

Amazon, Starbucks say 'get back'

Workers say fight back!

By Steve Gillis, Jim McMahan
and Minnie Bruce Pratt

Big Business would like to believe that the wave of class struggle by U.S. workers is fading — despite being so visible in Amazon Labor Union's historic victory at the JFK8 warehouse in Staten Island, New York, and in the lightning spread of Starbucks Workers United (SBWU).

But remember the "Red for Ed" strike wave, begun by the Chicago Teachers Union in 2012, taken up with a vengeance by the West Virginia teachers, then spreading to Oklahoma and to Arizona. That has not ended yet, as the Seattle Education Association strike Sept. 7 shows. (See "Class War in West Virginia: Education Workers Strike, Win," workers.org/books.)

And what about the longest U.S. strike still underway? The United Mine Workers have been stubbornly out on the picket line for 18 months and counting in Brookwood, Alabama. ("Alabama miners defiant," Workers World, Sept. 15)

U.S. workers have been organizing unions and striking for victory for over 200 years. Not stopping now, especially not Amazon and Starbucks workers!

Shaking the walls of Seattle world HQ

Voices of 400 workers reverberated off the walls of Starbucks world headquarters in Seattle on Sept. 13: "What do we want? Contract! When do we want it? Now!" Organized by SBWU, the block-long picket line was a push back against Starbucks' rabid union-busting tactics across the country.

The union action protested Starbucks Investor Day, held inside where CEO Howard Schultz and company were announcing a "Reinvention Plan." Starbucks soon-to-be CEO Laxman Narasimhan was introduced at the meeting, but Schultz, the infamous outgoing CEO, will remain on the board.



Hundreds of Starbucks workers protest company's 'Investors Day.' Seattle, Sept. 13.

In response to the workers' tremendous organizing drive, the "reinvention" no doubt includes Starbucks current anti-union tactics, while adding new technology to wring huge profits for investors out of workers' labor.

The SBWU demonstration in front of the massive Starbucks tower was a show of force to the bosses scheming inside. "If we don't get it? Shut it down!" the workers chanted. At the rally, fired-up Starbucks worker-organizers from Seattle; Portland and Eugene, Oregon; and Olympia, Washington, gave moving statements about working conditions at Starbucks and their successful organizing drives.

Marchers included large union contingents from SBWU, Laborers International Union (LIUNA), Service Employees Union (SEIU), Communications Workers (CWA), the Sheet Metal Workers, International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Locals 19 and 23, UNITE-HERE Local 8 and Teamsters Local 117, along with members of the Martin Luther King County Labor Council and other groups.

On Sept. 8 a national zoom meeting initiated by Support Amazon Workers Network called for national demonstrations and activities on Sept. 29 (National Coffee Day) and Oct. 1 (International Coffee Day), which will be the six-month anniversary of the Amazon Labor Union victory at JFK8 — the first Amazon facility unionized in the U.S. The actions will show solidarity with union drives by Amazon and Starbucks workers. According to an Aug. 30 Gallup poll, 71% of people in the U.S. back unionization. (news.gallup.com)

The call included worker-leaders and supporters of Starbucks and Amazon workers from across the U.S. For more info, see supportamazonworkers.org.

Facing down Starbucks police tactics in Boston

On Sept. 15, Starbucks management called in the cops to threaten Boston SBWU's 24/7 encampment. This was the two-month mark of a militant strike against discrimination and union busting by workers at the Boston University neighborhood shop at 874 Commonwealth Ave.

For the first time since the strike began July 18, cops were brought in to threaten arrest — on the pretext of alleged trespassing. A Boston Police Department captain and his Special Operations SWAT squad — sporting bulletproof vests and driving arrest wagons — arrived to enforce Starbucks' global "union avoidance" and infamous union-busting law firm Littler Mendelson's menacing of the union.

Strikers and supporters from throughout greater Boston — including a large contingent of the one-month-old Boston University Graduate Students' Union — massed in defiance on the strike-line to confront the corporate-instigated police attack.

Between songs of resistance and rousing chants led by Workers United strike captain Spencer Costigan, speakers condemned the silence of Democratic politicians about Starbucks' use of state force and called on Boston

Continued on page 5

People's Townhomes	2
Capitalist culture in sports	3
In the streets for reproductive justice	5, 10
Jeanette Merrill ¡Presente!	8
Alex Saab case breakthrough	11
Editorial: Busing migrants, targeting socialism	10

6-8

Walk to free Leonard Peltier
Pennsylvania prison abuses
Yvonne Swan Wanrow
Oklahoma serial executions
Oct. 19: All out for Mumia!



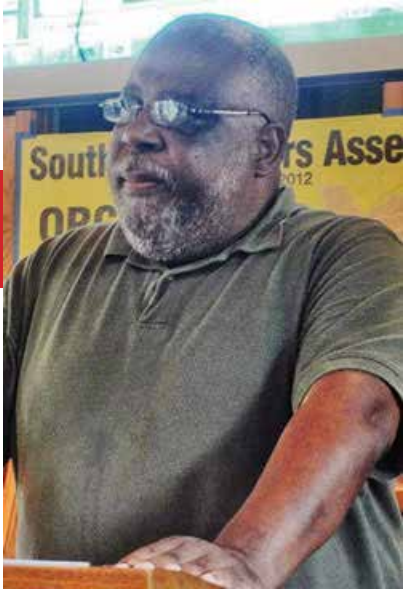
WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Indigenous Peoples Day 3

Philadelphia, Oct. 11, 2021

Saladin Muhammad, Rest in power!

Saladin Muhammad, a founding member of Black Workers For Justice, UE 150 and the Southern Workers Assembly, died on Sept. 19 in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, after a long illness. He consistently provided a profound, militant defense of the Black working class, especially in the U.S. South. Read more on Muhammad's revolutionary legacy at workers.org/2022/09/66748/.



People’s Townhomes residents continue the fight

By Joe Piette

Residents and supporters of the People’s Townhomes, formerly called University City Townhomes, continue to organize resistance as the eviction date of Oct. 8 fast approaches.

After over a year of meetings, numerous street protests, a 31-day protest encampment, surprise visits to developers’ offices and crashing a cocktail fundraiser, resident organizers have updated their demands. The Save the UC Townhomes now calls on Mayor Jim Kenney and other city and state officials, University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University leaders and real estate executives to not only stop any evictions of the 70 resident families of 400 people. They want a commitment to a process to preserve the UC Townhomes and to further commit resources to the acquisition of the property.

Reparations for UPenn complicity in Black displacement

People’s Townhomes activists interrupted the University of Pennsylvania incoming student convocation Aug. 29 to demand UPenn’s financial support for People’s Townhomes residents as partial reparations for the Ivy League university’s long history of displacing Black residents from adjacent neighborhoods.

In a reactionary response, UPenn President Liz Magill retaliated with disciplinary hearings for students who were involved in disrupting her speech. Organizers point out that if Magill hadn’t dismissed residents’ requests to speak to her, there would never have been a disruption.

Despite Magill’s displeasure, Fossil Free Penn, a student activism group, is demanding Penn divest its endowment



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE
Peoples Townhomes resident Krystal Young (sitting with her dog Shadow) teaches UPenn students how to fight for housing rights, Sept. 16.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE
Surrounded by residents and clergy, Rev. William Barber speaks to the crowd in front of the Peoples Townhomes complex, Sept. 18.

from the fossil fuel industry and reinvest in the Philadelphia community and clean-energy companies and projects. They held a teach-in Sept. 16 on the struggle of UC Townhomes residents to stop their evictions. Students held the event at a tent city on campus, which they erected Sept. 14 as part of a global End Fossil Now movement occupying schools and universities around the world.

Interfaith leaders say housing is a human right

On Sept. 18, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, North Carolina architect of the Moral Monday movement and co-chair of the national Poor People’s Campaign, spoke at a UC Townhomes rally of residents, activists and clergy. “You’re a hypocrite if you’re a politician participating in throwing people out of their homes. You’re a hypocrite if you say you’re a developer, and you want to tear down UC Townhomes. That’s not development,” he said.

“University of Pennsylvania and Drexel, if you’re not in the fight with these residents, then you might as well close down your political science departments and your public policy departments and your sociology departments and your law departments. You should not only be saying ‘leave UC Townhomes alone,’ you should be saying anybody who lives in UC Townhomes and their children can go free to Drexel and UPenn.”

Barber volunteered to stay at UC Townhomes at a future date if that would help direct media attention to the struggle.

After several residents described why they became organizers, several clergy from the POWER Interfaith Coalition spoke. A dozen ministers and rabbis followed up by signing a letter to Mayor Kenney, which included the Townhomes demands. It asks him to meet with resident leaders to discuss how to stop their evictions and how he’s going to handle dozens of other expiring HUD housing contracts in this city.

Resident organizer Mel Hairston, one of the last speakers, brought the crowd to its feet with the words, “Housing is not only a human right, housing is OUR right!” □

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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MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD this week

♦ In the U.S.	
Amazon, Starbucks workers say fight back.	1
People’s Townhomes residents continue fight . . .	2
Boston marches for Indigenous Peoples Day . . .	3
Capitalist culture in sports	3
Seattle: Educator-student unity in school strike .	4
Philly Museum of Art workers strike.	4
On the picket line.	4
West Virginia politicians ban abortion	5
Biden, Walsh try to block railroad strike.	5
Jeanette Merrill iPresente!	8
Defend reproductive rights in the streets	10
U.S recognizes Alex Saab as Special Envoy.	11
♦ Around the world	
Puerto Rico: Five years after Hurricane Maria. . .	9
Cubans vote on family code	9
Friends of Socialist China statement.	9
Haiti explodes with cries of ‘down with misery’ . .	11
♦ Tear down the walls	
Walk for Justice, free Leonard Peltier.	6
Violent squad attacks Pennsylvania prisoners . .	6
PA DOC reclassifies Latinx as ‘white’	6
Yvonne Swan Wanrow and self-defense	7
Oklahoma serial executions	8
♦ Editorial	
Busing migrants, targeting socialism	10
♦ Noticias en Español	
Operación ‘Lone Star’	12
Mumia sobre el medioambiente.	12
De reinas y capitalismo	12

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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

Boston Marches for Indigenous Peoples Day

By K. James

Protesters will march through the streets of Boston on Oct. 8 to demand that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day (IPD) instead of Columbus Day. For decades, Indigenous peoples in the United States have been demanding an end to the public celebration of Christopher Columbus, who committed brutal atrocities against the Indigenous people he encountered, including rape, theft, enslavement, mutilation and genocide. Columbus is also recognized as having initiated the trans-Atlantic slave trade, which resulted in the enslavement and deaths of millions of Africans.

Indigenous people in Boston scored a major victory Oct. 6, 2021, when

then-Boston Mayor Kim Janey signed an Executive Order declaring the second Monday in October to henceforth be recognized as Indigenous Peoples Day. However, Boston has failed to meet with local Indigenous organizations to plan any city celebrations for IPD. Local Indigenous groups, including the United American Indians of New England (UAINE), are demanding that Boston meet with Indigenous organizations to plan IPD events in the future.

The Massachusetts state legislature has failed over the course of the last four years to pass a bill that would declare Indigenous Peoples Day statewide. Mahtowin Munro, co-leader of UAINE and lead organizer for IndigenousPeoplesDayMA.org said, “While we’re glad that some cities and towns across Massachusetts

are celebrating IPD, Columbus Day is still being celebrated statewide. We call upon the Massachusetts legislature to step up in the 2023-2024 legislative session and pass our statewide Indigenous Peoples Day bill.

“It will also be important for them to pass our other legislation currently before them, including bills to ban Native American team mascots, to provide for Indigenous curriculum content in the public schools, to protect sacred Native



Oct. 9, 2021, Boston

PHOTO: BOSTON UNIVERSITY NEWS SERVICE

American heritage and to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students.” □

Slap on Sarver’s wrist, funds for Favre Capitalist culture in sports

By Monica Moorehead

U.S. sports — whether professional or amateur — like almost every institution under capitalism, is all about making profits before meeting human needs. Bosses of professional teams, usually referred to as owners, are billionaires who mostly gained their wealth from investing in speculation, real estate, entertainment or other Wall Street ventures.

