state to defy great odds

for the greater good. We are honored to be part of their familia.” (librotraficante.com, Aug. 23, 2017) This writer was part of the original 2012 Librotraficante caravan. Along the way to Tucson, we were met and hosted by many organizations. Two famous Chicano authors stand out. They were Denise Chavez and Rudolfo Anaya (author of “Bless Me, Ultima,” one of New Mexico’s most treasured literary works). Chavez welcomed us into her home and bookstore in Las Mesillas, New Mexico, and served us a huge and delicious breakfast spread. Anaya, considered the godfather of Chicano literature, fed us and talked with us for hours, Then a bottle of tequila was passed around. Eventually this icon gave us his blessing and a charge: Occupy Arizona!

### No book banning — again!

How time flies! The original six-city caravan began with a send-off at Casa Ramirez. Ten years later we were again at Casa Ramirez to celebrate and to continue the struggle. We won a victory in Arizona then, but now there are threats of book banning from Texas to Florida and beyond. At the anniversary celebration, Diaz asked everyone present to “join us as we launch the next chapter in the Librotraficante Movement. Just in time, as it seems like these book banners ain’t learned their lesson. Time to school ’em again. “We are taking the Librotraficante Movement to the next level and touring all year long and into next year, the 25th anniversary of “Nuestra Palabra: Latino Writers Having Their Say.” Texas Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick is one of the targets of the Librotraficantes. Patrick has said that he will push for a change in state law that would end or revoke professorial tenure to teachers who he says “indoctrinate” students with ideas about critical race theory. From MAS to African American studies to LGBTQ+ studies, this is the time to organize again: No banning of liberation literature or critical ethnic studies. Patrick and all the other book banners around the country need to study the history and the power of a peoples’ movement like the Librotraficante Movement, because we have history and righteousness on our side. And we will win! □

# Italian airport workers refuse to load arms for Ukraine

By Alessio Arena  
Fronte Popolare, Italy

Workers at the Galileo Galilei Airport in Pisa — a civilian airport — reported March 12 that they had been involved in the loading of a cargo plane with what was alleged to be humanitarian aid destined for Ukraine. The aid turned out to be arms and ammunition destined for the troops of the Zelensky regime. Having learned the real content of the shipment, the workers refused to complete the loading operations and informed their rank and file union, Unione Sindacale di Base (USB), which publicly denounced the incident. “From the Cargo Village located at the civilian airport, ‘humanitarian’ flights take off. These are supposed to be filled with food, provisions, medicines and anything else useful for the Ukrainian people tormented



PHOTO: UNIONE SINDACALE DI BASE

People protest in Pisa, Italy, March 19 against the Italian government's decision to send weapons to Ukraine's government under the guise of humanitarian cargo. Banner reads 'From Tuscany, bridges of peace, not flights of war!'

by weeks of bombing and fighting. But it’s not like that: When they showed up under the plane, the workers in charge of loading were faced with boxes full of various types of weapons, ammunition, explosives,” says the USB statement. And further: “We strongly denounce this real fraud, which cynically uses the ‘humanitarian’ cover to continue to fuel the war in Ukraine.” Role of Italian regime The Italian government is on the front line in the proxy war fought on Ukrainian territory by the Russian army against the troops of the Zelensky government, which had been armed, trained and financed for almost a decade by the U.S. and NATO. Italy’s role has reached the point where the country is being increasingly excluded from the initiatives of the French-German axis that leads the European Union. These initiatives have aimed at trying to stem the crisis, recently materialized in a high-level discussion among French President Emmanuel Macron (current president of the EU Council), German Chancellor [Olaf] Scholz and Chinese President Xi Jinping. Media propaganda has pounded away, pushing an increasingly active Italian commitment in support of the Ukraine regime in Kiev. Leaders of Italy’s executive, headed by Prime Minister Mario Draghi, have ranted against Moscow. The country is being led by the hand to a paroxysm of Russophobia completely alien to its traditions and to the common sense of the population. An impressive barrage of distorted information, hypocritical rhetoric on human rights and anathema to unified networks against the execrable demon of “pacifism” is lavished to legitimize sending weapons to the war

theater. Doing this is a dangerous step towards generalizing and worsening a crisis that threatens to drag the continent and the whole world into the abyss. The episode at Pisa airport shows that the attempt to impose pro-war sentiments on the Italian people is meeting resistance, despite the concerted effort almost all parties represented in Parliament have been making. In recent weeks, the media has launched a hostile campaign against the main Italian trade union, the Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL) and against the National Association of Partisans of Italy (ANPI). The ANPI is “guilty,” along with many other popular organizations, of refusing to conform to the single voice of war propaganda. While they oppose the “special military operation” ordered by Putin, they also oppose sending weapons to the Ukrainian army and, in the case of ANPI, against the expansion of NATO to the east. □

## WAR

### WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

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

– Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009; Foreign Minister of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government.

