

Inclusive, expansive, revolutionary

New Family Code approved by Cubans 2-to-1

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

After years of intense discussion, debate and an on-the-ground, neighborhood-by-neighborhood democratic process, the people of Cuba have passed a new Family Code. The provisions of this “Code of Affections,” as it is familiarly known, are progressive, revolutionary and honor the reality of the wide range of families that people are creating in defiance of patriarchal capitalism.

People have formed all manner of different family configurations throughout history. But under modern-day capitalism, until very recently only one type — the male-dominated, female-compliant heterosexual marriage — has been given legal, state sanction.

Recently some headway has been made internationally, including in the U.S., to legally sanction paired same-sex unions and grant adoption rights to those couples. Though this accommodation has been made based on the fact this “new” kind of family parallels the paired heterosexual norm, marriage equality in the U.S. may now again be under threat, given the rise of protofascist efforts in many

states and the current makeup of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Now Cuba has heroically enlarged the world’s understanding of what a socialist vision of marriage and family can be. The new Code of Families generously embraces the many varied and actual familial structures that human beings create in order to love, shelter, protect and nurture themselves and their children.

The new Code legalizes same-sex marriage, allows same-sex couples to adopt children, promotes equal sharing of domestic responsibilities and extends labor rights (including pay) to those who care full time for children, the elderly or people with disabilities. The Code confirms the right to free abortion, paid family leave and assisted and surrogate pregnancies (but not for profit). It fights

gender-based violence and expands the rights of children and grandparents.

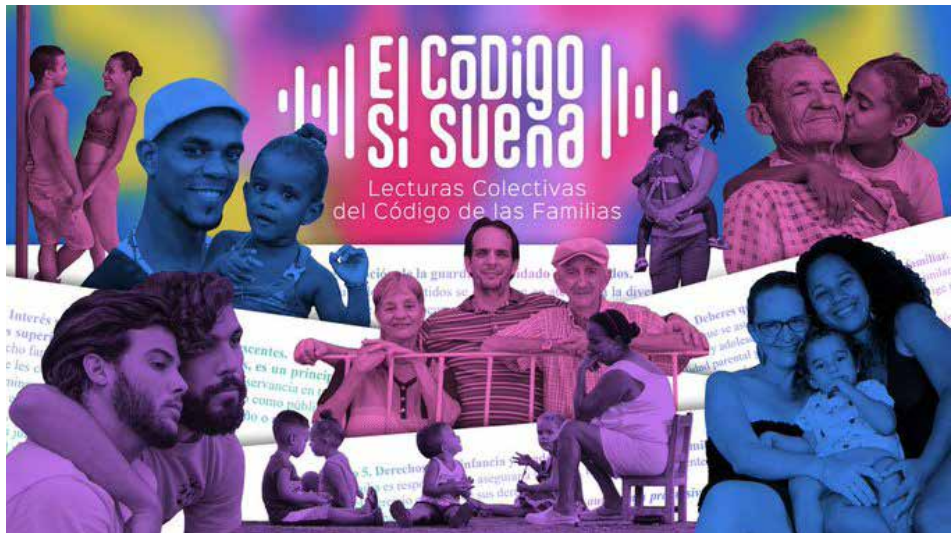
The new Code replaces the concept of “parental authority” with that of “parental responsibility.” Luis Palenzuela Paez, a Civil and Family Law expert and member of the working group drafting the new Code, stressed that the concept of parental authority originated in the “pater familia” of the Roman family, who held the power and legal right of life and death over the members of his family, which included his wife, children and enslaved people.

With deliberation, the new Family Code embeds in its articles such principles as “gender equality, the obligation of parents to provide their children with emotional stability and to contribute to the free development of their personality, based on their capacities, aptitudes and vocation.” (Granma, Sept. 20)

A resounding win for the people of Cuba

On Sept. 18 and Sept. 25, Cubans who went to the polls to vote in a referendum on the code numbered 6,251,786. The “yes” votes were 3,936,790 or 66.87% and the “no” votes were 1,950,090 or 33.13%.

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The new Cuban Code of Families ‘allows you to dream.’

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WW PHOTO: LESLIE FEINBERG
Cece McDonald, imprisoned for an act of self-defense, is greeted by Leslie Feinberg, Minneapolis, May 1, 2012.

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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-ac-

tivists 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 ½-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. □



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Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Peoples' Townhomes on front lines of struggle for affordable housing

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

Residents in 69 low-income housing units at the University City Townhomes in West Philadelphia received welcome news Sept. 23. Their pending Oct. 8 eviction date was moved to Dec. 27, after the property owner IBID Associates applied for an extension of their federal contract with Housing and Urban Development.

Residents first learned of plans by the owners to discontinue a decades-long contract with HUD July 8, 2021, and to evict all residents by July 8, 2022. If residents are evicted, IBID wants to demolish the buildings, and sell the land for \$100 million to developers.

The residents, with growing community support, have put up an impressive struggle, now forcing the owners to postpone the evictions for a fourth time. They are making it clear; they don't plan to go anywhere.

Each win by the residents of what they call the "Peoples Townhomes" has come with broadening support and growing national attention to this fight-back by a predominantly Black and Brown low-income community.

After the first eviction date extension, Save the UC Townhomes Coalition set up a creative tent encampment on July 9 to drive home what their future would look like if evicted. Hundreds of individuals, and community groups responded. City labor unions called on their members not to carry out any evictions. It took the cops — in this case sheriffs — to comply with the landlords' orders to tear down the tents on Aug. 8.

Residents and supporters disrupted an incoming University of Pennsylvania student convocation Aug. 29 as President Liz Magill was speaking. With banners denouncing "Penntrification," the protest shed light on UPenn's historic, racist expansion at the expense of Black residents in surrounding communities. IBID Associates subsequently moved the Sept. 7 eviction date to Oct. 8.

When two UPenn students who supported the protest were subsequently brought up on disciplinary charges by Magill, 73 UPenn faculty members issued a letter in their support.

Following a celebratory press conference and rally at City Hall Sept. 7, Save



July 11, Philadelphia

the UC Townhomes led a march to the Pennsylvania Academy for the Fine Arts, where demonstrators crashed a fund-raising event for the Building Industry Association of Philadelphia Political Action Committee. Several local politicians were caught there hobnobbing with the major developers, gentrifiers and bankers.

Two city council members subsequently issued a previously prepared statement calling for a one-year extension of the federal contract between IBID and HUD.

Recently, AFSCME District Council 47, representing thousands of city workers, issued a strong resolution supporting the Townhomes residents' demands and calling on the city to use its resources to "ensure that properties which are subject to expiring HUD contracts in the coming years are maintained as affordable, subsidized housing for those who are low income or very low income."