Some professional athletes may earn multimillion-dollar salaries, but they don’t compare to the billions that owners receive in ticket sales and cable and streaming revenues for games that fill stadiums and arenas.

So it should come as no surprise that widespread corruption, which is endemic to this system, expresses itself politically with racism, misogyny, anti-LGBTQ2S+ bigotry and anti-worker behavior within sports.

Recent major developments involving the two most popular professional sports in the U.S. — football and basketball — show that this reality is the norm not the exception.

On Sept. 13 Robert Sarver, majority owner of the National Basketball Association’s Phoenix Suns for 17 years, was suspended for the entire 2022-’23 season and fined \$10 million for racist and sexist behavior. The ruling is based on a 70-page NBA report on an investigation that began November 2021, when Suns employees exposed that Sarver had repeatedly used racist language and had exhibited misogynist behavior toward women. Sarver is also the owner of the Women’s NBA Phoenix Mercury team, which multiplies the impact of his behavior on women and gender-oppressed athletes and team employees.

The investigation included interviews with over 300 current and former workers with the Suns and 80,000 emails, text messages, videos and other documents.

The summary of the investigation states that, on at least five occasions, Sarver “repeated the N-word when recounting the statements of others,” and he “Engaged in instances of inequitable conduct toward female employees, made many sex-related comments in the workplace, made inappropriate comments about the physical appearance of female employees and other women, and on several occasions engaged in inappropriate



NBPA Executive Director Tamika Tremaglio calls for lifetime ban on Robert Sarver on NBA Today, Sept. 16.

physical conduct toward male employees. Engaged in demeaning and harsh treatment of employees, including by yelling and cursing at them.”

The entire report can be read at wlrk.com/phoenix-suns-report/.

Reaction to the suspension

Once Adam Silver, the NBA commissioner, announced the punishment for Sarver, the reaction was one of shock, anger and dismay. Both LeBron James and Chris Paul, the Suns guard, declared that the punishment was not harsh enough against Sarver.

Silver represents the interests of the owners in any negotiations or decisions.

James posted on Twitter Sept. 14: “Read through the Sarver stories a few times now. I gotta be honest. ... Our league definitely got this wrong. I don’t need to explain why. Y’all read the stories and decide for yourself. I said it before, and I’m gonna say it again, there is no place in this league for that kind of behavior. I love this league, and I deeply respect our leadership. But this isn’t right. There is no place for misogyny, sexism and racism in any workplace. Don’t matter if you own the team or play for the team. We hold our league up as an example of our values, and this ain’t it.”

Paul stated on Twitter Sept. 14, “Like many others, I reviewed the report. I was and am horrified and disappointed by what I read. This conduct especially toward women is unacceptable and must never be repeated. I am of the view that the sanctions fell short in truly addressing what we can all agree was atrocious behavior. My heart goes out to all of the people that were affected.”

National Basketball Players Association Executive Director Tamika Tremaglio stated Sept. 16 on ESPN’s NBA Today regarding the Sarver suspension: “We are

absolutely calling for that [lifetime ban]. We do not want him to be in a position where he is managing or engaging with individuals who are engaging with our players or the players themselves. We are absolutely clear from the findings that are in the report that we do not want him to be in that position.” Tremaglio stated that she spoke on behalf of the entire NBPA with this demand.

PayPal, which provides their logo patches on the Suns and Mercury playing jerseys, stated that they will not renew their

contract with the team if Sarver is allowed to return following the one-year suspension. And Jahm Najafi, the Suns’ vice chairperson and second-largest stakeholder, called for the resignation of Sarver.

The NBA bylaws state that a vote of three-fourths of the 30 NBA owners is needed for a permanent ban of another owner. There has been some speculation that NBA owners want to avoid setting a precedent of banning one of their own, for fear that their own despicable behavior may come under scrutiny.

Theft of Mississippi funds

Meanwhile, another scandal was unfolding within the poorest state in the U.S. — Mississippi. On the same day that Sarver was suspended, it was revealed that former Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant assisted retired National Football League’s Green Bay Packers quarterback, Brett Favre, with \$5 million in welfare funds to construct a state-of-the-art volleyball center at the University of Southern Mississippi, Favre’s alma mater.

The news service Mississippi Today exposed text messages exchanged between Favre, Bryant and Nancy New from the Mississippi Community Education Center, between 2017 and 2019, conspiring to divert state welfare funds into building the facility. This scandal has been included in a broader civil lawsuit involving the state’s

Department of Human Services misspending of at least \$77 million of welfare funds that were diverted toward personal spending by officials and projects like the volleyball center.

Usually misappropriation of funds provided by the federal government goes on uninterrupted and unknown in every state, but it took a case of someone with an almost mythical stature like Favre — also a known misogynist — to bring what happened in this state to light.

This scandal is especially galling considering the facts that Mississippi has a 20% poverty rate and has the highest child poverty rate, with 27.9% of its under-18 population meeting federal poverty guidelines, and 15% of residents food insecure. While Black people comprise 13% of the general U.S. population, Black people make up 38% of Mississippi’s population. There is a horrific crisis in Jackson, the state’s capital, where the entire water treatment facilities cannot provide drinkable water, due to the city’s antiquated infrastructure and flooding caused by climate change.

And abortions have been banned, with the exception of when a pregnant person’s life is in danger or a rape has been reported to law enforcement. Anyone performing or attempting to perform an abortion can be charged with a felony offense and sentenced to up to 10 years in prison.

So yes, \$77 million may seem like a drop in the bucket; but with the current social crisis gripping the poorest state, every penny and more should be used to provide drinkable water, health care including abortions, nutritious food, jobs, housing, education and much more.

Sports, like every other institution, can only be liberated from greed, corruption and inequality — like in the two examples mentioned here — once all of society is liberated from the scourge of capitalism. And the key to that liberation is socialism, where the workers can collectively use their productivity to provide for all human needs. This need includes the joy of sports in the spirit of friendly competition and not profit. □

Back to the Streets — Say NO to U.S. wars!

Stop Washington’s war moves toward Russia and China.
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Join protests during the week of Oct. 15 – 22.

Organize an action in your local area or join one.

www.unacpeace.org

Seattle

Educator-student unity in school strike

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

A five-day strike by the Seattle Education Association (SEA) produced gains for the district’s 6,000 educators and 50,000 students. Despite rhetoric from the district management against the strike, the educators walked out Sept. 7, the scheduled first day of school. Now a tentative agreement has been reached as educators headed back to work Sept. 14.

After the tentative agreement was reached Sept. 13, the SEA members voted 57% to 43% to suspend their strike until the members could vote on ratification. The vote to suspend was taken after an eight-hour membership zoom meeting. Highlights of the agreement have been distributed to members for a final vote.

The strike came as part of an upheaval of workers everywhere who have had enough of cutbacks and worker oppression and exhaustion. Mass picketing with full participation increased unity between teachers, education worker staff, students and parents. The SEA had the experience of a 2015 strike during the national “strike wave” of education workers.

The leadership of Seattle Public Schools seemed to be taking a cue from the union-busting tactics of locally headquartered Amazon and Starbucks monopolies. SPS management refused to propose anything but take-backs from what the union had previously won.

The overriding issues of the strike dealt with shortages of teachers and education staff workers. Not only has the administration failed to adequately provide for education during COVID-19, but previous years of cutbacks have damaged public schools.

Another key demand in SEA’s strike was more support for special education students, many of whom are disabled. The lack of funding for disabled students has been a scandal in the school district going back decades.



As education workers at Seattle Public Schools picket on Sept. 7, the first day of their strike, teachers from neighboring Kent, Washington — who struck their school district Sept. 1 — assemble signs in solidarity.

A summary of the SEA’s wins in the tentative contract include the following: Educators struck for and gained specific staffing ratios for special needs students.

SEA Vice-President and bargaining chair Uti Hawkins emphasized that even with the new contract, the union has to continue to fight to recruit and retain

The agreement provides workplace protections for teachers, school counselors, nurses and social workers. There are to be increased benefits for substitute teachers. The district agreed to provide teachers with interpreters and translator services for meetings with multilingual parents.

The teachers won a 7% pay increase, although 5.5% of that is automatically provided by the state to all schools for inflation adjustment.

people, as high costs make living in Seattle untenable. (Seattle Times, Sept. 14)

With superhigh housing costs, many educators can’t afford to live in Seattle. In a city with megabillionaires like Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos and Starbucks’ Howard Schultz, Seattle Public Schools’ story that it doesn’t have enough money was absurd.

The education workers have built bonds of solidarity in the strike. The Parent Teacher Student Association and the newly formed Seattle Student Union both came out in support. At Franklin High School, there was an active picket line with chants all day; the pedestrian overpass was decorated with pro-union banners, and there were continuous honks from vehicles.

The picket line discussions with educators, students and parents have brought more understanding of the issues workers face in their struggle. □

Philly Museum of Art workers strike

During a one-day strike Sept. 16, workers at the Philadelphia Museum of Art picketed the renowned institution as a warning to senior management of what will happen if the bosses continue their unfair labor practices.

With 180 members, the PMA Union (Local 397 of AFSCME District Council 47) has been negotiating with museum officials since October 2020. Local 397 filed eight Unfair Labor Practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board on Aug. 26, charging PMA management with repeatedly violating federal law by engaging in union-busting activity during contract negotiations. On Aug. 30, union members voted to authorize a strike.

“After massive layoffs, years without raises and an ongoing pandemic, museum management expects us to accept meager raises, insufficient paid-parental leave and no improvements to our health care benefits, whatsoever. We won’t,” said Adam Rizzo, Museum Educator and Local 397 President. “PMA Board Chair Leslie Anne Miller and COO Bill Petersen have the power to avert a strike: Start respecting this union; stop acting unilaterally in violation of federal labor law; and come to the table with real responses and a real commitment to reaching a fair resolution.”

Picketing sites included all entrances to the museum’s main building, the Perelman Annex and the Rodin Museum. Local 397 represents workers across nearly all museum departments, including visitor services, retail, education, installations, curatorial, conservation, marketing and development.



President of AFSCME District Council 47 Cathy Scott said: “Our membership would not have authorized a strike if they were not united in these demands. We cannot accept a status quo that subjects workers to violations of federal law, wages well below the national average for art museums and benefits that do not allow workers to support their families.”

— Report and photo by Joe Piette

WHEN WE FIGHT WE WIN!

On the picket line

By Marie Kelly

Nurses across U.S. declare: Safe staffing saves lives

Nurses must sound like a broken record to some, especially the greedy hospital CEOs who continue to equate health care with corporate profits. Instead of “show me the money,” nurses across the U.S. are demanding retention incentives and recruitment strategies, so enough nurses remain working to deliver optimal safe patient care.

This mid-September, some 15,000 Minnesota nurses held a three-day strike at 15 area hospitals over stalled contract negotiations. Minnesota Nurses Association President Mary C. Turner, an RN at North Memorial Hospital, explained why the nurses struck: “When our executives refuse to fully staff our hospitals and continue to push nurses out of the

profession, that is a public health crisis.” (tinyurl.com/25vepvxn)

Maine Medical Center nurses voted 3-to-1 to recertify their union and won a contract that begins to address safe staffing and work-life balance. Lastly, the University of Wisconsin Health nurses, represented by Service Employees Union (SEIU) Healthcare Wisconsin, won union recognition despite

attempts by UW Health corporate bosses to bust the union’s efforts. After a rally by nurses and a three-day strike planned, the hospital agreed to recognize the union and begin to renegotiate a contract.

Educators strike to demand fair contracts

According to Cornell University Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) School’s Labor Tracker, since August 2022 there have been eight teacher strikes at 14 schools, spanning pre-K to university education. Seattle teachers reached a tentative agreement to end their strike begun on Sept. 7. Teachers in Columbus, Ohio, struck for four days last month before approving a contract that guarantees a pay increase and climate-control upgrades to all schools.