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# No sanctions, no nukes, no war!

Continued from page 1

ends up paying a price for having done it. ... I know these sanctions are the broadest sanctions in history, and economic sanctions and political sanctions.”

In an interview with blogger Brian Tyler Cohen, Biden said his “goal from the very beginning” was to keep NATO and the European Union “on the same page.” (tinyurl.com/22dbb5d7)

The EU, a bloc of capitalist economies dominated by Germany, is unable and unwilling to directly challenge U.S. hegemony, especially when they are threatened with nuclear war in Europe if they don’t comply. The EU imposed all the sanctions demanded by the U.S. Their sanctions mirror those imposed by Washington. However, they are still able to purchase some gas from Russia, based on an agreement with the U.S.

Sanctions were imposed on Russia in 2014 after the majority Russian population in Crimea voted to rejoin Russia. This followed a U.S.-supported coup that included fascist elements in the Ukrainian capital of Kiev. At that time, two regions in East Ukraine — Donetsk and the Lugansk People’s Republics — broke away from the fascist gangs in Kiev.

Since the 1999 U.S./NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, and despite constant warnings of danger even from its own political strategists, the policy of the U.S.

government has been to keep absorbing more East European countries into NATO, building NATO bases around Russia, recruiting and training soldiers and mercenaries, creating provocations on the Russian border and using Ukraine as a pawn to destabilize the entire region.

These years of constant economic and military attacks on Russia are hidden from the public in the U.S. and the EU.

**What is behind U.S. war policy?**

Why is EU/Russian trade and integration so threatening to U.S. imperialism? The EU is the biggest investor in Russia. A new and larger double pipeline, called Nord Stream 2, was built to carry cheap natural gas from Russia through the Baltic Sea and into Europe. It provides fuel for EU industries and heat for millions of homes. It provides a break from reliance on high-polluting coal and oil.

Energy accounts for 62% of the EU imports from Russia. It costs much less than gas from the U.S., which is the largest exporter of fracked LNG gas. This is a challenge to opening new markets. With war and sanctions, U.S. gas and oil corporations will immediately profit from skyrocketing prices for fuel and guarantee their future control of the European market.

The clash is larger than just a gas pipeline. The U.S. economy is focused on military production. It is the largest exporter



Members of the Italian anti-war group No Muos demonstrate March 20 outside Naval Air Station Sigonella on the island of Sicily. The banner reads: ‘We will not pay for the wars of the rich. NATO/U.S. bases out of our land!’

of weapons systems. But U.S. imperialism is unable to match China’s Belt and Road development plans. More than 138 countries have signed on for new ports, railroads, industrial hubs and low-interest loans.

China’s Belt and Road development loans are far more attractive than U.S. weapons systems and the harsh austerity plans that are attached to IMF and World Bank loans.

U.S. finance capitalists are alarmed that two-thirds of the member countries of the European Union have signed on as formal members of China’s Belt and

Road Development projects. Port cities in Greece, Italy, Portugal and Hungary are being rebuilt. New energy projects are underway. Europe’s trade with China now exceeds its trade with the United States. (tinyurl.com/5bw7t6yv)

In the struggle to maintain its dominant position, U.S. imperialism has only one tool against these rapidly developing and sharply competing economic relations: war. Both military war and the economic war of sanctions.

*Coming, part 2: Sanctions are war.*

# Sanctions Kill Campaign: End the Ukraine war

This March 17 statement issued by the Sanctions Kill Campaign links to a petition at [www.sanctionskill.org](http://www.sanctionskill.org).

The Sanctions Kill Campaign is a broad coalition of social justice, solidarity and peace forces, focused on exposing the devastating impact of U.S. sanctions on civilian populations globally.

**Sanctions are not a substitute for war**

The current regime of sanctions against Russia is not a substitute for war but a form of warfare. Sanctions kill many thousands, just as bombs do. Sanctions create hyperinflation, artificial famines, social upheavals and health crises that punish civilian populations. As U.S. President [Joe] Biden said, the sanctions are intended “to inflict further pain.”

Sanctions are collective punishment and illegal under international law.

Nor are the sanctions by the U.S. and its allies against Russia a deterrent to war. They will not reduce hostilities but are an escalation of the current conflict.

**Sanctions consolidate U.S. dominance in Europe**

Sanctions are being used to consolidate U.S. dominance in the region, even though it is counter to the material interests of the European Union and Britain to cut economic ties with Moscow.

The growth in EU trade with Russia and

China threatens the domination of U.S. corporate power in Europe. The EU is the biggest investor in Russia. While the U.S. is the largest exporter of methane gas, the EU purchases substantial gas from Russia at much lower prices, also oil and wheat.