UC Townhomes residents are calling

on the city to arrange to purchase the block where their homes are located and for their homes to be made permanently affordable. If they are forced to leave, they want a two-year eviction extension.

Struggle puts spotlight on national lack of affordable housing

The struggle by UC Townhomes residents to remain in their homes is forcing a discussion about what constitutes "affordable housing" and how little is available in major cities like Philadelphia. The city's failure to maintain an aging housing stock was even the topic of an op-ed in the Inquirer on Sept. 22 by Philadelphia Housing Authority President Kelvin A. Jeremiah, who admitted that 14,500 affordable Section 8 housing contracts are at risk of expiring over the next decade.

The problem is not that fewer homes and apartments are being built. It is that older housing construction, like the UC Townhomes, is being torn down and

replaced with new boutique condo towers, which offer fewer and considerably more expensive units than what they replace.

Backed by investments from Wall Street and other financiers, the building industry has turned to luxury high-rise condominium construction, rather than expanding housing opportunities for low-income families. Even when developers agree to set aside a certain percentage of units as "affordable," their concept of affordability totally excludes low-income families.

Driven by greed

Builders claim that the price of land, the higher cost of construction and the shortage of building materials forces them to turn to the luxury condo industry, but in reality it's pure greed.

Often the luxury boutique structures contain far fewer individual units, but they are built considerably taller than the low-rise buildings they replace, meaning more building materials are needed, and the developer can charge more.

The New York Times gives several examples of this in an article: "Taller Towers, Fewer Homes" by Stefanos Chen, Sept. 23. In one example sited at 1165 Madison Avenue in Manhattan, a developer constructed a new tower consisting of 13 stories with 11 units. The developer could have constructed 88 moderate-income units with fewer stories at the same site.

Under capitalism, there is little incentive for developers to build more units, when they can get higher prices and pay less for labor and materials for fewer but larger luxury spaces. Land and resources that could be used to house more people are being used instead for the super-wealthy, as developers chase the best return on their investments.

UC Townhomes residents are waging a fierce battle against IBID's plans to sell the property for millions of dollars to a developer who will most likely follow the example of the Manhattan builders.

The struggle over housing is a class struggle, with low- and moderate-income workers fighting the wealthy ruling class, which has disposable income gained from exploiting the labor of the global working class. The ultimate solution lies with a revolution to overturn capitalism and replace it with a society that prioritizes human needs — socialism. □



Sept. 7, Philadelphia.

UPenn students rally for environmental and housing justice

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

Students at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia held a press conference and rally Sept. 26 at the Fossil Free Penn encampment in front of College Hall. Speakers called on UPenn to end its practice of investing millions of dollars in fossil fuels and to cut all ties with the fossil fuel industry, its financiers and its upholders.

They also demanded that UPenn commit funds to preserve the nearby University City Townhomes, whose Black and Brown residents face eviction. While UPenn does not own the property, the students and other activists believe

the university should intervene in the sale because of its historic role in gentrifying the Black communities in West Philadelphia known as the Black Bottom.

In 1969, 400 students and activists occupied College Hall to force university trustees to pledge \$10 million for low-income housing to counter its encroachment into the Black Bottom. UPenn never delivered on its promise. Instead, the property where UC Townhomes are located was sold to the Altman Group, which is evicting the residents. Speakers noted that UPenn continues to work with Altman Group to build student housing in the area, often at the expense of longtime residents.

An additional demand was for the university, considered a "nonprofit," to make

voluntary payments, called PILOTs, that many tax-exempt organizations make to local governments. While UPenn did pay PILOTs to the City of Philadelphia from 1995-2000, it has since failed to make payments. With a \$20.7 billion endowment, UPenn could easily have paid \$62 million in PILOTs this year.

Speakers called on UPenn President Liz Magill to drop all disciplinary actions against the two students involved in a disruption of the Convocation for incoming students, Aug. 29, to protest "Penntrification." Townhomes resident Rasheda Alexander called out the hypocrisy of UPenn officials for failing to adhere to their own mission statement that urges students to develop "critical

thinking" and "awareness of moral and social issues."

The press conference and rally brought together many diverse groups in Philadelphia that are fighting gentrification. Speakers voiced opposition to the city's plans to build a new arena for the 76ers pro-basketball team in Chinatown and its plans to destroy natural wetlands in South Philadelphia's FDR Park in order to build facilities for the pending World Soccer Cup scheduled for 2026. Also of issue was the city's failure to address community concerns over remediation and redevelopment of a former industrial site in Point Breeze, where a Sunoco refinery was destroyed by an explosion and fire in 2019. □

Amazon hires a former prison manager

By Monica Moorehead

Amazon, with its notorious multi-billionaire owner Jeff Bezos, is universally known as one of the world’s largest union-busting conglomerates. It is well documented that workers there have passed out due to heat and suffered physical injuries, mental anguish and other horrific working conditions that accompany the frenzied pace of packing, loading and delivering packages. If this wasn’t bad enough, along comes another shocking strike against Amazon to add to its already long list of criminal behavior.

On Sept. 12, Amazon hired a former manager from one of the largest private prison corporations as its new director of worker training programs. Dayna Howard was once a “quality assurance” manager for the Corrections Corp. of America between 2000 and 2005. CCA, which became CoreCivic in October

2017, is a Wall Street company that runs 65 state and federal prisons and detention centers in the U.S., all for profit.

In 2021, CoreCivic made close to \$2 billion in revenue from mass incarceration, a heinous form of wage slavery. Howard stated on her LinkedIn page

error rate.” In other words, she was very efficient in ensuring that prisoners and detainees were checked into a facility in a timely manner.

This is not Howard’s first job with Amazon since coming to work for them in 2012. She headed up their global security and loss-prevention programs. The latter job criteria was to make sure that no Amazon worker or contractor confiscates products from warehouses. In other words, Howard was Amazon’s top spy and cop.

Amazon has had a close relationship with police departments in setting up sting operations and doorbell surveillance cameras to deter people from taking deliveries ordered by others. One can only imagine how many billions of dollars Amazon invested in these programs to police their products and their workers.

Now Howard’s latest job description is to head up the learning and development team, Amazon’s internal training program for all warehouse workers. Amazon states that this program is about “improving the everyday experience of our associates.



We design and deliver learning programs to guide and support employees’ career paths inside Amazon and implement improvements that make a real difference for both our workers and our customers.” (vice.com)

If no one had a clue what Amazon’s sordid history is, this description comes off sounding like a positive development. It is not. How can any progressive person think that a former prison official — which Howard is — has the mindset of treating workers with dignity.

Aren’t prisoners and detainees workers just like Amazon workers? The only difference is that prisoners are in maximum security, and Amazon workers are in minimum security when it comes to treatment. Both sets of workers are exploited for their labor in varying degrees and environments.