Faculty members at Eastern Michigan University, southwest of Detroit, ended

their September strike following a tentative agreement with university administration. Contract negotiations centered around salary and prohibitive health insurance increases. This same administration sought a court injunction, claiming the strike was illegal, but it was denied by the judge. The Eastern Michigan University-American Association of Union Professors (EMU-AAUP) represents 500 tenured and tenure-track faculty.

Ridgefield, Oregon, schools remain closed, and teachers there passed a no-confidence vote against school district administrators. The 200 Ridgefield Education Association (REA) members have been on strike since Sept. 9 demanding smaller class sizes, more student mental health and special education resources, and pay increases to improve teacher retention rates. (koin.com, Sept. 12)

Factory workers build labor power

United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 1166 represents workers at the Stellantis NV plant in Kokomo, Indiana. The plant is owned by Stellantis, formerly Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. After a strike in early September, the workers ratified a new contract addressing the deteriorating conditions inside the plant. The contract guarantees the installation of a new HVAC

system, repair of broken machinery and overtime protections.

Mississippi poultry plant workers are organizing at the Peco Foods plant in West Point, Mississippi, for recognition with United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1529. Poultry plants in Mississippi have been the target of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids, like the one in 2019 at the Koch Food plant in Morton, Mississippi. It was part of the largest workplace immigration raids in state history. Almost 700 workers were arrested, half of them from Morton, which the community has not recovered from.

Minor league baseball players win

Minor league baseball players have won their fight for a union! They will join the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA). Finally, the minor leaguers may win some of the perks that major league players had won from MLB corporations that reap profits from lucrative television contracts. Minor league baseball has a 120-year history of abusing players, offering meager salaries, no job security and other mistreatment. The union drive was organized at the player level, and the MLBPA is ready to work to make the minor league players’ lives easier. Play ball! □

Amazon, Starbucks workers say fight back!

Continued from page 1

Mayor Michelle Wu to order the city's armed forces withdrawn immediately.

Defying Amazon and white supremacy at Stone Mountain, Georgia

Amazon workers at the ATL2 Warehouse in Stone Mountain, Georgia, took the tech giant by surprise Sept. 13, when they walked out over low pay, dangerous working conditions and management intimidation. Workers chanted: "No respect, no work — no cap!" The latter is slang to emphasize: "I'm telling the truth. No exaggeration!"

West Virginia

Politicians ban abortion, but not without a fight

By Otis Grotewohl
Charleston, West Virginia

Sept. 14 — The Republican-majority West Virginia legislature passed an abortion ban during a Sept. 13 special session. The same legislature had introduced the bill to ban abortion, known as HB 302, in late July. (See "Abortion access under attack in West Virginia," Workers World, July 29.)

Anti-choice state senators wanted to pass HB 302 with limited exceptions, but ultrarightist sponsors of the bill in the House of Delegates wanted a complete ban, without any exemptions.

With the help of anti-choice Democrats and "moderate" Republicans, the two chambers passed an amended HB 302 with exceptions in the case of rape, incest and/or if one's life is at risk — but all requiring arbitrary qualifications that must be preapproved. Governor Jim Justice — an openly anti-choice chauvinist — stated he would gladly sign the bill and did so Sept. 16.

Courageous response by young workers and community activists

The bigoted, corporate-funded House speaker, Roger Hanshaw, announced a "legislative cookout" at the governor's mansion near the state capitol building for Sept. 12, the day before the vote. Activists from the Women's Health Center in West Virginia, Planned Parenthood, ACLU-WV and WV Free organized a protest, suitably called "Picket the Picnic."

More than 200 protesters showed up with signs and shouted down the legislators who attended the posh event. Picketers chanted, "1, 2, 3, 4! Abortion is worth fighting for! 5, 6, 7, 8! Separate the church and state!" and "'Pro-life,' that's a lie, you don't care if people die." Organizers passed out noisemaker bullhorns and tambourines.

Hundreds of protesters packed the capitol building Sept. 13, the day the bill passed. The mood of the angry crowd was much more militant; and as the legislature shamefully hustled their bigoted bill, protesters made a lot of noise. After the

The walkout came a day after a co-worker passed out from heat exhaustion and was taken to the hospital, a crisis videotaped and shared widely on social media.

Inland Empire Amazon Workers Union tweeted Sept. 14: "IE AWU stands in solidarity with the Amazon employees that walked out in protest for better pay and working conditions in Stone Mountain, [Georgia]. We employees deserve the basic life necessities, and we demand them without any retaliation and backlash in return. #AmazonHurts." Those workers in San Bernardino, California, based in the Inland Empire region,

walked out Aug. 15 over similar demands; their facility is one of only three U.S. Amazon air hubs.

Stone Mountain workers received more support Sept. 15: "The Amazon Labor Union stands in solidarity with the @amazon workers at ATL2 in Stone Mountain, Georgia. Workers all around are tired of unfair treatment, and we're not sitting around waiting for change; we're demanding it."

On Twitter, Lynn Schore commented: "#Amazon workers go out on strike in #StoneMountain, Georgia. Perfect place to do it. Stone Mountain is the beating heart of Southern racism and white-supremacist hatred." (Sept. 14)

She is referring to a giant 90-foot-high memorial to white supremacy and the Confederacy, sandblasted into the mountain rock, featuring enslavers President Jefferson Davis and Generals Robert E. Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson, galloping on horseback. Ku Klux Klan members and admirers organized the stone sculpture, and in 1915 they burned a cross at the mountain's summit to announce a revived



WWW PHOTO: STEVE GILLIS

Starbucks Workers United and supporters, Boston University area, Sept. 13.

anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic, anti-Black "second Klan" that policed "morals" and became a political force for white supremacy throughout the U.S.

Now workers are uniting across nationality, language, sexual and gender identity, age and ability to forge a unity that defies the forces of patriarchal racism and the assaults of capitalism — including right there at Amazon ATL2 at the foot of Stone Mountain.

McMahan in Seattle and Gillis in Boston provided on-the-ground reports.

Biden, Walsh try to block railroad strike

By Martha Grevatt

As the deadline for a national railroad strike loomed, President Joe Biden and U.S. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh hammered out a tentative agreement between the rail freight bosses and those railroad unions which had not already agreed to a contract. For now, this maneuvering has averted a strike that was set to commence when a 60-day "cooling off period" — ordered by the federal government — concluded Sept. 16. Union members have not yet begun voting on the contracts.

At the heart of the impasse between the two sides was a ruthless absenteeism policy, which, combined with excessive mandatory overtime, pushed workers into working while sick, including with COVID-19, skipping doctor visits and missing family events.

The consequences have been devastating and even fatal, as in the case of Aaron Hiles, a 51-year-old BNSF Railway worker. Hiles scheduled a doctor's appointment, after he "felt different," but canceled it when he was called in to work, fearing penalties under the company's recently introduced attendance policy. Hiles suffered a fatal heart attack June 21 while at work on a freight train.

The railroads' policy, considered by unions to be the worst in the country, is even harsher. Workers are given a certain number of "points." Points are deducted for missing work regardless of circumstances, with a low point balance leading to warnings and then firings. But a worker who agrees to be on call for 14 consecutive days can build their point balance back up.

A deadly operating model

Rail companies such as Union Pacific and BNSF have adopted a cost-cutting model known as Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR). Shipping processes, equipment and, most importantly, the labor force are streamlined to control

the "operating ratio" — the relationship between a company's costs and its revenue, i.e., the rate of profit. When the number of workers is held to a minimum — in this case by an extreme, PSR-driven attendance policy — profits are higher.

The federal Surface Transportation Board estimates that freight carriers have cut 30% of their workforces over the past six years. In 2021 BNSF made \$6 billion in profit, and Union Pacific made \$6.5 billion, both an increase of 16% over the prior year.

The rail bosses did not want a disruptive strike, nor did the capitalist class as a whole, as its business depends on rail transport for the movement of raw materials and finished products. Walsh and Biden were working at the bosses' behest, despite all their nice talk. "The Biden Administration applauds all parties for reaching this hard-fought, mutually beneficial deal," Walsh babbled after working 20 hours round-the-clock to secure the tentative agreement.

In fact the deal is limited in how "beneficial" it is to union members. The contracts contain new language so that workers can take time off — without pay, of course — for medical conditions. But other circumstances, such as unexpected car trouble or attending a child's sporting event or school play, can still cost a worker points.

Pay is raised 24% over five years going back to 2020. While that looks like a lot of money, it doesn't keep up with today's rampant inflation. And the more important question is this: How do you put a price on one's health — or in the case of Aaron Hiles, one's life?

It's entirely possible that rail workers will reject this government-brokered deal. As Gabe Christenson, co-chair of the rank and file-led group Railroad Workers United, tweeted after the deal was announced: "A full-blown strike is still a distinct possibility this Fall." □



Sept. 12 protest for reproductive rights, Charleston, West Virginia.

WWW PHOTO

Walk for Justice: Free Leonard Peltier

By Stephanie Hedgecoker

The American Indian Movement (AIM) Grand Governing Council held a rally Aug. 31 in Cedar Field Park, Minneapolis, to launch a 15-week march to demand President Joe Biden release Indigenous political prisoner, Native elder Leonard Peltier. The “Leonard Peltier’s Walk to Justice” left Minneapolis for the 2 ½-month march, which will arrive in Washington, D.C. Nov. 18. Rallies are planned in cities along the way. (See map: tinyurl.com/43du3dv4)

Leonard Peltier, Anishinaabe and Dakota, a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, who turned 78 years old Sept. 11, is recognized around the world as a political prisoner; Peltier was nominated for the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. He has been in prison now for 46 years for a crime he did not commit. In violation of its own statutes, the U.S. government has repeatedly refused him parole.


The U.S. suppressed hundreds of thousands of pages of documents which would indicate Peltier’s innocence, including ballistic evidence, in a June 1975 shoot-out at Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Two FBI agents opened fire on a tiny village, while children, elders and adults slept in their homes. In the resulting firefight, Joseph Bedell Stuntz, Lakota AIM member, and the two agents died. U.S. prosecutors publicly admitted that they do not know who actually fired the shots that killed the agents.

“The day of the shoot-out in 1975, the FBI created a narrative that some super soldier killed two FBI agents,” Dr. Nick Estes of The Red Nation said to the Minneapolis rally. “They don’t tell you that the vast majority of people at that shoot-out were under the age of 18.” (tinyurl.com/3pcc6rsv)

An international effort grew to seek legal clemency in 1993, after all court venues to obtain his release were exhausted. In 1994 the FBI issued a memorandum outline to counter that campaign, according to Leonard Peltier Defense Council spokespersons. Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark used blunt words to describe Peltier’s trial and conviction: “There was no evidence that he did it, except fabricated, circumstantial evidence, overwhelmingly misused, concealed and perverted.”

Former U.S. Attorney James Reynolds, who was the government’s prosecutor in Peltier’s trial, sent a letter to then-President Barack Obama to urge clemency. In the letter, Reynolds argued for Peltier’s Clemency Petition “as being in the best interests of justice considering the totality of all matters involved.”