With the EU and especially Germany unwilling to impose sanctions, which would break all relations with Russia, Biden threatened the U.S. allies that the only alternative to sanctions . . . would be nuclear war. The U.S. president said: “You have two options. Start a Third World War. ... Or two, make sure that the country that acts so contrary to international law ends up paying a price.” Biden said the U.S. “goal from the very beginning” was to keep NATO and the EU “on the same page.”

Using the dominant role of the dollar in the world economy, Washington has unilaterally imposed over 5,500 sanctions on Russia, making it the most sanctioned target of U.S. aggressive policies.

**U.S. sanctions drag the whole world into the conflict**

Unfortunately, Russia is not the only victim of these unilateral coercive measures. Over 40 countries, comprising a third of humanity, are so targeted by the U.S. These include Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, China, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Sudan. Third countries trading with targets of U.S. sanctions face

heavy fines. This deadly form of economic warfare destroys regional development.

Further, the U.S. is compelling other countries to execute these extreme economic penalties. We note, with grave concern, that these sanctions imposed on Russia are dragging the whole world into a conflict which has a high potential of spiraling out of control.

The United Nations did not approve the U.S.-instigated sanctions. Many countries now refuse to join with the U.S./EU sanctions imposed on Russia. To date India, Pakistan, Indonesia, South Africa, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and other countries with smaller economies have refused to comply with the U.S. measures. In fact, almost all of Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa, and most of Asia reject the sanctions.

**Sanctions are a crime against humanity**

Such sanctions would damage these countries’ own trade relations. Supply chain disruptions and inflationary pressures from the U.S.-led sanctions are already disproportionately impacting poor and working people globally due to shortages and higher prices for food, fuel and basic commodities. Especially impacted are people in the developing world.

As over 60 years of U.S. sanctions against the Cuban Revolution prove, sanctions meant to achieve the regime

change the U.S. wants to impose have, in fact, resulted in raining misery upon the targeted people. These sanctions serve as a cautionary lesson to any nation that wishes to exercise its sovereignty under the globally inflicted “Pax Americana.” Sanctions are a crime against humanity.

**Ending the Ukraine war**

This devastating war started with the U.S.-orchestrated coup in 2014, overthrowing the democratically elected government in Ukraine. Although Ukraine is not a formal NATO member, the U.S. has since dumped mountains of lethal arms and deployed U.S. military “advisers” into Ukraine.

Ukraine is a pawn in Washington’s strategy against Russia. Since the coup, Ukraine has been reduced to the poorest country in Europe with the highest rate of migration. Kiev’s continuing aggression against its eastern provinces and mass privatizations of socially owned property have furthered the economic ruin.

The Sanctions Kill Campaign calls on all sides to end hostilities and for the U.S. to employ diplomacy — not weapons, sanctions and war!

More at [www.sanctionskill.org](http://www.sanctionskill.org)  
Sign the petition:  
[solidaritycenter.ourpowerbase.net/civicism/petition/sign?sid=28&reset=1](http://solidaritycenter.ourpowerbase.net/civicism/petition/sign?sid=28&reset=1)





# Another form of imperialist genocide

The House of Representatives passed H.R. 2116 bill on March 18 — the “Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair Act” or the CROWN Act — with a vote of 235 to 189.

What is this legislation about? It is a bill that outlaws discrimination “based on the individual’s hair texture or hairstyle, if that hair texture or that hairstyle is commonly associated with a particular race or national origin.” The hairstyles that the bill includes as examples are “hair is tightly coiled or tightly curled, locs, cornrows, twists, braids, Bantu knots and Afros.”

These hairstyles mainly pertain to communities of African descent. Some states have passed similar legislation. Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-N.J.), who introduced the bill and is African American, raised that Black people have been denied employment, housing, federal assistance or equal treatment due to their hairstyles, a reflection of one’s national identity.

The bill now goes before the Republican-dominated Senate for passage. This is the same Senate that has held up the passage of the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021 that sought to bring about some modest reforms in addressing police abuse and murders.

The CROWN bill, while progressive in addressing the ongoing bias against the culture of mainly African Americans, at the same time speaks to the institutionalized white-supremacist attitudes that permeate every aspect of U.S. society and that are not just isolated instances.

The great Philadelphia 76er basketball player, Allen Iverson, was once ostracized by the National Basketball Association white hierarchy for wearing cornrows. Iverson’s immense popularity, due to his fearless style of play, admired mainly by Black and white youth, made him an important icon for the Hip-Hop generation and culture during the mid-1990s.

In December 2019, 16-year-old African American wrestler, Andrew Johnson, was given an ultimatum by a white male referee during a competition — either have his dreadlocks cut off or forfeit his wrestling match. Wanting to compete so badly, Johnson made the painful decision to have a white female trainer cut his dreadlocks. This occurred in Buena Vista, New Jersey, only two years ago!