Amazon was hoping to keep its workers invisible like prisoners, but not even the hiring of a former prison official can stop the march forward by this workforce. They, along with others like Starbucks’ workers, are letting their voices resonate regarding their right to organize and be treated with dignity and respect. □



The right to fight back

By Leslie Feinberg

On June 5, 2011, CeCe McDonald and friends were assaulted in Minneapolis by a group of white-supremacist, swastika-wearing, anti-LGBTQ+ thugs. One of these slashed McDonald with a broken glass; and in the fight that followed, he died. McDonald was arrested, tried and sent to jail for defending her life and the lives of her friends — and surviving. Feinberg wrote the following article, published by Workers World, Dec. 7, 2012, and excerpted here, to rally international support to “Free CeCe!”

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

The struggle to “Free CeCe!” has sparked a growing, broad united front against white supremacy and anti-trans violence.

Stop the war on trans/women of color!

It is no metaphor to say that there is a war against trans/women of color in the U.S. — on the streets and in the prisons.

Here are the names of some of those who lost their lives to anti-trans lynchings in cities across the U.S. in 2012:

Brandy Martell. Paige Clay. Kyra Kruz. Deoni Jones. Tracy Johnson. Tyrell Jackson. Rosita Hidalgo. Coko Williams. Kendall Hampton. Tiffany Gooden. Dee Dee Pearson. Githe Goines. Brenting Dolliole. Janette Tovar. Cassidy Vickers.

When a trans person is murdered, often police and monopoly media don’t investigate or report the deaths. Killers, largely unsought, walk free. Therefore little is known about any possible links between these murders or any connections the killers had/have with neofascist groups, police or military.

CeCe McDonald fought and survived a group fascist attack. She is hailed as a hero — a femme hera — in many communities in the U.S. and around the world.

The continued punishment of CeCe McDonald by police, prosecutor, judge and prison warden is a green light to neofascists — on the streets and in schools, police precincts, prisons and detention centers.

‘Cops and Klan work hand in hand’

Police and prison guard brutality against trans people also goes largely unreported by officials and monopoly media.

Journalist Marc Lamont Hill wrote in Ebony magazine: “According to studies, 38% of Black trans people indicate that they have been harassed by the police. Even worse, 20% state that they have been physically or sexual assaulted by police.”

Hill continued, “[T]rans individuals are subjected to prison sentences, during which they will be labeled and treated as a gender rather than their own. Such a practice, if done to straight cissexual individuals, would clearly be understood and challenged as torture.” (ebony.com)

CeCe McDonald wrote from St. Cloud prison [in 2012]: “I would have rather been punished for asserting myself than become another victim of hatred.”

CeCe McDonald’s assertion, and her self-defense, are historically rooted in the right — the necessity — to fight back against Nazi, Klan and other white-supremacist, fascist terror.

‘Who’s gonna stop the Klan?’

It wasn’t moral persuasion that overturned the Southern slavocracy on the North American continent. It took many hard-fought, bloody battles.

The “legal” system of enslavement was rocked by “illegal” uprisings and resistance by enslaved and self-emancipated African laborers, like Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth.

Freedom fighters — Black and white together — carried out a guerrilla raid on the U.S. Army arsenal at Harpers Ferry,

Virginia, in 1859. They hoped to liberate and distribute weapons and spark insurrectionary uprising against the white-supremacist slavocracy.

After the Civil War, the former Southern plantation owners created and armed the Klan as a weapon of terror and murder.



WW PHOTO: MINNIE BRUCE PRATT
Leslie Feinberg ready to lead the ‘Free CeCe!’ contingent in Syracuse, at Central New York Pride, June 15, 2013.

WWP founder Sam Marcy wrote. “[T]he durability of the Klan rests on solid long-term bonds to the [capitalist] state, and the two share a common political ideology, for the most part.” (“The Klan & the Government: Foes or Allies,” workers.org/marcy)

Marcy emphasized that after the Civil War, “The Northern industrialists and bankers were more interested in reaching a compromise with the ex-slaveowners than with the newly freed slaves.

“The U.S. government capitulated to the Southern planters and ex-slaveowners after the period of Reconstruction, when it withdrew federal troops from the South without establishing an independent citizens’ militia composed of the Black people and poor whites.”

Marcy continued, “[That] left them politically defenseless and deprived the Black population of economic power by failing to grant the newly emancipated people the land which they had tilled for centuries. . . .

“It was in this period that lynchings, the most barbarous form of counterrevolutionary terror, became the hallmark of the reactionary attempt to keep the Black people in semi-bondage,” Marcy concluded.

‘We’re gonna stop the Klan!’

Ever since the violent dismantling of revolutionary Black Reconstruction after the Civil War, the police, in large numbers, have been called out to protect the right of white supremacists and fascists to assemble and publicly make their call for racist genocide.

When police attack, their force is always directed at those protesting the Klan.

Over the decades, millions have taken to the streets in movements for national liberation and immigrant worker rights, against white supremacy, patriarchal class rule and anti-LGBTQ+ oppressions.

These have answered which social force has the ability and willingness to fight white-supremacist, lynchlaw terror — chanting in unison: “We’re gonna stop the Klan!”

The demand to “Free CeCe McDonald!” defends the right to organize and fight back against white-supremacist, anti-trans, anti-woman violence — on the streets, and in jails and prison cells.

McDonald, threatened with years in prison, was sentenced to 41 months and released after 19 months due to international organizing. Feinberg, arrested in Minneapolis for June 4, 2012, civil disobedience in defense of McDonald, was tried and found guilty on Sept. 4, 2013, and sentenced to “time served.” See Feinberg’s reporting on the campaign at workers.org.

Sources: The Root, theroot.com; trans-respect-transphobia.org; The Guerrilla Angel Report, lexiecanes.wordpress; and supportcece.wordpress.com.

Saladin Muhammad: a life dedicated to organizing Southern Black workers

WW COMMENTARY

By Dante Strobino

Saladin Muhammad, a revolutionary Black union organizer and propagandist, died on Sept. 19 in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, at age 76 after a long illness. The writer is the International Representative of United Electrical Workers (UE) 150 and a founding member of the Durham branch of Workers World Party who worked with Muhammad for many years.

Saladin Muhammad's contributions to the global struggle for Black liberation and against capitalism and imperialism are too numerous and profound to ever fully capture. His revolutionary commitment and practice have greatly influenced the direction of the U.S. labor movement, in particular in challenging all of us to understand the critical role of the U.S. South in the global working-class struggle.

His countless writings and speeches about the central role of the Black working class to help end exploitation for all those who toil, have left a permanent mark on our social movements.

Saladin endlessly challenged all of us to think more critically and to work more strategically. Every space that he was in, Saladin's gentle yet firm perspective was always the sharpest in the room.