Worldwide supporters who have called for freedom for Leonard Peltier include Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Coretta Scott King, Harry Belafonte, Pete Seeger, the National Congress of American Indians, Amnesty International, a working group of the U.N. Human Rights Council and thousands of activists. □




“LEONARD PELTIER’S WALK TO JUSTICE”

A SPIRITUAL WALK FROM MINNEAPOLIS MN TO WASHINGTON D.C. TO SEE THE RELEASE OF ELDER AND POLITICAL PRISONER LEONARD PELTIER

These are dates of future events. Please follow the Facebook page for times, location and event detail updates. No drugs, alcohol, weapons or anyone under the influence at any walk events. <https://www.facebook.com/LeonardPeltierWalkToJustice/>

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 8/31 Free Leonard Peltier Rally
Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 9/1 Sunrise Ceremony and Beginning of the Walk
Franklin Avenue Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 9/5 Justice for Leonard Peltier Rally and Prayer
Federal Courthouse Eau Claire, Wisconsin
- 9/17 Free Leonard Peltier Rally and Prayer
Madison, Wisconsin
- 9/24 Leonard Peltier’s Walk to Justice Rally and Prayer
Chicago, Illinois
- 10/1 Rally and Prayer for Justice in an Unjust Justice System
Southbend, Indiana
- 10/11 Free Leonard Peltier Rally and Prayer
Federal Building Toledo, Ohio
- 10/19 Justice for Elder Leonard Peltier Rally and Prayer
Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building Cleveland, Ohio
- 10/28 Free Leonard Peltier Rally and Prayer
Joseph F. Weir, Jr. U.S. Courthouse Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- 11/14 Free Elder Leonard Prayer and Rally
Capital Building Washington D.C.
- 11/18 Free Leonard Peltier Concert, Rally and Prayer
Washington D.C.



Violent squadron attacks Pennsylvania prisoners

By Miley Fletcher

The State Correctional Institution Forest, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PA DOC) and the institution’s administration ordered the Correctional Emergency Response Team into SCI Forest on Sept. 2 for the second time within a three-month period. The CERT consists of guards from other institutions within the state correctional institutions.

The guards on this CERT Team were from SCI Somerset, SCI Smithfield, SCI Albion and SCI Greene. They are a bunch of goons who use racism, bigotry and discrimination. They violate inmates’ rights by destroying property, reading court transcripts, drawing penises on family photos and asking inmates what they are in prison for. They take commissary food, smearing it into court appeal papers. They made racist comments about African American inmates.

This CERT Team taunted me about my sexual orientation of being a transgender

woman. The CERT Team guards do not wear name tags, so we aren’t able to identify them. On the back of their black shirts, “Pennsylvania Department of Corrections CERT” is in white letters, along with a white skull and two military machine guns crossing each other.

On Sept. 2, approximately 50-60 CERT Team walked into the Special Needs Unit at SCI Forest with no name tags to identify them. They came in and started harassing people, destroying property, treating us with disrespectful attitudes, racism and discriminatory treatment of transgender women, and asking what we were in jail for, which is none of their business.

Being transgender, I should only be strip-searched by a woman, not a bunch of bigoted men, ignorant about the transgender community.

Three inmates with mental health issues were taken to the restricted housing unit (RHU), because these CERT goons taunted them until they snapped back at them. This is a cowardly act

against inmates on a special needs unit block. These goons went cell-to-cell on the unit, terrorizing mental health-affected inmates, destroying property, writing and drawing inappropriate sexualized pictures on their personal family pictures. This is terrorism.

Three of the inmates with mental health issues were physically grabbed and forced to the floor. They were dragged to the RHU with physical force, hurting them. This is failure to protect. This is not care, custody and control. The backs of their shirts say it all. They say, “this is a dictatorship, not a democracy. Get used to it.”

Complaints, grievances denied

When you complain to administration and/or file grievances, you are told: Denied, lack of evidence. The PA DOC has the same response on their grievance appeals. They say: Do you have their names? But they know the CERT goons don’t use name tags. They also know there is no camera footage in the cell area when

the CERT Team goons are there.

The PA DOC and Administration snub their noses and deny any wrongdoing, even when they know it’s true. They deny it ever happened, because they know inmates with mental health issues cannot do the paperwork or write to organizations to help them — and these attacks have happened twice in a 90-day period.

I ask your readers to send a letter, email or phone call to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (Department of Corrections, 1920 Technology Parkway, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050; 717.728.2573, ra-contactdoc@pa.gov) and ask why this is being done to inmates during CERT Team searches. Ask why they wear these black shirts with such a logo on the back, and why they don’t wear name tags.

Say something because what these goons are doing is wrong.

Miley Fletcher is incarcerated at SCI Forest.

Pennsylvania DOC reclassifies Latinx incarcerated workers as ‘white’

By Bryant Arroyo and Betsey Piette

In late August, environmental justice advocate and Puerto Rican political prisoner Bryant Arroyo was notified that the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Pennsylvania Justice Network, arbitrarily and without prior notice, changed his Hispanic/Latino race classification to “white.” The misnamed “Justice” Network is a statewide association of cops and other policing agents.

As Arroyo notes in his initial grievance: “They want us to be reclassified as white, in order to raise the numbers in their demographics in and around the prison populations, across the state of Pennsylvania.”

His grievance requested the DOC and Justice Network “rescind their inaccurate, manufactured, false and misleading mis-identity, as being white, when I’m

incontrovertibly Hispanic/Latino (race) ... If I can’t be labeled as the Hispanic/Latino man that I am, then I am requesting for both the PA DOC and PA-Justice Network to relabel me as Asian — not white!!!

“... Currently, the bogus white-race change has placed me in an atypical, uncertain, dangerous and unpredictable predicament, [if] I’m forced to being celled with a white inmate, who is inconspicuously a xenophobe, bigot or has personal addictions, hang-ups, who cowardly hates Hispanics/Latinos.”

The DOC’s practice is to house prisoners by race.

Arroyo continues: “As I understand it, both PA Justice Network and PA DOC do not have any rule-making authority when it comes to race change(s). They don’t have any quasi-judicial or legislative authority, either implied or explicit, when it comes to changing an inmate(s) identifying race in

the PA DOC institutions.

“There is no doubt, the PA DOC and PA-Justice Network didn’t consider the racial impact this does or will potentially have upon the Hispanic/Latino race at large. This is not only troubling but imposing, invasive, intrusive and categorically unacceptable for the PA DOC and PA-Justice Network to continue to deceive the taxpaying citizens by perpetuating a fraud about our Hispanic/Latino race being counted as white. This needs to be properly addressed and rectified by reversing the status of our race back to Hispanic/Latino, posthaste!”

As expected, Arroyo’s initial grievance was rejected. In their response the Office of Population Management (OPM) states: “The PA DOC is now consistent with all enforcement agencies in tracking race and ethnicity. Since Hispanic is not a race, it is no longer tracked that way, but it is listed under his ethnicity. Therefore, he has not lost the designation of Hispanic in our system.” The OPM labeled Arroyo’s

grievance as “racist.”

Arroyo’s response to the OPM in his next-level grievance states: “The adversarial administration unconstitutionally eviscerated and deprived all Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity/race, culture and heritage across the PA DOC, by failing to provide any one of us with a choice to choose our own race, in accordance with the Census Bureau of Vital Statistics [which notes]: ‘Two-thirds of Hispanic/Latinx adults say being Hispanic is part of their racial background. When it comes to reporting their racial identity, Latinx stands out from other Americans.’

“... So, the PA DOC involuntarily reclassifies every Hispanic/Latino without any notice/memo and whitewashes our culture, and we are the ‘racist?’ PA DOC is racially divisive and didn’t anticipate for any prisoner to catch them in their insidious act of genocide towards our specific culture — Latinx. I’m white for their benefit, not mine?! What if their race was reclassified as Black. Another Jan. 6?” □



Bryant Arroyo



Yvonne Swan Wanrow set precedent for self-defense cases

By Phebe Eckfeldt

Record numbers of women and gender-oppressed people are being locked up.

Writing for the Guardian, Mariame Kaba quoted multiple studies that have indicated that between 71% and 95% of incarcerated women have experienced physical violence from an intimate partner. As children and adults they experienced multiple forms of physical and sexual violence. This has been dubbed the “abuse-to-prison pipeline.” (Jan. 3, 2019)

Advocates who work with women and gender-oppressed people who have defended themselves against violence state that they are being imprisoned in large numbers, sometimes receiving extreme sentences like life without parole, while others are deported.

Survivors are punished for defending themselves and their children. They are criminalized because they have removed their children from abusive situations, have been coerced into criminal activity and have committed “crimes of survival” in order to live. Poverty makes women and gender-oppressed people more vulnerable to violence under capitalism, whether it is from the state or domestic partners.

As of 2019, there were 231,000 women in jails and prisons in the U.S. Right now approximately 5,000 transgender people are in state prisons. Most of them are people of color. In Texas the number of women incarcerated has risen by over 1,000% since 1980.

Yvonne Swan Wanrow – first women’s self-defense case

Yvonne Swan Wanrow, a Sinixt Indigenous mother, shot and killed a known sexual predator William Wesler in August 1972 in the Spokane, Washington, area. He had tried to grab her son and threateningly approached her young nephew when he was asleep. He had previously raped her babysitter’s daughter. When told by neighbors of Wesler’s actions and that he had been seen prowling around the area, the police did nothing.

Wesler, more than 6 feet tall and a heavy man, was intoxicated when he entered Wanrow’s friends’ home, where she was with her family. He refused to leave. Wanrow was 5’4” tall, weighed 120 lbs and at the time she was wearing a cast on her foot and using a crutch. When Wanrow called out the front door for help, no one responded. When she turned around, Wesler was almost upon her, and Wanrow pulled her gun and shot him.

She was convicted by an all-white jury and found guilty of second-degree murder and first-degree assault. Her case became known as the first women’s self-defense case. It set a legal precedent and would impact other cases of self-defense by women and gender-oppressed people to come.

Impact of the American Indian Movement

In 1975 an appeals court reversed Wanrow’s conviction and ordered a retrial. (tinyurl.com/ywck6yz4)

During the period of her trial and after, the anti-Vietnam War movement, the Indigenous struggle, the women’s movement and the movements against racism, sexism and for self-determination were in full swing.

The American Indian Movement (AIM)

occupied the town of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on the Pine Ridge Reservation on Feb. 27, 1973, in response to a call for support from traditional elders in the community. The 71-day occupation occurred during a period of violence by then-Oglala Tribal Chairperson Dick Wilson’s tribal police, who were collaborating with the FBI and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

AIM had been protesting the U.S. government’s “termination policy,” which tore Indigenous children from their families, weakened the power of tribal governments and cut federal assistance for education and health care, keeping the majority of Indigenous people living in poverty. They were active in fighting against police harassment, especially in Minneapolis where AIM was founded. AIM stated that Indigenous people made up 70% of the population in the Minneapolis city jail but were only 10% of the overall population. (John William Sayer, “Ghost Dancing the Law: the Wounded Knee Trials,” 1997)

Wanrow and her sisters set up the Defense Committee for Yvonne Wanrow, which AIM supported actively. Feminists from Minneapolis drove to Spokane and set up the Free Yvonne Wanrow campaign, which worked together with the Defense Committee and was focused on educating and winning over white working-class people to support Wanrow’s cause.

The prosecution appealed the reversal of her conviction to the Washington Supreme Court. When Wanrow attended the trial of AIM leader Russell Means in 1975, she saw Center for Constitutional Rights lawyer William Kunstler at work, and she wanted him for her lawyer. He referred her to their women’s division, and Elizabeth Schneider and Nancy Stearns became her attorneys. They filed a supplemental brief for Wanrow with the Washington State Supreme Court in 1976.

Wanrow makes self-defense viable

Up until this point, the law or a court had never taken into account the right of a woman to self-defense and what self-defense meant. Before the Wanrow case, self-defense was not seen as a viable defense strategy for women who killed their abusers. The jury in her case was

into account not whether they thought the defender was actually in danger, but whether the defender themselves thought they were in danger. The judge had restricted Wanrow’s ability to use a self-defense claim. Racism and sexism also needed to be taken into account. This is what her defense committees and lawyers worked hard to do.



Yvonne Swan Wanrow

On the morning of Feb. 23, 1976, Wanrow sat in a Spokane, Washington, courtroom, flanked by her two women lawyers. AIM members packed the courtroom, standing against the walls and filling the aisles. Outside, the sound of drumming, singing and chanting filled the air, as hundreds more AIM members and supporters took over the parking lot.

Case became precedent setting

Wanrow could not know it at the time, but her case would be precedent setting for women who defend themselves or their children against domestic, physical or sexual violence.

On Jan. 7, 1977, the Supreme Court of Washington ruled in her favor; a new trial was ordered. In April 1979 Wanrow pled guilty to manslaughter and second-degree assault. She received five years probation and one year of community service. She had only served three days in jail.