The same referee who made the ruling on Johnson’s hair claimed it violated the National Federation of State High School Associations’ rule that all hair should

be covered while competing. This same white referee was accused of using a racial slur against a Black referee in 2016. There was no doubt that Johnson was humiliated and traumatized by this incident.

**Prisoners won lawsuit to keep hairstyle**

Back in 2020, WW covered a case of two African American prisoners, Eric McGill and Leonttay Pratt, who were relegated to solitary confinement for months for wearing dreadlocks due to their Rastafarian faith. The men were first imprisoned at Lebanon County Correctional Facility in Pennsylvania for not being able to make bail. As a result of a number of lawsuits targeting this facility, the county jail was forced to pass a narrow religious exemption to this racist policy.

The Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project, which represented these prisoners, released a statement saying, “While this new policy protects the rights of incarcerated people to wear dreadlocks for religious reasons, it does not address the larger issue that Lebanon County still bans dreadlocks when people have them for reasons other than religion. Contrary to Lebanon County’s assertions, dreadlocks do not present inherent security or

cleanliness concerns. Indeed, dozens of jail and prison systems across the United States permit incarcerated people to have dreadlocks.”

The WW article, written by co-director of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party Ted Kelly, goes on to say, “The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 1994 stated plainly that ‘any action which has the aim or effect of depriving them of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities,’ constitutes a violation of the genocide convention.” ([workers.org/2020/05/48514](https://workers.org/2020/05/48514))

There are many forms of war carried out at home and abroad by U.S. imperialism. For example, there is the current instigated U.S.-NATO threat of war against Russia which could lead to a wider war. There is the ongoing war against Black and Brown people in the form of police terror inside the U.S. And this war includes the attempted cultural genocide that the CROWN bill addresses.

The fact that such a bill had to be passed in the year 2022 is an indictment of a racist system that relies on demonizing African and other Indigenous cultures of oppressed people to maintain its class rule. □

## With nearly 1 million deaths U.S. disparages China’s COVID-19 policy

By G. Dunkel

Look at the March 20 figures from Worldometer for the United States and China, including Hong Kong.

The U.S. has officially recorded 997,845 deaths. (The real figure is certainly higher since deaths due to COVID-19 are often unreported.) Since the official death rate in the U.S. currently is around 1,200 a day, the official total for the U.S. will be over a million deaths before the end of March.

Every state has abolished their mask mandate, if they even had one, and legal restrictions aimed at reducing the spread of COVID-19 are being rescinded quickly. The general attitude seems to be that people must learn to live with the disease, like they live with the flu, and accept the deaths as part of leading a normal life and keeping profits flowing.

China is reporting a COVID-19 surge in the past few weeks, with two fatalities March 19, the first COVID-19 deaths in China in over a year. China has reported only 4,638 deaths since the beginning of the pandemic two years ago. Its population of 1.4 billion is close to four times the population of the U.S.

The “zero tolerance” COVID-19 policy has led China to lock down major cities like Shenzhen in southern China, bordering Hong Kong, and in Jilin Province in the northeast. China was able to hold a successful Summer Olympics under this policy without any large-scale outbreaks.

Hong Kong, which is formally part of China but has its own health care system and a capitalist economy, has reported 5,650 deaths. Almost all of these are due to the fifth wave of COVID-19, which has battered Hong Kong for the past two months.

Hong Kong, according to an analysis by the Hong Kong Free Press, has had a peak COVID-19 infection rate of 900 per 100,000, a global record, and at one point the highest death rate in the world. Hong



A COVID-19 vaccination site in Wuhan, China, during the upsurge of the delta variant in 2021.

Kong relied on travel restrictions that involved compulsory quarantining in designated places and multiple testing. But its health care system — limited and profit-driven — collapsed as COVID-19 spread rapidly among the elderly, whose vaccination rate was low, and as restrictions and testing requirements were relaxed. Hong Kong has very dense, cramped, expensive housing.

**Corporate media blames China**

Zeynep Tufekci, a New York Times columnist with connections to Harvard who writes for a number of influential magazines like Scientific American, wrote March 11 on the two-year anniversary of COVID-19. Her basic charge is that China covered up the pandemic in December 2019 and that this cover-up cost millions of lives.

She says: “It may seem like a fantasy to suggest that the outbreak could have been extinguished before it became a pandemic, but later outbreaks of this virus were contained. This first wave could have been too, and the pandemic might have been completely avoided, saving millions of lives and much suffering.”

Earlier in the article she charged: “China could have notified the World

Health Organization sometime in early to mid-December that it had an outbreak of a previously unknown coronavirus . . .”

Hindsight is always clearer. But from mid-December to mid-January, China’s public health leadership developed a plan that saved millions of Chinese lives — look at the figures for China and the U.S. — a plan that any other country could have adopted.

Another notable Times columnist, Paul Krugman, who has a Nobel Prize in Economics and is a research professor at the City University of New York, wrote in a March 17 column, “China [is] now experiencing a disastrous failure of its COVID policy.”