Saladin's life practice to carry out the slogan of Unity-Struggle-Unity captures much of his nuanced insights. It would be hard to find any union organizer that could fully put into practice the teachings of Chairman Mao or Vladimir Lenin in the context of the U.S., and specifically the U.S. South, better than comrade Saladin.

He may have not quoted all the teachings of revolutionary proletarians from around the world at a mass meeting, but certainly the message he conveyed to any crowd always found a way to bring everyone in the space much further along the path toward that same end.

Saladin, as part of the African People's Party, helped motivate a political and organizational decision to send cadre down South. He moved from Philadelphia to the Black Belt Eastern North Carolina in Rocky Mount in the early 1980s. In doing so, he didn't just move on his own.

His perspective to develop the leadership of Black workers, within a social movement and social union context, won over many other Black revolutionary socialists of the time, from many differ-

ent political tendencies, to join his efforts and also move to North Carolina. A few years later, Black Workers for Justice was founded under his leadership.

He also later founded the Black Workers League, a revolutionary nationalist Marxist Leninist tendency that fought for Black self-determination, a cornerstone of the struggle against U.S. imperialism for national liberation; women's emancipation; workers power;



Saladin Muhammad and Dante Strobino at the Fruit of Labor World Cultural Center on April 6, 2013, following annual Black Workers for Justice Dr. Martin Luther King Support for Labor banquet in Raleigh, North Carolina.

and revolutionary social transformation. He led a major struggle inside the Black Liberation movement at the time about the critical importance of organizing at the point of production and service in the U.S. South.

Promoting pre-majority unionism

Within a couple years, Black workers at multiple factories throughout that area of Eastern North Carolina were organized through the Rocky Mount Workers Unity Council, sponsored by the Black Workers for Justice. This helped bring a basic level of organization and solidarity to workers from these plants who were fighting for fairness and waging shop floor struggles against the boss.

Learning from the experience of various international unions having lost several National Labor Relations Board union recognition elections in the local area, Saladin, being the true dialectician that he was, helped develop the practice of pre-majority unionism.

The bulk of the labor movement at that time did not support such efforts, thinking it would not ever be consolidated into a powerful enough force to ever win con-

cessions from the boss and build organization. Through Saladin's efforts over 35 or more years, he proved them wrong.

Saladin later became an organizer with the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America (UE) helping on many Southern organizing campaigns at General Electric and Westinghouse plants. Meanwhile, back home, Saladin was supporting the efforts of his BWFJ comrades to organize workers at several facilities. This eventually led to the founding of the Carolina Auto and Aerospace Machine Workers Union (CAAMWU), which formally affiliated with UE in 1994, after having won a successful campaign at the Rocky Mount Cummins Diesel engine plant to secure a paid Dr. King holiday.

After the UNC Housekeepers Association filed a lawsuit alleging racism and low pay against the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1997, Saladin and his comrades were able to successfully turn that lawsuit into a statewide organizing campaign. This effort targeted mostly Black housekeepers, groundskeepers and food-service workers at the UNC System's 16 universities and later established UE Local 150, the North Carolina Public Service Workers Union.

This was a critical step in demonstrating how workplace cadre must not just be focused on one workplace at a time but "must see themselves" (as Saladin would say) as part of a broader workers' movement in their industries or at their employers across entire regions or states.

Saladin would continue to educate the labor movement by attending labor conferences and organizing workers speakers' tours across the country speaking about the importance of organizing the U.S. South and the need for new labor organizing models, such as social justice pre-majority unionism.

Founding of Southern Workers Assembly

Saladin worked to assist in convening the Million Worker March in October 2004 in Washington, D.C. This March was a powerful expression of uniting the Black mass movement and workers struggle into a common political arena, by bringing together Black leaders of several militant labor organizations across the country, such as the ILWU (International Longshore and Warehouse Union) Local

10 in San Francisco.

The MWM issued a comprehensive workers program of "mobilizing in our own name" demands that challenged the predominant "Anybody but Bush" liberal mentality of the time, which was sick of wars and living conditions caused under the presidency of George H. Bush.

Saladin played a decisive leadership role in the strike of City of Raleigh sanitation workers in 2006 and wrote a powerful pamphlet summing up the critical leadership role of Black workers. He later helped give guidance to municipal workers organizing across North Carolina that eventually established additional UE 150 union chapters in Greensboro and Charlotte.

When the Democratic National Convention was planning to be held in Charlotte in September 2012, Saladin played a critical role in working with comrades in Workers World Party that formed the March on Wall Street South, to call for a major regionwide gathering of oppressed workers to speak out on the opening day of the convention on Labor Day.

This led to the founding of the Southern Workers Assembly, which Saladin guided until his death, giving direct guidance and input to the strategic thinking around how to build local workers assemblies.

A few years later Saladin would also author, on behalf of the SWA and with support of the Savannah Central Labor Council, a resolution that was to be passed at the National AFL-CIO Convention in support of organizing labor in the South. Such a resolution had not been passed in many decades.

After the right-wing takeover of the North Carolina General Assembly in 2010, the Dr. Rev. William Barber and the state NAACP played a critical role in convening mass actions at the state Legislature every Monday, which ignited the Moral Monday Movement.

Saladin played a critical role in ensuring that workers organizations had a clear voice and presence in these actions and organized the day of civil disobedience, where union members from nearly a dozen unions got arrested challenging the state government's efforts.

Saladin's brilliance and steadfast warrior spirit have energized millions to think bigger and to act more decisively. His spirit lives on in our social movements and will be present until our final victory has come.

Long live the revolutionary spirit of Saladin Muhammad! □

Workers at Philadelphia Home Depot file for union

By Betsey Piette

Retail workers at a Home Depot store in northeast Philadelphia filed a petition on Sept. 20 with the National Labor Relations Board to form a union. Their request covers 274 employees organized as Home Depot Workers United. If successful, this will be the first store-wide, door-to-door union within the company. In 2019, 60 Home Depot drivers won a petition to unionize as Local 287 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in San Diego, California.

The request to unionize covers merchandising, specialty and operations associates at the 4640 Roosevelt Blvd. Philadelphia branch. The workers were driven to unionize over concerns including wages, scheduling and working conditions. While the company experienced record profits during the pandemic, working conditions for employees deteriorated.

Vincent Quiles, an employee-organizer, told the Philadelphia Inquirer: "Long story short, we got screwed

over during the pandemic. This company made money hand-over-fist, and we just feel exploited. A lot of times we feel like we're just a means to an end to make other people a lot of money." (Sept. 20)

According to the Economic Policy Institute, 42% of Home Depot workers earn less than \$15 an hour. Most — 68% — make between \$12 to \$18. The living wage in Philadelphia for a single worker with no children is \$17.87.

During the pandemic, the company made tens of billions in profits. CEO Craig Menear has been paid over \$13 million so far in 2022.