Reflecting on her struggle, Wanrow said, “That was what saved me, to focus on something else, minimize my personal struggles. It put me in solidarity with other Indian people. Instantly, I was sympathetic to AIM. I understood it as being a spiritual movement. American Indian Movement – that doesn’t sound like any military force to me. It sounds like a spirit, a spirit of defense. We are in defense of our land, our life and our human rights. There is nothing wrong with self-defense, and self-defense is not a crime. ...” (“Fighter for Women’s Rights Tells Her Story of Self-Defense,” Seattle Post Intelligencer, April 8, 1983)

Many cases of women and gender-oppressed people defending themselves and their families against violence followed Wanrow. Some are well-known but most are unknown. Political discussion and activism around self-defense and violence against women became a very important topic of political action and discussion in the progressive movement at that time.

Here are a few cases:

Joann Little was the first woman to be acquitted of murder in the name of self-defense. If convicted, she would have faced the gas chamber. Little, while in prison, defended herself against a jailor who was raping her. The guard was 6 feet tall and 200 lbs. Little was 5’3” and 120 lbs. Joann Little defense committees, vocal and active, were set up across the U.S. and internationally and were a key to her acquittal.

Angela Davis wrote of her case: “Joann Little may not only have been the victim of a rape attempt by a white racist jailer; she has truly been raped and wronged many times over by the exploitative and discriminatory institutions of this society. All people who see themselves as members of the existing community of struggle for justice, equality and progress have a responsibility to fulfill toward Joann Little.

“Those of us – women and men – who are Black or people of color must understand the connection between racism and sexism that is so strikingly manifested in her case. Those of us who are white and women must grasp the issue of male supremacy in relationship to the racism and class bias which complicate and exacerbate it.” (“Joann Little: The Dialectics of Rape,” 1975)

Days after giving birth, **Marissa Alexander**, a Black woman in Florida, fired a warning shot at the wall, when her abusive, estranged husband threatened her and she was unable to escape. The mother of three was in prison for three years and under house arrest for two. She was released in 2015 following a national campaign to free her.

CeCe McDonald, a Black trans woman, and her friends were forced to defend themselves on the streets of Minneapolis. Struck in the face with a glass by a white bar patron with Nazi tattoos, CeCe stabbed him in self-defense, and he died. An international defense committee was mounted. McDonald served 19 months in prison and was released in January 2014. McDonald spoke around the country in support of survivors of violence and abuse, especially trans people. Workers World writer Leslie Feinberg wrote extensively on McDonald’s case. (workers.org/2012/12/5776/)

In California, **Wendy Howard** and her children had been abused by her partner since 2002. The abuse was verbal, physical and sexual. Howard tried to stop the abuse, but the district attorney and police did nothing. In 2019 the abuser attacked Wendy in her home while her children and grandchildren were there. Forced to shoot him in self-defense, she was charged with first-degree murder. Howard faces a maximum sentence of 50 years to life.

Wendy Howard’s new trial date is set. During her bail hearing, the judge agreed that there was evidence of justified self-defense and lowered the bail from \$1 million to \$500,000. But the Kern County District Attorney still refused to drop the charges. Please go to her website: defendwendy.com/ and see how you can help.

Self-defense against abuse is not a crime! Trying to survive under capitalism is not a crime! End the “abuse to prison pipeline”!

This author’s aunt, Polly Taylor, initiated the Free Yvonne Wanrow campaign with her partner Marge Nelson.



Yvonne Swan speaks at the 2009 AIM Fall Conference in San Francisco. Watch her discuss the events surrounding her famous trial in the early 1970s at tinyurl.com/YvonneSwan

instructed to determine what degree of force would be necessary to use for a man facing a man, not a woman against a man. The use of weapons was not taken into account for a conflict of women against men, or if the person believed they were in danger.

A new law instructed the jury to take

Oklahoma serial executions

WW COMMENTARY

By Gloria Rubac

The state of Oklahoma is making execution history. It is poised to become a serial killer. On July 1, an Oklahoma court set execution dates for 25 men on its death row who have exhausted their appeals. Executions will take place each month for 25 months.

The first, James Coddington’s execution, was carried out Aug. 25, after Governor Kevin Stitt rejected the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board’s recommendation of clemency.

Richard Glossip, a man who has strong claims of innocence, had been scheduled for Sept. 22 but was reset for Dec. 8. The next Oklahoma execution is set for Benjamin Cole, Oct. 20.

Executions in Oklahoma had been held off for several years, after several executions were horribly botched. However, courts finally approved a series of drugs to be used, and the court set these 25 dates. There are 43 people on death row in Oklahoma, so over half those on the row are scheduled for execution.

Botched executions

On April 29, 2014, the execution team had trouble finding a vein in the

arm of Clayton Lockett. They decided to insert an IV in his groin, but they used a wrong-sized needle. Finally, after 45 minutes, Oklahoma officials decided to halt the execution. Lockett then died of a heart attack while lying in the execution chamber.



CREDIT: OKLAHOMA COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY
Tabling at Oklahoma Peace Festival, 2018.

Oklahoma officials did not follow execution protocol Jan. 15, 2015, and used a wrong drug as they were murdering Charles Warner. His final words were, “My body is on fire!” He was supposed to be unconscious! They were supposed to use a drug called potassium chloride but

instead used potassium acetate, which was wrongfully delivered to the state and went unnoticed by those carrying out the execution.

Last October, Oklahoma carried out its first execution since those that were botched in 2014 and 2015. John Marion Grant was put to death Oct. 28, 2021, and he had around two dozen convulsions and vomited as the drugs were given. At one point a doctor went in to wipe the vomit off Grant’s face and neck. The prison director said there would be no changes made. So apparently, this was just killing as usual. (tinyurl.com/yc2yy7u7)

If you can tolerate reading about torture, there is a list of botched executions in the U.S. that prove that legal lynchings are experiments taking place on live human beings, without a predictable outcome. Those on death row are human guinea pigs for states trying to figure out how to kill a person. (tinyurl.com/28aujna4)

The use of the death penalty, like many

issues, is reflected in statistics, many stories, trends, important dates, public events, press coverage and history. Texas has made much history in what is called “the modern era” by using executions so often that no state will ever catch up with its total of 575 executions. Stories of the 186 innocent people who actually survived death row in the U.S., since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976, and were exonerated are stories that should be turned into movies.

Former President Donald Trump’s execution spree was historic. Between July 2020 and January 2021, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was raging in prisons, the federal government executed 13 people. There had not been a federal execution in 17 years. And nine members of the execution team at the federal prison in Terra Haute, Indiana, contracted COVID-19, according to the Death Penalty Information Center.

Oklahoma’s planned spree of legal lynching gives more credence to abolitionists — who demand no more executions. Period. There is no way, no manner, no plan to humanely lynch people. Capital punishment must go into the dustbin of history. It is one more racist and anti-worker attack on our class. □

Jeanette Merrill ¡Presente! ‘You have to be a partisan in the class struggle’

By Ellie Dorritie
Buffalo, New York

The class struggle lost our very partisan comrade Jeanette Fusco Merrill in the 90th year of her revolutionary life in August. Jeanette was a founding member of Workers World Party, for decades a National Committee member and a member of the Steering Committee of the Buffalo branch.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Jeanette, who was born in Buffalo, took up the fight against racism in this city. Together with her spouse, comrade and life partner Ed and the rest of the comrades in the newly-formed Workers World Party, they supported the Mothers Alliance in its fight to stop racist school segregation, to end hiring discrimination at retail stores Grant’s and Woolworth’s, and against gentrification and displacement of low-income housing.

In the early 1960s, Mae Mallory was fighting extradition from Cleveland to Monroe, North Carolina, over false kidnapping charges against her and Robert Williams. They were targeted because they supported the right of the Black community to arm and defend itself from the Ku Klux Klan. Jeanette spent many months fundraising and agitating to build support for Mae’s freedom and holding public meetings to raise money for guns

for Rob Williams in North Carolina — an effort which drew attention and retaliation from the FBI.

Jeanette was a militant voice in support of liberation movements in the U.S. and around the world, beginning with the Cuban Revolution in 1959.

She was outspoken in the struggle to defend the Young Lords, the Organization of Afro-American Unity under Malcolm X and the Deacons for Defense and Justice, and to free jailed fighters in the Black Panther Party, and Martin Sostre and Geraldine Robinson. Robinson, now Geraldine Pointer, spoke at Ed Merrill’s funeral in 2005, recalling that Ed and Jeanette, representing the Martin Sostre Defense Committee, supported her and her children during the frame-up of the African American bookstore owner.

Fearless against red-baiting

Being a target of red-baiting — the government’s tool to weaken the effectiveness of activists — became a way of life for Jeanette and the other Buffalo comrades. FBI agents visited the bosses at their workplaces and used infiltrators to plant divisive fears among them. More than once, Jeanette’s name and her communist affiliation appeared on the front page of the local paper.

Jeanette, a telephone company worker, was never afraid of a challenge. When

co-workers saw her being publicly red-baited and asked, “Aren’t you a communist?” she didn’t deny it. Instead, she always explained: “If you mean, am I for free health care?” and went on to describe the proletarian vision of a better world.

Jeanette was fearless in speaking out, disrupting the House Un-American Activities Committee hearings in Buffalo in 1964. When HUAC rolled into Buffalo, not only were they greeted by 1,500 pickets, mostly students — but they were unable to hold their witch-hunt hearings without disruptions. In the end they were run out of town.

After most of the founding members of Workers World Party moved the party’s headquarters from Buffalo to New York City, Jeanette and Ed started the Buffalo branch over again. They organized meetings that inspired students on the restive campus of the University of Buffalo, injecting a class-conscious worldview of the anti-war struggle. Together they helped kindle a chapter of the militant Youth Against War and Fascism. Many youths soon joined the Buffalo branch of Workers World Party.

Jeanette never paused in teaching revolutionary Marxism-Leninism by example, and the new members quickly grasped that their work in the anti-war movement was to build a direct connection to the ongoing war against the Black community and to defend the right of the Vietnamese people to make their own decisions about the war, negotiations and demands.

Teaching Marxism by example

Women comrades were able to grow as leaders with Jeanette’s guidance and to bring an understanding of class to the 1970s women’s movement.

Jeanette’s strong class-conscious perspective on oppression was what drew students and workers alike into action with Workers World Party on such issues as prisons, food and utility prices, Native rights, LGBTQ+ rights, Palestine and so much more. She knew how to organize, and we learned!

When the Prisoners Solidarity




Jeanette Merrill demonstrates for U.S. political prisoner and revolutionary journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal and for an end to the death penalty.

Committee of YAWF was called upon by the Attica prisoners during the September 1971 rebellion to send in an observer, Jeanette accompanied our comrade Tom Soto, who went inside while the rest of the Buffalo branch was outside the walls with the families of the prisoners — cops and troopers aiming their rifles at us, before they began the assault and massacre.

When Workers World Party was building for the 1974 National March Against Racism in Boston, Jeanette stood on a bench with a bullhorn in downtown Buffalo at lunchtime, raising money for buses to go to Boston.

Jeanette’s imagination for outrageous but incredibly effective action led Buffalo’s chapter of Women United for Action to hold our first huge rummage sale, to enable us to fund community-based free distributions of apples and potatoes that local farmers would otherwise have destroyed. These rummage sales and food distributions were accompanied by mass distributions of literature decrying capitalism’s failed system of profit before people’s needs.