Krugman argues that the cost of

China’s lockdowns is becoming unsupportable: It’s affecting Apple’s production of iPhones and creating kinks in the world’s supply chain.

**Why the differences between China and the U.S.**

China is a socialist country that tries to protect the lives and prevent the suffering of its people. It developed a strategy of “test, track, isolate,” before vaccines, before antivirals, before monoclonal antibodies — a strategy that involved locking down millions of people and whole cities for weeks at a time. It was a coherent approach for the whole country. Mistakes were made and sometimes corrected in time. China’s leadership realizes that the virus and circumstances can and do change rapidly.

In the U.S., a capitalist country, the approach to controlling the pandemic was remarkably incoherent. It exposed a lack of racial and economic justice and was stained by all sorts of quackery over supposed remedies — hydroxychloroquine and ivermectin were the two most promoted “cures.” Many decisions were made to preserve businesses and their profits.

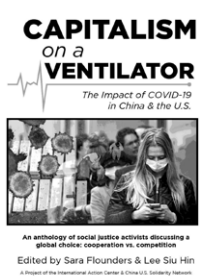
If the United States had the same death rate as China — in other words, if it had the same social system and approach to COVID-19 as China — fewer than 2,000 people would have died in the U.S. in the course of the pandemic. □

### Capitalism on a Ventilator

#### The impact of COVID-19 in China & the U.S.

An anthology contrasting the effective Chinese response to COVID-19 with the disastrous response here in the U.S. It pushes back against the racist anti-China campaign in the media.

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**CAPITALISM on a VENTILATOR**  
The impact of COVID-19 in China & the U.S.  
An anthology of social justice activists discussing a global choice: cooperation vs. competition  
Edited by Sara Flounders & Lee Siu Hin  
A project of the International Center for Chinese U.S. University Research



WW COMMENTARY

In South Korea, the right wing roosts and rallies

By Danny O'Brien

As the United States military apparatus once again flexes its muscles and bares its teeth to the world, we see in its wake an international mobilization of imperialism and a hopping onto the bandwagon of warmongering. On March 9, right-wing candidate and former prosecutor Yoon Suk-yeol of the People's Power Party won the presidency of the Republic of Korea (South Korea or ROK) in a narrow margin of 48.6% to 47.8% against Lee Jae-myung, the Democratic Party candidate.

Yoon's party, despite its name, is not to be confused with a party concerned with the power of the people.

Attack on working people

Yoon's campaign raises several alarms for working and oppressed people. Firstly, he ran on a campaign of cutting the minimum wage and allowing for a longer workweek. Currently, the minimum wage in the country is the equivalent of \$7.20 an hour. Under the previous presidency of Moon Jae-in, South Korea's workweek was reduced from a grueling 68 hours to a still-grueling 52 (40 hours plus 12 hours overtime).

Yoon has criticized even this limit for "inflexibility," saying people in certain sectors, like the gaming industry, should "be able" to work 120 hours a week.

Apparently, he believes what a country of overworked people needs is simply more work.

Attack on gender equality and women

Yoon wishes to abolish the 21-year-old Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, stating with audacity that it is "inefficient" and that there is "already gender equality." The Ministry is charged with protection of women against domestic violence, improvement of rights on a gender-equal basis, prevention of the sex trade and planning positive gender policies.

Yoon ran on a campaign of anti-feminism, pandering to a large and growing voter bloc within the country of "idaenam" ("men in their twenties"). "Idaenam" cite feminism and affirmative



There was fierce protest against U.S. deployment of its Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) in South Korea in 2016.

action as "reverse discrimination," are in opposition to LGBTQ+ rights and (surprise) are concentrated mainly in the upper class.

Attacks on immigrants

Yoon campaigned to start the screening of foreigners, specifically Chinese immigrants, to deny them use of the country's national health insurance. Yoon believes Chinese immigrants are "taking advantage" of the services and "putting their spoons on meal tables prepared by Koreans."

This rhetoric will no doubt raise Sinophobic bigotry and Korean nationalism within the country and could potentially have the same deadly results as the hateful anti-immigration rhetoric in the U.S. There could easily be a rise in hate crimes against Chinese people in Korea, as well as against women and gender-oppressed people.

Dangerous military policies

While these domestic policies will suffocate the working class and deprive them of liberties, Yoon's foreign policy exists on a potentially more dangerous ground.

The U.S. already maintains a nuclear presence in South Korea by use of bombers and submarines. The denuclearization of the country in 1991 reversed the three-decade-long amassment of 950 warheads. Now, in a time of renewed nuclear fearmongering, Yoon Suk-yeol has requested the U.S. redeploy its

U.S. military occupation

As it stands, the U.S. has multiple air defense battalions scattered around the Korean peninsula. In 2015 during my time in the U.S. Army, I was attached to a PATRIOT Launching Station battery in Osan Airbase, south of Seoul. I saw the disdain of the Korean people toward the military occupation of their country and watched as they further protested this occupation after the U.S. sent live samples of anthrax to the country through the airbase.