Because Home Depot has a history of union busting, Quiles and other workers did not appeal to an established union to organize them. They wanted to file as quickly as possible, lest management try to disrupt the



NE Philadelphia Home Depot where workers file for first instore union Sept. 20.

filing. Now they are open to any advice others can give.

"We look a lot at what Amazon [Staten Island workers] did up in New York. We're hoping to maybe do the same thing; but as of now, it's us and a handful of people who are offering advice." (Inquirer.com, Sept. 20) □

Ukraine: the invasion of capital to take over agriculture

By Michael Roberts

Marxist economist Michael Roberts worked in the City of London (the British Wall Street) as an economist for over 40 years. He published this article on his blog, thenextrecession.wordpress.com, Aug. 13. It details plans of Western imperialism to privatize and take over Ukrainian agriculture, taking advantage of the war provoked by U.S.-NATO aggressive policies.

The week of Aug. 6, Ukraine’s foreign private creditors agreed to the country’s request for a two-year freeze on payments on about \$20 billion of foreign debt. This would enable Ukraine to avoid defaulting on its overseas borrowings. Unlike other “emerging economies” in debt distress, it seems that foreign bondholders are happy to help Ukraine out — if only for two years. The move will save Ukraine \$6 billion over the period, helping to reduce pressure on central bank reserves, which slid by 28% year-to-date, despite significant foreign aid.

Ukraine’s economy is, not surprisingly, in a desperate state. Real GDP is projected to decline by more than 30% in 2022, and the unemployment rate is at 35%. (Constantinescu et al. 2022, Blinov and Djankov 2022, National Bank of Ukraine 2022)

“We are grateful for the private sector support of our proposal in such terrible times for our country,” responded Yuriy Butsa, Ukraine’s deputy finance minister. “I’d like to emphasize that the support we’ve received during this transaction is hard to underestimate... We will stay fully engaged with the investment community further on and hope for their involvement in the financing of the rebuilding of our country after we win the war.”

Here Butsa reveals the price to pay for this limited largesse by foreign creditors: the accelerating demand of foreign multinationals and governments to take control of Ukraine resources and bring them under the control of foreign capital without any restrictions and limitations.

In a past post, I had outlined the plan to privatize and hand over the vast agricultural resources of Ukraine to foreign multinationals. And for several years now, a series of reports by the Oakland Institute, an economic observatory, has documented the takeover of foreign capital. Much of what is below comes from Oakland.

Ukraine’s agricultural strengths

Post-Soviet Ukraine, with its 32 million arable hectares [1 hectare = 2.4705 acres, so about 79 million acres] of rich and fertile black soil (known as “chernozëm”), has the equivalent of one-third of all existing agricultural land in the European Union.

The “breadbasket of Europe,” as it is called, had an annual production of 64 million tons of grain and seeds, among the world’s largest producers of barley, wheat and sunflower oil. (For the latter, Ukraine produces about 30% of the world total.)

As I explained in my previous post, the planned takeover of Ukraine’s resources partly provoked the conflict: the semi-civil war, the Maidan revolt and the annexation of Crimea by Russia. As the Oakland Institute has outlined, to limit unrestrained privatization, a moratorium on the sale of land to foreigners had been imposed in 2001. Since then, the repeal of

this rule has been a main goal of Western institutions.

As early as 2013, for instance, the World Bank provided an \$89 million loan for the development of a deed and land title program, needed for the commercialization of state-owned and cooperative land. In the words of a 2019 World Bank paper, the aim was an “accelerating of private investment in agriculture.” That agreement, denounced at the time by Russia as a backdoor to facilitating the entry of Western multinationals, includes the promotion of “modern agricultural production . . . including the use of biotechnologies,” an apparent opening toward GMO [genetically modified] crops on Ukrainian fields.

Despite the moratorium on land sales to foreigners, by 2016, 10 multinational agricultural corporations had already come to control 2.8 million hectares of land. Today, some estimates speak of 3.4 million hectares in the hands of foreign companies and Ukrainian companies with foreign funds as shareholders. Other estimates are as high as 6 million hectares [about 15 million acres].

The moratorium on sales, which the U.S. State Department, IMF and World Bank had repeatedly called to be removed, was finally repealed by the Zelensky government in 2020, ahead of a final referendum on the issue scheduled for 2024.

‘Ukraine Recovery Conference’

Now with war grinding on, Western governments and corporations are stepping up their plans to incorporate Ukraine and its resources into the capitalist economies of the West. On July 4 and 5, 2022, top officials from the U.S., EU, Britain, Japan and South Korea met in Switzerland for a so-called “Ukraine Recovery Conference.”

The URC’s agenda was explicitly focused on imposing political changes on the country — namely, “strengthening the market economy,” “decentralization, privatization, reform of state-owned enterprises, land reform, state administration reform” and “Euro-Atlantic integration.”

The agenda was really a follow-up to the 2018 Ukraine Reform Conference, which had emphasized the importance of privatizing most of Ukraine’s remaining public sector, stating that the “ultimate goal of the reform is to sell state-owned enterprises to private investors,” along with calls for more “privatization, deregulation, energy reform, tax and customs reform.” Lamenting that the “government is Ukraine’s largest asset holder,” the report stated: “Reform in privatization and SOEs has been long awaited, as this sector of the Ukrainian economy has remained largely unchanged since 1991.”

The irony is that the 2018 URC plans were opposed by most Ukrainians. A public opinion poll found that just 12.4% supported privatization of state-owned enterprises (SOE), whereas 49.9% opposed it. (An additional 12% were indifferent; whereas 25.7% had no answer.)

However, war can make all the difference. In June 2020, the IMF approved an 18-month, \$5 billion loan program with Ukraine. In return, the Ukraine government lift[ed] the 19-year moratorium on the sale of state-owned agricultural lands, after sustained pressure from international finance institutions.

Olena Borodina with the Ukrainian Rural Development Network commented that “the agribusiness interests and oligarchs will be the primary beneficiaries of

such reform. . . . [This] will only further marginalize smallholder farmers and risks severing them from their most valuable resource.”

Zelensky regime approves capital takeover

And now July’s URC has reemphasized its plans to take over the Ukraine economy for capital, with the full endorsement of the Zelensky government. At the conclusion of the meeting, all governments and institutions present endorsed a joint statement called the Lugano Declaration. This declaration was supplemented by a “National Recovery Plan,” which was in turn prepared by a “National Recovery Council” established by the Ukrainian government.

This plan advocated for an array of pro-capital measures, including “privatization of noncritical enterprises” and “finalization of corporatization of SOEs” — identifying as an example the selling off of Ukraine’s state-owned nuclear energy company EnergoAtom.