Although her health kept her from activism in recent years, Jeanette will always be an example and an inspiration for those of us who experienced firsthand her fiercely working-class passion, compassion, courage, pride and strength as a revolutionary woman leader. □



**Come out for
Mumia Abu-Jamal
9am, Wed., OCT. 19
1301 Filbert St.
Criminal Justice Center
Philadelphia**

**Because after 40 years, bribed witnesses
and secret deals is still not justice.**

<https://lovenotphear.com/>
<https://mobilization4mumia.com/resources>

Mumia Abu-Jamal

- A Black Panther Party veteran, writer and community activist.
- Unfairly convicted by Philadelphia’s racist injustice system in 1982 and sentenced to be executed.
- The people’s movement forced the state to take him off death row in 2011 but he still faces Death by Incarceration.
- New evidence found in hidden boxes at the Philadelphia District Attorney’s office in 2018 could prove his innocence.
- An October 19 court hearing may rule that Mumia has a right to reopen his case in Common Pleas Court to hear the new evidence.
- If so, the resulting court procedures could finally release him after 40 years behind bars.

**Come out October 19 to demand:
FREE MUMIA!**



Five years after Hurricane Maria Puerto Ricans continue to struggle

By Deborah Rodriguez

A Call to Action on Puerto Rico, a U.S.-based collective with an anti-colonial, pro-independence perspective stated, “Given the damages caused by Hurricane Fiona, we demand that Gobernador Pierluisi issue an executive order requesting that AEE (Electric Power Authority) recruit all the men and women displaced and retired from AEE to address the emergency. We need knowledge and experience Now! #Utiertothescue #Onlythepeopleforthepeople.”

It’s been five years since Hurricane Maria ravaged the archipelago of Puerto Rico and changed the lives of its people. Today, Puerto Rico is being hit hard once again with Hurricane Fiona, with 80 mph winds that have knocked out all power on the island, while many of the people are still recovering from the disaster of five years ago.

The effects of years of austerity laid bare and the years of neglect to Puerto Rico’s infrastructure were evident in the collapse

of the electrical grid. Compounded by a debt crisis imposed on them by President Barack Obama’s PROMESA Act, through its Fiscal Control Board, “La Junta,” in 2016, the impact of Maria was inevitable. Puerto Rican people were not prepared for the destruction left behind by Hurricane Maria and, more importantly, the over 3,000 lives lost.

Post-Maria, the Puerto Rican people have been in the streets protesting the treatment of the people by the government (workers.org/2019/08/43194), cuts to public service employee pensions (workers.org/2022/02/61761), policies that create tax havens for foreign investors (Ley 20 and Ley 22), and the privatization of electrical services. (workers.org/2022/07/65634)

The protest calls are loud and clear: “RICKY RENUNCIA”; “FUERA LUMA!” and “PUERTO RICO NO SE VENDE!”

The Puerto Rican people understand that their enemy is the U.S. and its cronies. Their policies have created conditions that have amplified the distinctions between the wealthy and power elite from

the masses of working-class people. The effects of over 400 years of colonialism and neocolonial policies have laid the groundwork for organized mass protests.

The limited housing, due to overvaluation and prioritization of tourism companies, has made it difficult for Puerto Ricans to purchase homes, resulting in the forced displacement of Puerto Ricans to the U.S. to the extent that there are now more of us Puerto Ricans here than on the island. The privatized roads, beaches and other assets should instead be zones protected as natural resources. There are increases in essentials such as water and tolls and the outright sale of the national university, Universidad de Puerto Rico (UPR).

Of course, not to be forgotten is the foreign electrical company LUMA, whose services have been linked to several electrical fires in Puerto Rico and constant outages often lasting hours, all while imposing seven rate hikes in the last year.

The Puerto Rican people understand that the ruling class will never concede an inch and that they must fight and protest for every gain.



Hurricane Maria, September 2017



Hurricane Fiona, September 2022

The struggle continues; victory is certain. A luta continua, vitória é certa.

To join the “Puerto Rico No Se Vende / Puerto Rico Not for Sale” campaign, see linktr.ee/prnosevende

Cubans vote on Family Code that ‘protects human dignity’

By Bill Sacks

The Cuban people will vote in a Sept. 25 referendum on a new Family Code, which, if approved, would expand women’s and LGBT+ rights, as well as the concept of the nuclear family. Cubans living outside the country voted on Sept. 18.

The new Code would legalize same-sex marriage, allow same-sex couples to adopt children, promote equal sharing of domestic responsibilities and extend labor rights (including pay) for those who care full-time for children, the elderly and people with disabilities. It would further confirm the right to free abortion, paid family leave and assisted and surrogate pregnancies (but not for profit), and it would fight gender-based violence and expand the rights of children and grandparents.

For example, the Code would establish the right of all Cubans to form a family, regardless of sex or gender identity, thereby recognizing all variety of family forms, including multiparental families and allowing parental rights to be shared among an extended and nontraditional



This cartoon from the Cuban newspaper Granma shows a range of people protected by the shelter of the new Family Code.

family that could include grandparents, stepparents and surrogate mothers.

And while the right to reproductive choice and reproductive health is being eliminated or severely restricted in the U.S., the new Code strengthens the right to free and safe abortion in a hospital or clinic for all Cubans.

New code ‘protects human dignity’

In the words of Cuban Minister of Justice Oscar Silvera Martínez, the new

Code “protects human dignity ... and eliminates any vestige of discrimination in the family sphere and rejects violence. He further explained that the Code “is for the benefit of all ... has an inclusive, protective and equal character, does not regulate rigid or pre-established family models and allows the people to solve the conflicts that occur and exercise the rights recognized in that area, taking into account the characteristics, situations and possibilities of each person.”

The referendum is the culmination of a years-long democratic process of discussion and debate among the Cuban people to update the 1975 Code, which codified gender equality in law—a process mandated by the new Constitution that was passed in 2019. A drafting commission began working on a new Code in 2019 and in 2021 presented 22 versions to the National Assembly of People’s Power, which approved a draft to then be submitted to the people for discussion and debate.

Between February and April, nearly 6.5 million Cubans took part in more than 79,000 meetings facilitated by

the Federation of Cuban Women, the Committees to Defend the Revolution (CDRs) and other community organizations to offer proposals and amendments to the proposed Code. Over 400,000 proposals were offered by the people, which were submitted to the National Assembly of People’s Power for evaluation and then returned to the people again for further discussion and proposals.

The proposed Code to be voted on this month represents the 25th draft and was unanimously approved by the National Assembly, after evaluating the thousands of proposals submitted.

Unlike in the U.S., where state after state is making it more difficult for people of color and poor and working people to vote, all Cuban citizens and residents are automatically registered to vote at age 16 and can cast a ballot in the referendum.

Bill Sacks has been an organizer and participant with the Venceremos Brigade, breaking the travel blockade to Cuba, for over 50 years.

Statement condemns OHCHR’s ‘Assessment of human rights concerns’ in China’s Uyghur Autonomous Region

The following statement has been initiated by Friends of Socialist China. You can add your name as an individual signatory using the form at socialistchina.org. Once you do so, your name will appear on this page within a few hours. Organizations wishing to sign on to this statement should contact Friends of Socialist China at info@socialistchina.org.

We strongly condemn the publication by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of its Assessment of human rights concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, People’s Republic of China. In the words of former OHCHR lawyer and human rights expert Alfred de Zayas, this document “should be discarded as propagandistic, biased and methodologically flawed.”

Based on substandard research methods and biased sources, the Assessment is completely lacking in credibility. It treats arms of the military-industrial complex, such as the Australian Strategic Policy

Institute (ASPI), along with professional anti-communists such as Adrian Zenz, as legitimate sources. Meanwhile the voices of Chinese NGOs, academics and individuals are suppressed, as are the numerous reports of diplomatic trips to Xinjiang—including by representatives of Muslim-majority countries—that have taken place in recent years.

The Assessment pointedly ignores China’s extraordinary progress in promoting the human rights of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang: in relation to poverty alleviation, social welfare, economic development, safety from terrorist attacks, and more. Instead, the document uses deliberately ambiguous language—that China’s actions “may” constitute crimes against humanity—in order to slander the People’s Republic of China whilst maintaining some plausible deniability.

It is highly suspicious that the Assessment makes no mention of then-U.N. Human Rights Commissioner Michelle Bachelet’s visit to Xinjiang in

May 2022. Having visited a prison and spoken to former trainees at a vocational education and training center; having interacted with civil society organizations, academics, and community and religious leaders; Bachelet found no evidence of crimes against humanity. The numerous conversations she had do not form part of the data set for the Assessment.

What is the reason for the disparity between the OHCHR report and Bachelet’s end-of-mission statement? It is painfully obvious that the OHCHR has come under intense pressure from the U.S. to bolster the credibility of the lurid slanders that have been thrown at China by Western politicians and journalists. Such propaganda forms part of the West’s imperial agenda of undermining China.

The OHCHR Assessment does a profound disservice to the cause of strengthening global human rights cooperation. The report does not enjoy a mandate from the General Assembly or the Human Rights Council, and it runs counter to the

wishes and interests of the mainstream of the international community. A joint statement delivered by Cuba at the 50th session of the Human Rights Council in June this year stated its firm opposition to the “politicization of human rights and double standards, or interference in China’s internal affairs under the pretext of human rights.” This statement was signed by 69 countries, the overwhelming majority from the Global South.

Given the OHCHR’s relative silence in relation to persistent human rights abuses by the imperialist powers, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the Assessment is politically motivated, produced under pressure from the U.S. and designed to contribute to a dangerous, escalating new Cold War.

We call on the OHCHR to withdraw its Assessment, and we stand in solidarity with the people of China, subjected to abhorrent and baseless accusations.

See socialistchina.org for list of signers.

Busing migrants, targeting socialism

Playing with human lives in a despicable racist political stunt, Greg Abbott, right-wing governor of Texas, has bused thousands of undocumented migrants north from the U.S. border with Mexico since the beginning of August.

The buses dump homeless, jobless, hungry people — far from their own countries, with few to no resources — into New York City, Chicago or Washington, D.C. That is, if they don't get abandoned by their driver in the middle of rural Georgia, as almost happened to one busload.

White-supremacist Gov. Ron DeSantis jumped into this meanness on Sept. 15, flying two planeloads of migrants — who had been misled — from Texas into tiny Martha's Vineyard island in Massachusetts.

Maybe social media discussion tempted some people to dismiss these actions as mere midterm election jockeying between far-right Republicans in the South and "liberal" Democrats in the North.

But this is a political "game" only if you forget that the people being "jockeyed" are people being moved around by the hand of the capitalist state — whether Democrats or Republicans hold office.

Instead, let's ask: What is the ideological point these right-wingers are trying to make to their base through political bullying?

Attack on right to shelter

New York City has a "right to shelter" law guaranteeing a safe place to sleep to all homeless people, men, women, children, families — in place since the Coalition for the Homeless won the 1979 Callahan v. Carey lawsuit and fought to enlarge its coverage since then.

Massachusetts is the only U.S. right-to-shelter state for homeless families. Washington, D.C., and Chicago are "sanctuary cities" for undocumented migrants.

These places have those protections for the common good of people who live there. But to anti-communist DeSantis and Abbott, these protections are suspect — they reek of socialism.

Abbott has warned of the emerging battle between socialism and capitalism in the U.S., saying, "Texas is the leader of the national movement for capitalism." (Houston Chronicle, Aug. 6, 2018)

DeSantis has established a "Victims of Communism Day" in the Florida public schools, requiring students to receive

"instruction" on the "poverty, starvation, migration, systemic lethal violence and suppression of speech" that supposedly occur under socialism.

DeSantis does not acknowledge that 56% of those killed by Florida cops in recent years were people of color — absolutely victims of "systemic lethal violence." As for "suppression of speech" — he personally pushed through laws to make illegal any discussion of enslavement, racism, gender identity and sexuality in the state's public schools! (AfroCubaWeb.com)

These proto-fascists are targeting cities where "right to shelter" and to "sanctuary" have been won by a peoples' struggle. These programs are only a glimmer of the security that socialism could offer working and oppressed people in our daily lives.

The governors and others are scheming to undermine the hope socialism offers — dramatizing that some current migrants are from Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela. This is supposed to prove people are fleeing "repression" in anti-imperialist countries open — or already on the road — to socialism.