Typically, our military unit would convoy across the land and set up missile systems at various bases, including a weeklong display of force directly on the border with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Soldiers would test weapons, throw grenades and don their "full battle-rattle." The endless military adventurism, dog-and-pony shows and touting of U.S. missile systems was then and is an ongoing force against the self-determination of the Korean people.

The weapon system I was tasked with was a truck-mounted launching station capable of sending 4 to 16 missiles — each

costing \$3 million — between 25-99 miles. The number of missiles and range depends on the launcher used.

But this massive system was a pistol compared to THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense), with missiles that can fly further, higher and faster than the PATRIOT.

In 2017, the THAAD program was deployed to South Korea, despite popular opposition, and was instrumental in muddying relations between China and that country, as China had reasonable cause to believe THAAD could be used against its people. Later that year, China and South Korea agreed to attempts at renormalization of their relationship.

Now, in addition to heinous requests for the redeployment of tactical nuclear weapons, Yoon has requested additional THAAD installations from the U.S. While Yoon has claimed the THAAD missiles

are for "deterrence" against the DPRK, China opposes the installation due to additional security issues regarding surveillance and espionage from the system's radars.

Yoon backs new U.S. proxy alliance

Yoon wants South Korea to join a three-way military alliance with the U.S. and Japan. This would strengthen the U.S.

presence in the Indo-Pacific and South China Sea and assist the U.S. in militarily surrounding China.

Currently the U.S. is feeding the conflict in Ukraine to use it as a proxy war against Russia — even as it escalates hostility to People's China. If the U.S. further militarizes and nuclearizes South Korea and forms a new bolstered military alliance in the area, this will increase military tension on China's and Russia's eastern areas from the Korean Peninsula.

Joe Piette contributed to this article.

Yoon wants South Korea to join a three-way military alliance with the U.S. and Japan. This would strengthen the U.S. presence in the Indo-Pacific and South China Sea and assist the U.S. in militarily surrounding China.

MUNDO OBRERO

Si le preocupa Ucrania, ¡Desmantelen la OTAN!

Por Sara Flounders

Mucho antes de la intervención rusa del 24 de febrero, el régimen golpista fascista de 2014 respaldado por Estados Unidos había reducido a Ucrania al país más pobre de Europa, y con la mayor tasa de migración. El Fondo Monetario Internacional reestructuró la economía y exigió medidas de austeridad que destruyeron las pensiones y cortaron el gasto social. Las privatizaciones masivas de bienes de propiedad social llevaron a la ruina económica.

Ahora la trata de personas con fines de explotación sexual comercial y trabajos forzados, junto con la compra de niños en orfanatos, está más extendida en Ucrania que en cualquier otro país europeo. La mayor industria de vientres de alquiler del mundo está en Ucrania; las madres de alquiler reciben 15.000 dólares por niño. (tinyurl.com/5n7xyhex)

Ucrania, a pesar de estar inundada de armas de la OTAN, carece tanto de

servicios sociales básicos que tiene las tasas de vacunación más bajas de Europa. Las tasas de vacunación contra el polio, el sarampión y la difteria son del 53%. Y sólo uno de cada cinco ucranianos ha recibido una dosis completa de la vacuna COVID-19, planeando preocupaciones sobre la aparición de nuevas variantes de COVID-19 en las condiciones de hacinamiento de los refugiados fuera de Ucrania. (tinyurl.com/5dyas8st)

Ucrania: un peón de la OTAN

Ucrania, aunque no es oficialmente miembro de la alianza militar de la OTAN bajo el mando de Estados Unidos, ha recibido cientos de millones de dólares en equipo militar letal de Estados Unidos. Las tropas ucranianas sirvieron bajo el mando de Estados Unidos y la OTAN en Irak y



Kiev, Ucrania

FOTO: RT

Afganistán. Como "Socio de Oportunidad Mejorada", Ucrania acogió ejercicios de entrenamiento militar conjuntos con tropas estadounidenses, británicas y canadienses.

En el este de Ucrania y en los países de la OTAN se están instalando armas con capacidad nuclear táctica, que podrían

alcanzar ciudades rusas en cuestión de minutos.

La guerra en Ucrania podría terminar hoy si los Estados Unidos dejara de bombear miles de millones de dólares en armas letales y miles de "asesores" militares estadounidenses y contratistas militares privados -mercenarios- en Ucrania. Esta guerra devastadora nunca habría comenzado si estas fuerzas entrenadas y equipadas por Estados Unidos no hubieran estado bombardeando los 2.000 kilómetros de frontera entre Ucrania y Rusia durante los últimos ocho años, todo ello mientras Estados Unidos y la OTAN han estado rodeando a Rusia con bases militares en los países vecinos.