In order to “attract private capital into the banking system,” the proposal likewise called for the “privatization of SOBs” (state-owned banks). Seeking to increase “private investment and boost nationwide entrepreneurship,” the National Recovery Plan urged significant “deregulation” and proposed the creation of “‘catalyst projects’ to unlock private investment into priority sectors.”

In an explicit call for slashing labor protections, the document attacked the remaining pro-worker laws in Ukraine, some of which are a holdover of the Soviet era. The National Recovery Plan complained of “outdated labor legislation leading to complicated hiring and firing process, regulation of overtime, etc.” As an example of this supposed “outdated labor legislation,” the Western-backed plan lamented that workers in Ukraine with one year of experience are granted a nine-week “notice period for redundancy dismissal,” compared to just four weeks in Poland and South Korea.

In March 2022, the Ukrainian parliament adopted emergency legislation allowing employers to suspend collective agreements. Then in May, it passed a permanent reform package effectively exempting the vast majority of Ukrainian workers (those at businesses with fewer than 200 employees) from Ukrainian labor law.

Documents leaked in 2021 showed that the British government coached Ukrainian officials on how to convince a recalcitrant public to give up workers’ rights and implement anti-union policies. Training materials lamented that popular opinion toward the proposed reforms was overwhelmingly negative but provided messaging strategies to mislead Ukrainians into supporting them.

While workers’ rights are to be removed in the “new Ukraine,” in contrast the “National Recovery Plan” aims to help corporations and the wealthy by lowering taxes.

The plan complained that 40% of Ukraine’s GDP came from tax revenue, calling this a “rather high tax burden” compared to its model example of South Korea. It thus called to “transform tax service” and “review potential for decreasing the share of tax revenue in GDP.” In the name of “EU integration and access to markets,” it likewise proposed “removal of tariffs and nontariff nontechnical barriers for all Ukrainian goods,” while



simultaneously calling to “facilitate FDI [foreign direct investment] attraction to bring the largest international companies to Ukraine,” with “special investment incentives” for foreign corporations.

In addition to the National Recovery Plan and the strategic briefing, the July 2022 Ukraine Recovery Conference presented a report prepared by the company Economist Impact, a corporate consulting firm that is part of The Economist Group. The Ukraine Reform Tracker pushed to “increase foreign direct investments” by international corporations [and to] not invest resources in social programs for the Ukrainian people.

‘Removing excessive regulations’

The Tracker report emphasized the importance of developing the financial sector and called for “removing excessive regulations” and tariffs. It called for further “liberalizing agriculture” to “attract foreign investment and encourage domestic entrepreneurship,” as well as “procedural simplifications” to “make it easier for small and medium enterprises” to “expand by purchasing and investing in state-owned assets,” thereby “making it easier for foreign investors to enter the market post-conflict.”

The Ukraine Reform Tracker presented the war as an opportunity to impose the takeover by foreign capital. “The post-war moment may present an opportunity to complete the difficult land reform, by extending the right to purchase agricultural land to legal entities, including foreign ones,” the report stated. “Opening the path for international capital to flow into Ukrainian agriculture will likely boost productivity across the sector, increasing its competitiveness in the EU market,” it added.

“Once the war is over, the government will also need to consider substantially lowering the share of state-owned banks, with the privatization of Privatbank, the country’s largest lender, and Oshchadbank, a large processor of pensions and social payments,” the URT insisted.

Elsewhere there are less explicit pro-capital policies offered by semi-Keynesian Western economists. In a recent compilation by the Center for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), various economists have proposed Macroeconomic Policies for Wartime Ukraine. In this the authors “emphasize at the outset that Ukraine’s crisis is not a setting for a typical macroeconomic adjustment program,” i.e., not the usual IMF fiscal austerity and privatization demands.

But after many pages, it becomes clear that there is little difference in their proposals from those of the URC. As they say, “the aim should be to pursue extensive radical deregulation of economic activity, avoid price controls, facilitate matching of labor and capital and enhance the management of seized Russian and other sanctioned assets.”

The takeover of Ukraine by (mainly foreign) capital will thus be completed, and Ukraine can start paying back its debts and providing new profits for Western imperialism. □

Movements in NATO countries mobilize against war

By John Catalinotto

With an avalanche of anti-Russian propaganda in NATO-member and other European Union countries — and in the U.S. — the corporate media has created an obstacle to mobilizing antiwar actions. Nevertheless, the high economic cost of the war, including much higher prices for basic goods and shortages of energy sources, have created an opening that anti-imperialist and anti-war activists are starting to widen.

In Germany, the antiwar movement has called for coordinated actions in cities around the country Oct. 1. In Spain, at least one coalition has called, in its Madrid Platform, for mobilizing all parts of the Spanish state against NATO aggression and to get military bases out. In Austria, where a demonstration was held Sept. 24, the Coalition for Austrian Self-determination calls for returning Austria to its historic position of neutrality.

In the United States, the United National Antiwar Coalition has called for demonstrations the week of Oct. 15-22 in over 30 cities.

Massive demonstrations took place weeks ago in Prague, Czechia, and in many French cities opposing the war — and the costs of the war, which are borne by the European working class and poor, even more acutely than in the United States. Shortages of fuel for heating homes in winter and enormously higher prices for energy will inflict direct pain on the poorest sectors of Europe's capitalist society.

While some of the mobilizations criticize the Russian decision to intervene militarily, their statements all emphasize the provocations of the U.S.-NATO side: moving military bases closer and closer to Russian borders since 1990; the NATO-backed civil war against the eastern regions of Ukraine since 2014; and the criminal nature of the sanctions imposed on Russia.

Initiative in Germany

Willi van Ooyen, a leading and veteran activist in the antiwar movement in Germany and a former parliamentary group leader of Die Linke in the Hessian state, explained why the movement called for Oct. 1 protests in a Sept. 24 interview in the German daily newspaper, Junge Welt: Because the government hiked the military

budget with hardly any discussion, “we want to take action now and make it clear that military spending must not be allowed to continue to increase. Instead, more money is urgently needed to fight poverty and the climate crisis.

“An above-average number of smaller initiatives will take part in the protest. The number will grow in the coming days. If you want to be present in many places, it means that larger actions cannot be organized everywhere. Nevertheless, we are confident that we will make our demand for disarmament instead of rearmament

clear. Especially since we will also be present on the streets in larger cities like Berlin, Hamburg, Frankfurt am Main or Munich.”

Regarding the high prices for food and energy, he said, “Huge sums are being spent on nonsensical armaments projects and ultimately on preparations for war — and not on what the people in this country actually need. We want to bring our peace policy demands into the current social protests. Our common theme is the unequal distribution of wealth.” □

Oct. 15-22 actions: Say NO to U.S. wars!

The United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) is organizing for protests the week of Oct. 15-22 in this call posted at unac.peace.org.

Back to the streets! Say NO to U.S. wars!