Conveniently omitted is the fact of U.S. actions that kill — economic blockades,

sanctions and military interventions — against any country trying to assert independence from the brutal hand of capitalism. The deadly impact is great deprivation, starvation, internal upheaval in many countries — and subsequent migration for survival.

The U.S. is conducting a global class war against all working and oppressed people, including in this hemisphere. The grandstanding ploys of Abbott and DeSantis are coldhearted, hateful manifestations of those larger capitalist attacks against the possibility of socialism.

Yes, in the U.S. we are nowhere near socialism. The capitalist class has a chokehold on national and state governments. But the rising younger generation is busy unionizing across lines of nationality, sexuality, gender, abilities and language. They are expanding the possibilities for the future.

Our hope is in the consciousness emerging in workers and oppressed people, worldwide, who are caught in the grip of the forces of capitalist production and exploitation — the consciousness that will begin the struggle for socialism, starting now. □

WW COMMENTARY Defend abortion access in the streets

By Monica Moorehead

The following article first appeared as an editorial in the June 30 WW issue. It is being reprinted and updated as a commentary in light of the upcoming Oct. 7-9 nationally coordinated actions to defend reproductive rights. See womensmarch.com/initiatives/womens-wave for more information.

Tens of thousands of mainly young people took to the streets in utter outrage on June 24 and June 25 when the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade — the legalization of federal protection of the right to abortion for the past 49 years.

Various groups are scrambling to find ways to make sure abortion on demand is accessible, including providing necessary funds for those forced to travel hundreds of miles to other states where clinics still provide this essential health care.

This reactionary, barbaric ruling will turn back the clock for women — especially those of color — as well as gender-nonconforming and trans people. This is an attack

on their right to choose for themselves when it comes to having a child or not. This ruling reflects how patriarchy, misogyny and racism are deeply rooted in U.S. society.

The ruling signals a return to "states' rights." At one point in U.S. history, states had the right to enslave African people before the U.S. Civil War resulted in the military defeat of the Confederacy. One pro-life, right-wing politician had the unmitigated gall to put an equal sign between the end of abortion and the end of slavery.

This comparison is meant to confuse the masses into believing that to be anti-racist, you have to be anti-abortion — when in reality Black enslaved women were systematically raped by their white enslavers and forced to carry the resulting pregnancies to term — and the child was then the property of the enslaver.

In many of the protests held since June 24, not only were there signs defending the right to abortion but also those saying "Defund the police." There were signs such



as "Abolish SCOTUS!" and "Abort the court!" for having the power to hold the fate of millions of people in their hands.

There were signs emphasizing that SCOTUS cared more about people having the right to carry guns than people having a right to an abortion. This was in response to a SCOTUS decision, issued June 23, that struck down a New York State law that

banned people from carrying guns in public.

In a 1989 political report to a Workers World Party conference, Chairperson Sam Marcy stated in response to the weakening of Roe v. Wade by SCOTUS: "The abortion decision confirms that whenever the bourgeoisie is in a crisis, they will let nine people, unelected, appointed for life, decide the most critical issues concerning life in the United States."

This observation is very timely today as the bourgeoisie and their fragile system face an unprecedented economic

Continued on page 11

Hail Indigenous Peoples Day! Support Workers World

Boston's proclamation last year that the second Monday of October every year would be Indigenous Peoples Day, "in lieu of" Columbus Day, was a victory for Native peoples, since the creation of U.S. settler colonialism, the theft and devastation of their lands and cultures, denial of all rights, the torture and genocide, began and continued in what is now the state of Massachusetts.

Then on Oct. 8, 2021, President Joe Biden proclaimed a federal Indigenous Peoples Day and acknowledged the atrocities "European explorers inflicted on Tribal nations and Indigenous communities." These pronouncements came about due to the strong, unified struggles by Indigenous peoples and their allies, notably at Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline and the courageous, militant fight that shut down the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The movement for recognition of Oct. 12 as Indigenous Peoples Day began in Berkeley, California, following a huge march called by the American Indian Movement in San Francisco on Oct. 10, 1992, protesting the celebration of conquistador mass murderer Christopher Columbus's arrival 500 years earlier. Since then, 14 states, Washington, D.C., and over 130 cities have dumped the holiday honoring the genocidal conqueror and recognize Indigenous peoples, their knowledge and cultures on that day.

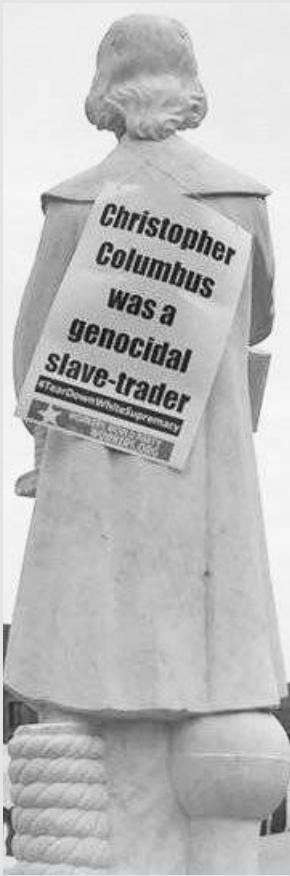
Workers World has continually supported the

righteous struggles of Native peoples on the streets and in our newspaper. WW joins Indigenous communities to demand: Drop "Columbus Day" as a federal holiday! Commemorate Indigenous Peoples Day in every city, town and state! Down with white supremacy!

Your donations matter!

Workers World relies on our readers' backing. The WW Supporter Program was founded 45 years ago to help build this socialist newspaper. Since the early 1990s, the fund has supported the website workers.org, where WW articles are posted daily and the PDF file of every weekly paper is displayed.

Workers.org contains news and an analysis of global and U.S. struggles and is a resource for political activists. The website posts firsthand accounts by writer-activists in many countries, translated by our staff. Timely articles by worker-organizers keep the newspaper current on U.S. union drives, along with reports on antiwar, anti-racist and other progressive movements.



Unforeseen circumstances during the pandemic caused us to reduce the number of printed issues to once a month. But the weekly online newspaper has never been skipped during this 2 1/2-year health crisis. While WW's staff is voluntary, both the printed newspaper and the website require that monthly expenses be paid. Although many online publications require fees to read their articles, WW does not. Our articles are free to all readers.

But WW needs your help! Join the WW Supporter Program! Can you give \$50, \$100, \$200, \$300 or more per year? For a contribution of \$50 or more, you will receive 12 print issues a year and a weekly email of the online issue. Supporters can receive the book, "What road to socialism?" by notifying us. By donating, you help class truth reach more readers.

Write monthly or annual checks to Workers World. Mail them with your name, address and email address to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or sign up to donate online at workers.org.

We appreciate your support. □

Dramatic U-turn

U.S. recognizes Alex Saab as Special Envoy of Venezuela

By William Camacaro

This article was first published by Orinoco Tribune. William Camacaro is a Venezuelan-American, National Co-Coordinator in the Alliance for Global Justice and was a co-founder of the Bolivarian Circle of New York “Alberto Lovera” and Senior Analyst for the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA).

After more than two years questioning Venezuelan Alex Saab’s diplomatic status, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has now conceded that he is a special envoy. The dramatic U-turn was made in a filing before Judge Robert Scola on Tuesday, Sept. 13, in a hearing that was held regarding Saab’s motion to compel the DOJ to hand over certain documents, which his defense believes would be beneficial to his claim of diplomatic immunity.

Alex Saab’s defense has been pushing the DOJ for some months now to make what are called “Brady disclosures.” These require that information and evidence that is material to the guilt or innocence of a defendant must be disclosed by the prosecutor to the defense team. The term comes from the 1963 U.S. Supreme Court case (Brady v. Maryland), in which the Supreme Court ruled that suppression by

the prosecution of evidence favorable to a defendant who has requested it violates due process.

The Department of Justice has steadfastly dragged its heels in producing the requested documents, leaving Saab’s defense no choice but to file a motion to compel the hastening of the process.

Saab’s defense team is adamant that, given the importance of the case, other branches of the U.S. government — such as the Department of State, DOJ’s Office of International Affairs, Department of Defense and the Washington Interpol liaison office — all hold information that supports the notion that Alex Saab is a Venezuelan special envoy entitled to diplomatic immunity and inviolability.

Alex Saab was detained June 12, 2020, on the Cape Verdean Island of Sal, on instructions from the United States to the tiny West African archipelago. At the time, which coincided with the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Alex Saab was undertaking a humanitarian special mission to Iran to procure medicines, medical equipment and equipment for the oil sector in Venezuela.

His detention was declared illegal twice by the Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States, in March and June of 2021, a claim that

was further supported by rulings from the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva. Similarly, Saab’s detention was condemned by several other U.N. bodies. Cape Verde bowed to political pressure from the United States and agreed to extradite Alex Saab. Even though the domestic judicial process was not completed, Alex Saab was forcibly removed to Miami on Oct. 16, 2021.

Throughout Tuesday’s hearing, the DOJ appeared off-balance, and Justice Scola’s comments on the performance were on several occasions bathed in scorn, if not outright sarcasm. Central to the discussion was whether or not the DOJ intended to use any classified materials to support its position. After some prevarication, it admitted that it was still “reviewing the matter” and that “technology issues” were making the review more difficult than usual. Justice Scola asked Alex Saab’s defense team if they objected to granting the DOJ more time, to which they agreed.

The date for the hearing on Alex Saab’s status as a diplomat entitled to immunity has now been pushed back to Dec. 12. Following the DOJ’s acceptance of the fact



PHOTO: FUSER NEWS

Puerto Rican Day Parade, New York City, June 12.

that Alex Saab is a special envoy, the court will effectively be left with only the issue of Saab’s entitlement to immunity to address.

The film “Alex Saab: a kidnapped diplomat” premiered in Caracas and was then shown in 10 U.S. cities on the same day. This film really exposes the starvation in Venezuela caused by U.S. sanctions. The role of Alex Saab in organizing the supplies of basic foods and essential supplies to every family in Venezuela through the CLAP food distribution program is highlighted.

The 48-minute film is available on Youtube. We encourage people to download it and organize screenings of this film. (youtu.be/bhO3k-sazdM)

Haiti explodes with cries of ‘down with misery’

By G. Dunkel

Since August 22, the date when the Haitian Revolution began in 1791, hundreds of thousands of Haitians have taken to the streets in every city and many towns to repeatedly say “down with misery.”

They are staying in the streets even in the face of warnings about inundations from Hurricane Fiona, which is currently devastating Puerto Rico. The mass anger has been reflected in the streets of Port-au-Prince and other cities filled with burning barricades and closed stores. Many embassies and consulates have closed to avoid confrontations that could turn deadly.

Haitians demand that Acting Prime Minister Ariel Henry pull up his stakes and leave, an end to high prices — lavichè, an end to the climate of fear and instability, an end to a state that doesn’t even provide drinkable water, much less public health and education. Many poor and working-class neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince are running short on water, since their usual water truck deliveries have been disrupted by the protests.

As the demonstrations have grown more militant, the cops have grown more aggressive, as the killing of two journalists recorded on video indicated.

Protests in Gonaïves and Hinche

Gonaïves is a seacoast city with a population of 300,000, north of Port-au-Prince, where Jean-Jacques Dessalines proclaimed Haiti’s independence in 1804. Protesters in Gonaïves attacked six institutions: the U.N.’s World Food Program, the Holy Family Church, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the offices of the clergy, the La Couronne brewery and the headquarters of the former departmental director of Public Works. (tinyurl.com/2p8j2ups)

Video of the Gonaïves protests show people, mainly women, carrying off big sacks of grain or flour. The WFP claimed that it lost 1,400 metric tons of food that it was planning on giving as 600,000 meals to children over the rest of the year. But people are hungry NOW!



March in Hinche (Ench in Creyol), Haiti. Banner in Creyol gives the date and place of the march, organizations involved, and says, roughly, “We say no to: hunger, speculation in gas, lawlessness, kidnapping.”