Ucrania es un peón en esta estrategia de Estados Unidos contra Rusia. El único camino hacia la paz es la disolución de la OTAN. ¡La OTAN fuera de Ucrania! □



Harriet Tubman

Una mujer llamada Generala Moisés

Por Mumia Abu-Jamal

Nos dejó hace casi un siglo pero su nombre sigue vivo, recordado por millones de personas; su memoria es sagrada entre los amantes de la libertad.

Sus papás le pusieron el nombre de Araminta. Era hija de esclavos negros de la región Tidewater en el estado de Maryland, tal vez en 1820 (o 1821 — nadie sabe a ciencia cierta). Cuando era bebé, los esclavos convirtieron su nombre elegante al apodo, “Minty”. Se recuerda en la historia por su nombre de casada: Harriet Tubman, luchadora por la libertad.

De niña, dio sus primeros pasos por el camino a la libertad. Ni 10 años tenía cuando se escapó de unos esclavistas crueles que usaban la violencia desnuda contra bebés, niñas y niños para forzarlos a hacer su voluntad.

A la tierna edad de 5 años, Harriet fue forzada a cuidar a un niño blanco, hacer labores del aseo doméstico, y trabajar día y noche para los demás. Tenía 7 años cuando la sorprendieron comiendo azúcar, un privilegio reservado exclusivamente para los blancos. Bajo la amenaza del látigo, la niña se fugó. Corriendo rápido hasta que sus piernitas le fallaron, se cayó en una pocilga donde tuvo que pelear durante cuatro días con los puerquitos por las cáscaras de camote mientras evitaba a la cerda enojada.

El hambre la obligó a regresar a la casa de su señora, donde sufrió una serie de latigazos brutales a manos de su amo. Sin duda, la experiencia de la violencia le dio una lección contundente, pero no precisamente la que la clase esclavista pretendía impartir. Ellos querían inculcar la semilla del terror a la niña para que jamás pensara en escaparse de nuevo. Pero parece que, al contrario, ella aprendió otra lección: al darse a la fuga no habría camino de vuelta.

Ella se casó con un hombre “libre”, John Tubman, quien era libre sólo en nombre, libre bajo la ley, pero no en su manera de



Los partidarios de Mumia Abu-Jamal se reúnen en la estatua de Harriet Tubman frente al Ayuntamiento de Filadelfia, el2 de marzo.

pensar. Cuando ella hablaba de la libertad, le gritó que dejara de hacer eso. La amenazó: “Si te escapas, yo te acuso con el amo. Te acuso ahora mismo”.

Mientras veía a su esposo, surgió en ella un sentimiento de incredulidad. Respondió: “No, no quieres decir eso”. Pero en lo más profundo de su ser, se dio cuenta de que eso fue precisamente lo que quiso decir. Sin embargo, ella pretendía vivir libre.

Sin lugar a duda, había aprendido otra lección: no se puede confiar en todo el mundo. Sabía que tendría que cuidarse, estar alerta, fijarse en cada detalle.

Al llegar el momento esperado, se fue, caminando por densos bosques, atravesando ríos y cerros, evitando caminos abiertos. Siguió la Estrella del Norte. Cuando llegó al supuestamente “libre” estado de Pensilvania, se dijo a sí misma: “He cruzado la línea. Soy ‘libre’”. Pero no hubo quien me recibiera en esta tierra de libertad. Era extranjera en tierra extraña. A final de cuentas, mi hogar estaba en el estado sureño de Maryland porque mi papá, mi mamá, mis hermanos, mis hermanas y mis amigos se encontraban allí. Pero yo era libre. Y ellos deberían ser libres. Yo haría un hogar para ellos en el Norte y los llevaría allí”.

Lo dijo. Lo dijo en serio. Lo hizo. Regresó a Tidewater una y otra vez. Con astucia, valor y firmeza, llevó gente de allí. Dos años después de haberse escapado, regresó a la plantación para llevarse a John

Tubman, pero el negro “libre” se había casado de nuevo y, al considerarse libre, no quiso salir de Maryland. Aun así, a Harriet esto no le disuadió de cumplir con su misión sagrada: la libertad.

Siempre llevaba una pistola y una vez, mientras conducía a unos 25 cautivos al Norte, estuvo a dos pasos de usarla. A uno de los hombres no le quedaban fuerzas. Hambriento y lleno de miedo, tomó la decisión de

que no valía la pena andar por los pantanos. Se negó a moverse hasta que ella se le acercó, lo encañonó con la pistola y le dijo: “Muévete o muérete”. Se movió. En unos pocos días llegaron a Canadá.