Stop Washington's war moves toward Russia and China. Stop endless wars: Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Palestine, everywhere.

Join us in protest during the week of Oct. 15-22. Organize an action in your local area, or join one at unac.peace.org.

Today working people face escalating costs of food and energy, recession, growing insecurity and attacks on efforts to unionize. The continuing wars and military provocations have brought us to the brink of nuclear war.

Yet, during this election period, imperialist foreign policy has been getting little attention. It is time for us to be back in the streets to demand an end to U.S. wars and provocations.

While the U.S. pours more weapons into the proxy war in Ukraine — holding open the possibility of direct confrontation with nuclear-armed Russia — the war fanatics in Washington seem determined to start even more fires around the world. Nancy Pelosi's trip to Taiwan; hints that the U.S. may be moving towards confrontation with China, as well as strikes against Iran; and reports that new U.S./South Korea war games will practice a “decapitation” strike against the North (DPRK), all show the urgent need to speak out.

Stop U.S./NATO wars and sanctions from Cuba and Palestine to Russia and China!

We need \$billions for housing, health care, jobs and climate — NOT for war profiteering! □

The drums of war grow ever louder

Declaration of constitution of the Madrid Platform Against NATO and the Bases

By Madrid Platform

Madrid, Sept. 20. Madrid Platform Against NATO and Bases. Translation: John Catalinotto

The centers of power of Euro-U.S. imperialism have decided to resolve this deep capitalist crisis by applying the updated version of the same procedures they used in other times: massive destruction of capital and war.

NATO and the military bases, the armed wing of imperialism, has set itself up as the governing body of the great reconfiguration of capitalism, necessary for its oligarchies to continue to hold power.

NATO's war against Russia, under the pretext of the Ukraine war, is the outbreak of a process of military encirclement of the Eurasian country [Russia], a process that has driven the development of the

Atlantic organization since its creation in 1949 (six years before the Warsaw Pact) and which has only accelerated since the disappearance of the USSR. The extension of NATO, moreover, has been linked to the growth of fascism, directly financed, organized and armed by NATO, as we are seeing in Ukraine but not only there.

The enormous crisis, together with the gigantic concentration of capital in the big Investment Funds (majority shareholders of all the big media, pharmaceutical, agricultural, armament and banking companies) has been used by the U.S. to get closer to its great historical objective: to break all kinds of economic, commercial, cultural, etc., ties between the European Union and Russia.

The imposition of sanctions on Russia has been the perfect instrument to wreck the European economy as a result of skyrocketing energy prices, the lack of other

raw materials and interest rates that are unaffordable for many companies and for the general population. All this while the U.S. takes over the European markets with the collaboration of governments of all political persuasions, headed by the PSOE-Unidas Podemos [coalition regime in the Spanish state], the first in the ranking of Washington's top lackeys.

In short, we are facing a huge transfer of revenues in two directions: from the working class to the bourgeoisie and from Europe to the U.S.

All this undermining of the living conditions of millions of people, a direct consequence of the high cost of living and mass unemployment, is a social powder keg more and more difficult to contain with the demonization of Russia, constantly repeated in the media.

The militarization of society, the increase of repression and of the mechanisms of social control (see the new National Security Law) and the establishment of an increasingly iron censorship of everything that is not war propaganda (last May a “ministry of truth” headed by General Ballesteros was created) has its keystone in NATO and the military bases.

Journalist Pablo Gonzalez

One of the most brutal examples of this repression is that of the journalist Pablo Gonzalez, imprisoned and held incommunicado in Poland, an EU country, for more than six months without trial or accusation, surrounded by a great media silence and without any known action on the part of the Madrid government. The denunciation

of the case and the fight for his freedom will be one of our most important tasks.

If we look at history, with some very recent examples, we will see clearly what the armies and the so-called “forces of order” are used for in times of deep social crisis.

On an international scale, there is also little doubt that no humanitarian consideration can stop an organization that is directly responsible for the death of millions of people and for ravaging countries to steal their resources, an organization dominated by the USA, the only country in the world that has used atomic bombs, dropping them on two defenseless cities [Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, August 1945].

In view of the seriousness of the situation and in order to try to assemble all the forces necessary to confront it, the Madrid Platform Against NATO and the Bases has been formed. The same is being done in other areas of the Spanish State with the intention of converging in a State Coordinating Committee and with the objective of rekindling the anti-imperialist flame that some decades ago permeated the majority of the working-class population and that can ignite struggle within a youth that has more reasons than ever to fight for its future.

And we encourage all persons and organizations that, based in this Community, are aware of the seriousness of the situation to participate in our efforts and to contribute to the extent of the possibilities of each one, by contacting us through the e-mail madrid_cob@riseup.net. □



Antiwar forces gather in Madrid June 26 to protest NATO Summit 2022.

California

Marching farmworkers say ‘Sí, se puede! Yes, we can!’

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Despite a farmworkers’ 24-hour vigil going on in Sacramento, California, Gov. Gavin Newsom is still stalling on signing Assembly Bill 2183, passed in May — a pro-farmworker bill that is also pro-union. Instead of an eye on justice, he seems to have his eye on a run for the U.S. presidency.

The Agricultural Labor Relations Voting Choice Act would make it easier for farmworkers to vote in union elections, by mail or card check as well as in-person. It would prohibit growers from encouraging or discouraging union membership. Newsom must sign the bill by Sept. 30, or it will expire.

It’s no surprise that farmers who hire farmworkers and local business “chambers of commerce” vehemently oppose the bill. Growers could face fines of between \$10,000 to \$25,000 for certain labor rights violations under Bill 2183.

But the bill was strongly backed in the California General Assembly — and was even endorsed in a Sept. 4 White House statement by President Joe Biden.

More importantly, there has been overwhelming popular and union backing of this bill, led militantly by the United Farm



Dolores Huerta, co-founder of United Farm Workers, speaks to marchers in Stockton, California, Aug. 20.

Workers (UFW) themselves.

On Aug. 3 workers and supporters started from Delano in the Central Valley on a marching journey that paralleled the one led by UFW co-founder Cesar Chavez in 1966, during the very first unionization drive by California farmworkers.

This time, on foot, in triple-digit heat,

they journeyed for 335 miles in 24 days to the state capital on Aug. 26. They were greeted along the way by cheering school-children, and they had their blisters and swollen knees treated by University of California-Davis medical students. Food vendors provided sopas, tacos and other food.

On Aug. 20 they were cheered on by union icon Dolores UFW Farm Workers, who spoke to them in Stockton, California. Huerta coined the stirring motto chanted now at all progressive marches: “Sí, se puede! Yes, we can!”

Farmworkers have been historically excluded from federal labor protections, such as the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, which was passed in a racist deal with Southern legislators intent on denying labor rights to Black farmworkers and domestic workers.