Hinche is one of the oldest towns on the island of Hispaniola, on the Central Plateau, about equidistant from Cap-Haïtien and Port-au-Prince, close to the Dominican border. It has about 25,000 people. Hinche was the site of a historic rally in 1990, when Jean-Bertrand Aristide’s campaign drew 30,000 people out to support him.

The Sept. 6 protest was organized by a coalition called the Table of Opposition, which held three simultaneous demonstrations. Each demonstration denounced lawlessness, kidnappings, cost of living going through the roof and the current government’s incapacity to resolve this crisis.

The demonstrations eventually merged and marched together through Hinche, setting up burning barricades. Banks, public transport and the Hinche market were closed. The cops used tear gas to disperse the crowd. There were injuries but no deaths. The Table of Opposition included civic and community organizations, some small political parties, human rights organizations and the teachers union. (tinyurl.com/5n6m78pu)

U.S. response

Haitians are generally fed up with both the U.N., which has refused to take responsibility for the cholera it introduced into Haiti — twice — and the United States which has deported over 20,000 Haitians in 2022 under atrocious conditions.

The satrap they picked, Ariel Henry, raised fuel prices by 100% in the midst of

national protests over high fuel prices. He had the gall to claim “The State needs 3 billion gourds [Haiti’s national currency] to launch some social program.” Fanning the flames, albeit with the blessings of the IMF.

Defend reproductive rights

Continued from page 8

crisis on a global scale. And who will bear the brunt of this crisis? The economic and political rights of all sectors of the multinational, multigendered working class are on the chopping block.

Widespread radicalization

There is an old Marxist axiom, “Being determines consciousness,” meaning that social conditions shape how one thinks.

In terms of the attacks on abortion rights, workers’ rights and police violence against people of color and now against anti-SCOTUS protesters, there is great potential for class consciousness to be shifted and to grow on a mass scale. The militancy and scale of the initial protests against SCOTUS have not been seen since the aftermath of the police lynching of George Floyd in May 2020, when millions took the streets during that summer.

Today some are calling on social media for a general strike of women and their allies. This may be a premature call — but worsening conditions here and globally

for billions of people may justify such a call sooner rather than later.

There is mass anger against this political offensive by the rabid right wing and against the ineffectiveness of the Democratic Party that has had ample time to strengthen abortion laws. The mass anger expressed now and over the coming months will be an important barometer for the outcome of the November midterm elections.

But while these elections come and go, what will remain are the bread-and-butter, life-and-death issues propelling the masses into the streets. They will come to rely less and less on the phony-baloney promises of capitalist politicians to meet their human needs — including health care, housing, education, an end to state repression and the right to organize.

L.D. Barkley, one of the martyred leaders of the 1971 Attica Prison uprising, stated that the heroic prison rebellion was “the sound before the fury.” Well, what we are seeing in the streets today, over 50 years later, is another reminder that mass fury, despite ebbs and flows, will always rage until the people win justice. □



PHOTO: ORINOCO TRIBUNE

Manifestación en Venezuela. Los tribunales estadounidenses finalmente admitieron el 13 de septiembre que Alex Saab, secuestrado por EE.UU., era de hecho un enviado especial de Venezuela, por lo que se le debe otorgar inmunidad diplomática frente a enjuiciamiento.

‘Operación Estrella Solitaria’: una estratagema de los supremacistas blancos

El gobernador protofascista de Texas, Greg Abbott, está recibiendo mucha publicidad estos días por enviar en autobús a los migrantes que solicitan asilo y que han entrado en Estados Unidos desde la frontera mexicana, hacia el norte, a Washington, D.C., y a la ciudad de Nueva York. Ahora se le ha unido en esta maniobra política el gobernador de Arizona, Doug Ducey. Desde mediados de abril, Abbott ha enviado a 5.100 migrantes a D.C. desde Texas, en más de 135 autobuses, como parte de la “Operación Estrella Solitaria” (Operation Lone Star). En la ciudad de Nueva York, el comisionado del Departamento de Servicios Sociales, Gary Jenkins, dijo que calcula que desde mayo han llegado allí más de 3.000 migrantes, entre ellos un número importante de familias con niños.

¿La razón que dan estos gobernadores supremacistas blancos? Según Abbott el 5 de agosto, “el caos creado por las políticas de frontera abierta de Biden”. (gov.texas.gov)

De hecho, muchas de las políticas fronterizas racistas de Trump se han mantenido durante la presidencia de Biden, debido a las múltiples demandas antiinmigrantes encabezadas por funcionarios estatales republicanos y respaldadas por la SCOTUS y los tribunales inferiores.

Lo que estamos viendo en tiempo real es el feo espectáculo de dos partidos políticos controlados por los capitalistas que compiten por sacar el mayor beneficio político de la desesperada situación de los migrantes que huyen de sus países devastados por el imperialismo militar y económico de Estados Unidos.

Y esta pugna no se limita a las palabras. No. Las personas reales están siendo empujadas de un lado a otro, a través de miles y miles de kilómetros, con la desesperación, la falta de vivienda, el hambre, la

enfermedad y a menudo la muerte como resultado.

La actual lucha entre el “poder federal” y los “derechos de los estados” es una repetición de la lucha sobre qué corriente dentro del capitalismo puede reclamar el poder y el control sobre los destinos de los trabajadores y los oprimidos.

Y la supremacía blanca es una premisa mortal en la que se basa ese poder. Cualquiera de las dos corrientes capitalistas está dispuesta a utilizar cualquier técnica disponible para ganar: la supresión legal, incluyendo el encarcelamiento y el trabajo forzado, el lenguaje racista “dog whistle” y los trucos publicitarios como el busing. Estas prácticas se transmiten de generación en generación de un político de la clase dominante a otro.

La historia de la estratagema

Porque la estratagema del busing de Abbott no es nueva. Es una página sacada del repugnante libro de jugadas del Consejo de Ciudadanos Blancos que luchó contra la segregación en el Sur durante los años 50 y 60, bajo la bandera de los “derechos de los estados”.

Fundado en 1954 en Mississippi, como parte de la reacción segregacionista a la sentencia de desegregación Brown v. Board of Education del Tribunal Supremo de EE.UU., el WCC era “el Klan de los empresarios”. Alcaldes, editores de periódicos, propietarios de empresas y líderes de los Boy Scouts se reunían abiertamente en esta red de organizaciones supremacistas blancas en todo Estados Unidos.

En 1985, el Consejo de Ciudadanos Conservadores, con

sede en Missouri, continuó la labor intolerante, utilizando las listas de correo del CMI y a algunos de los miembros de su junta directiva. El CCC tiene estrechos vínculos con el Partido Republicano en el Sur, y políticos prominentes como el líder de la mayoría del Senado, Trent Lott, fueron miembros abiertos mientras estuvieron en el cargo.

Una de las directoras de Workers World, que creció en Alabama bajo la segregación, fue testigo de una campaña de la CCC en su pequeña ciudad para “enviar a los negros al Norte” y denunciar la “hipocresía” de la lucha contra el racismo. Un reportaje fotográfico de primera plana en el periódico local mostraba a los líderes empresariales blancos del Partido Demócrata local “escortando” a un grupo de negros en un autobús Greyhound, con destino final a Detroit.

A los supremacistas blancos que organizaban estas maniobras políticas entonces, al igual que Abbott y Ducey ahora, no les importaba ni un ápice el destino de los desplazados y trasladados, tratando a la gente como piezas de un juego de ajedrez político.

De hecho, el 11 de agosto, en el norte de Georgia, las autoridades recibieron una llamada en la que se les informaba de que los migrantes enviados desde Texas en un autobús de la Operación Lone Star estaban a punto de ser abandonados cerca de la zona rural de Rising Fawn, Georgia, donde sólo había una gasolinera y tierras de cultivo. A los migrantes se les dijo que era sólo una “corta caminata” a Chattanooga, Tennessee— 25 millas (40 kilómetros) de distancia en las carreteras locales montañosas.

Workers World está comprometido con la lucha para combatir y acabar con la supremacía blanca. Estamos hartos de la farsa hipócrita del llamado gobierno “democrático” bajo el capitalismo. Exigimos y ganaremos un refugio seguro, refugio, atención sanitaria, puestos de trabajo, educación, libertad de encarcelamiento y la oportunidad de “pan y rosas” para todos bajo el socialismo. ¡No hay fronteras en la lucha de los trabajadores! □



Un traductor habla con los migrantes que son transportados en autobús por la Operación Lone Star de Texas a Washington, D.C. Fueron amenazados con ser abandonados en Rising Fawn, Georgia.

De reinas y capitalismo

Qué anacronismo es que, en esta época moderna de exploración de la luna y de las profundidades de los océanos más grandes, los medios de comunicación de masas lloren la muerte de la reina Isabel de Gran Bretaña. La adulación a la monarquía británica rezuma de la llamada prensa libre de Estados Unidos.

Parece que se ha olvidado la guerra revolucionaria de 1776, en la que murieron miles de personas para asegurar la independencia de las 13 colonias americanas de Gran Bretaña. Pero la clase gobernante de Estados Unidos, que ahora es posiblemente la más rica del mundo, tiene más en común con la monarquía de Gran Bretaña que con los millones de personas, en todo el mundo, que todavía sufren bajo el dominio colonial británico de una forma u otra.

En su apogeo, en 1921, el Imperio Británico dominaba una cuarta parte de todas las tierras de la Tierra. El saqueo de sus colonias convirtió a la clase dirigente británica en una de las más ricas del mundo. También inspiró rebeliones contra los colonizadores, que fueron aplastadas sin piedad.

Dos guerras mundiales entre bloques rivales imperialistas costaron muy caro. Millones de personas murieron en estas luchas por el dominio del mundo. El bloque anglo-estadounidense ganó las dos veces, y en 1952, cuando Isabel subió al trono, el Imperio Británico gobernaba unos 70 países.

La clase dominante estadounidense se enorgullece de sus orígenes revolucionarios en el derrocamiento del dominio británico y hace del 4 de julio una ocasión para felicitarse. Esto no ha tenido ningún impacto en la alianza entre las clases dominantes de Estados Unidos y Gran Bretaña.

Son aliados de clase con el objetivo compartido de cosechar superbeneficios a partir del trabajo de los trabajadores de ambos países y de todo el mundo.

El capitalismo es un sistema económico basado en la explotación de la clase trabajadora. El resultado es una riqueza incalculable para unos pocos, mientras millones luchan por sobrevivir. Esto es intrínsecamente inestable, independientemente de que lo gestione un presidente o un monarca.

Traducción: Deborah Rodriguez.

Cuando el medioambiente da vueltas

Por Mumia Abu-Jamal

Fuertes inundaciones azotan el estado de Misisipi, mientras las sequías abundan en el Oeste del país. Las áreas en medio se atrapan en el apretón sudoroso de una ola de calor. En Europa, cientos de personas mueren debido al calor excesivo. El cambio climático, a veces llamado “calentamiento global”, es una realidad.

Por su parte, los políticos que diseñaron la idea del cambio climático ahora suenan increíblemente estúpidos. Han sido apologistas para los industriales mientras la Tierra sigue hirviendo a fuego lento. También parece que las soluciones políticas a medias, como tratados y promesas de menos daño ambiental, se han vuelto insuficientes y han llegado demasiado tarde. Asimismo, los conservadores pronósticos científicos de derretimientos de hielo han gravemente subestimado los problemas enfrentados por las poblaciones humanas.

Dicho sencillamente, el capitalismo mata.

La búsqueda desenfadada de ganancias ilimitadas pone en peligro el aire, agua, temperaturas, y niveles de agua alrededor del mundo. Y los seres humanos enfrentan amenazas a la supervivencia imposibles de superar con la formidable maquinaria de guerra de Estados Unidos.

Tal vez la siembra de millones de árboles y la conversión de los hábitats humanos en espacios verdes podría retrasar la carnicería ambiental que viene. Tal vez.

Con amor, no miedo, soy Mumia Abu-Jamal.

31 de agosto de 2022

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Audio grabado por Prison Radio
Traducción Amig@s de Mumia en México.



Mumia Abu-Jamal