Harriet sabía que un esclavo capturado y devuelto a su dueño sería torturado hasta decir todo lo que sabía, así poniendo en peligro a todos los que buscaban la libertad. Para ella, era asunto de libertad o muerte. Así tan sencillo.

Más adelante diría de su educación y de la misma esclavitud: “Crecí como hierba abandonada – ignorante de la libertad, sin experiencia de ella. No estaba feliz ni contenta. Cada vez que veía a un hombre blanco me daba miedo de que me llevara. Se llevaron a dos de mis hermanas a una cadena de presidiarios. Una de ellas dejó dos hijos. Siempre vivimos en el desasosiego ... Creo que la esclavitud es lo más cercano al infierno”. \*

Como resultado de sus redadas en los estados carceleros del Sur, Harriet condujo cientos de negros a la libertad, incluso a sus propios papás, ya viejos, Harriet y Benjamin Ross. Se cree que sus antepasados vinieron del pueblo Ashanti, una tribu de la costa occidental de África (La región central de la antigua sociedad Ashanti, es el país moderno de Ghana.)

De principio a fin, su vida era de resistencia y lucha por la causa de la libertad.

Ejecutó entre 10 y 15 redadas al Sur para liberar a los cautivos negros. En estas

redadas liberó entre 300 y 500 personas.

Reclutada para asistir a las fuerzas norteañas durante la guerra civil de Estados Unidos, Tubman organizó la redada del Río Combahee en Carolina del Sur, rescatando a unos 800 esclavos y ocasionando miles de dólares de daño a las instalaciones sureñas. Con regocijo, observó la salida de tantas personas del cautiverio.

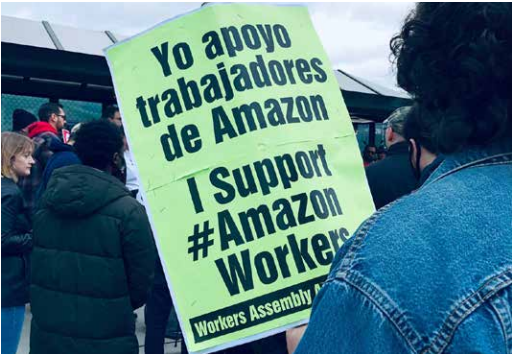
Años después, Tubman recordó la escena: “Nunca jamás había visto algo así. Nos reímos y reímos y reímos. Por un lado podrías ver una mujer cargando una cubeta colocada en la cabeza llena del arroz humeante como si acabara de quitarla de la fogata. Un niño se colgó detrás de ella... Una mujer llevó dos cerdos; subimos a todos. Al cerdo blanco le pusimos Beauregard (un general sureño) y al negro, Jeff Davis (el presidente de la Confederación de estados sureños). A veces llegaron las mujeres con gemelos colgados de sus cuellos. En mi vida no he visto tantos gemelos. Bolsas colgadas de los hombros, niños tras ellas, todos cargados...”\*\*

Harriet Tubman nos dejó en el año 1913, en sus noventa años de vida. El abolicionista armado John Brown habló de ella con tremenda admiración como “La Generala”. Harriet Tubman. Luchadora por la libertad”. Es un nombre sagrado, que queda alto en el altar de la libertad.

Fuentes:  
\* Petry, Ann, *Harriet Tubman, Conductor on the Underground Railroad*. NY: Harper Collins, 1955 [1983]; unpubl. sources].  
\*\* Lee, Butch. *Jailbreak Out of History: The Re-Biography of Harriet Tubman*. Brooklyn, NY: Stoopsale Books, 2000, p. 78.

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8 de febrero de 2007. El texto completo en inglés se difundió originalmente por Sis Fatirah y ahora se encuentra aquí: <https://podbay.fm/p/mumia-abu-jamals-radio-essays/e/1171838400>

Traducción: kalo



Manifestación de solidaridad del sindicato de trabajadores de Amazon, Isla de Staten, 20 de marzo.

Protesta en Filadelfia

Biden: ¡cumple tus promesas de inmigración!

Grupos de migrantes protestaron frente a la reunión del presidente Joe Biden con funcionarios del Partido Demócrata en Filadelfia el 11 de marzo. Unas 75 personas salieron con corta notificación para criticar a Biden y al Partido Demócrata por no haber actuado en la reforma migratoria que podría legalizar a 11 millones de migrantes y refugiados en los Estados Unidos.

Los oradores de JUNTOS, Shut Down Berks, MILPA, New Sanctuary Movement, Woori Center y otros

grupos hablaron durante 45 minutos, con un orador diciendo que ambos partidos no se han diferenciado: “Es el mismo circo, con distinto payaso” cuando se trata de la reforma migratoria.

Mientras la limusina y la caravana de autos de Biden entraban en el recinto del Hotel Hilton, los tambores y los cantos le daban la “bienvenida” en voz alta.

— Reportaje y foto de Joe Piette