Some states are trying to correct this injustice through legislative initiatives. Through leadership by the Workers Center of Central New York, based in Syracuse, the New York State Assembly passed the Farmworker Fair Labor Practices Act in 2019. Going into effect in January 2020, the law extended many new protections to farmworkers, including the right to a day of rest, overtime pay and collective bargaining rights.

Farmworkers in California are committed to fighting for basic worker rights, including the right to an easily accessed, fair and free union election, without intimidation from their bosses. They were determined because they know: “Sí, se puede!” (ufw.org/caagvotingchoiceact2022) □

Seattle

Teamster Women’s Conference holds rally outside Amazon HQ

By Martha Grevatt

The fight to unionize corporate behemoth Amazon is being carried out on many fronts and by many unions.

Over 1,000 attendees at the Teamster Women’s Conference, held in Seattle, rallied outside Amazon’s world headquarters Sept. 20. They carried signs reading “Amazon hurts workers” and “Organize Amazon!” Conference participants were joined by Teamsters General President Sean O’Brien and General Secretary-Treasurer Fred Zuckerman, along with eight international vice presidents and other Teamster leaders.

In June 2021 the Teamsters Union’s national convention passed a resolution committing resources to unionizing Amazon. President O’Brien, who defeated the entrenched incumbent President James Hoffa Jr. in November 2021,



Teamsters Women’s Conference descends on Amazon headquarters, Seattle, Sept. 20.

PHOTO: TEAMSTERS.ORG

has reaffirmed the commitment to help Amazon workers win union representation. Weeks before this mass rally, the Teamsters announced the creation of its new Amazon Division.

“Amazon should be afraid,” O’Brien warned. “The Teamsters are here standing shoulder-to-shoulder with so many communities demanding change. The Teamsters aren’t going away. Wherever

Amazon abuses workers, we’ll be there. Amazon will not bust unions and get away with it. Amazon will not churn and burn [U.S.] workers and get away with it. This corrupt corporate giant must answer to the Teamsters now, and we’re ready for the fight.” (teamster.org)

Amazon is the world’s largest online retailer and the second-richest corporation. It will take a multipronged struggle to make it a union workplace — especially given that its bosses are hell-bent on keeping Amazon union-free.

Whether it’s the Teamsters; the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union; the Amazon Labor Union; Amazonians United; or Carolina Amazonians United for Solidarity and Empowerment — or any group of Amazon workers uniting for justice — their historic struggle needs and deserves a massive and coordinated wave of working-class solidarity. □

High Tech, Low Pay
A Marxist Analysis of the Changing Character of the Working Class

By **Sam Marcy** with an updated introduction by Fred Goldstein, author of *Low Wage Capitalism*. Available at major online booksellers.

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by Fred Goldstein

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For more information, go to LowWageCapitalism.com

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

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

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Cuba will continue to raise its voice to reject domination and hegemonism

Speech by Cuba's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bruno Rodríguez, at the United Nations General Assembly, Sept. 21, 2022

Delegates:

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed, as never before, the true essence of the unjust and unsustainable prevailing international order.

Humanity never had this formidable scientific-technical potential nor this extraordinary capacity to generate wealth and well-being, and yet, never before has the world been so unequal and inequality so profound.

Eight hundred and twenty-eight million people, 10% of the world's population, suffer from hunger, and about 50 million children suffer from wasting, the deadliest form of malnutrition.

Unemployment will affect 207 million people in 2022, 21 million more than in 2019. In the middle of the fourth industrial revolution, 773 million human beings do not know how to read or write.

About 6.5 million people have died due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaccines to deal with it are inaccessible to a billion people in low-income countries. In 2021, pharmaceutical transnationals earned \$84,588 million.

The foreign debt has been paid several times, but it multiplies. Paradoxically, global military spending is growing rapidly and exceeds \$2 trillion annually for the first time.

There is no justification for humanity to continue to be threatened by the existence of almost 13,000 nuclear weapons. We advocate for the universality of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

How much more could we do if these resources were used to promote health and development? How many deaths from COVID-19 and other causes could have been avoided? How many children would be saved from hunger and preventable or curable diseases?

Mr. President:

Greenhouse gases recorded record concentrations in 2021, and it will be the same in 2022. The average sea level has reached a new high. The last seven years are the warmest ever registered.

We can't continue ignoring the alarms that warn about the imminent climate catastrophe. We have only one Earth, the only home of all, rich and poor. We have to act without further delay.

The "philosophy of war and dispossession" and the irrational patterns of production and consumption of capitalism, denounced by President Fidel Castro, will lead to catastrophe.

International relations are on a very dangerous path. The American offensive aimed at subjugating States through economic, military and political-diplomatic threat and coercion, to subject them to an order based on their capricious rules, together with the expansion of NATO and the development of an aggressive doctrine and the fifth-generation unconventional war, inevitably lead to a climate of tension and conflict, the consequences of which are unpredictable.

Mr. President:

Cuba, a small island developing state, has paid a high price for defending its legitimate right to exist as a sovereign and independent nation.

For more than six decades we have resisted a ruthless and unilateral economic, commercial and financial blockade that has intensified to extreme extent, at unprecedented levels since 2019 and during the pandemic.

Thirty years after the first resolution of this Assembly against the blockade, the

Government of the United States continues to ignore the almost unanimous demand of the international community to cease its illegal and cruel policy against Cuba.

The effort persists to generate material shortages, scarcity, suffering, sow discouragement, dissatisfaction and cause damage to the Cuban people.

The Government of the United States reinforces the pressures on governments, banking institutions and companies around the world interested in interacting with Cuba and obsessively pursues all sources of income and entry of foreign currency into the country, to provoke economic collapse.

As a result, the Cuban economy has experienced extraordinary pressures, which are manifested in industry, the provision of services, the shortage of food and medicine and the deterioration of the level of consumption and general well-being of the population.

The human damage that this policy generates for all Cuban families, impossible to quantify, is enormous, cruel and immoral.

The blockade is an act of economic war in peacetime.

The current Government of the United States maintains the most aggressive pressure measures against our country adopted by President Donald Trump's government.

The unjustified inclusion of Cuba in the arbitrary and unilateral list issued by the State Department of countries that are supposed to sponsor terrorism continues.

This slanderous rating imposes a stigma on our entities and institutions and makes financial and commercial transactions extremely difficult and the possibilities of payments and credits.

Cuba, which has been a victim of state terrorism, never promotes and will never promote terrorism. On the contrary, we condemn it in all its forms and manifestations.

The United States Government deals with opportunism with high sensitivity issues such as terrorism, religion, democracy, justice, corruption and human rights.

Double standards, incoherence, selectivity, political manipulation damage the cause of human rights.

The previous speech of the Czech Foreign Minister, who does not dare to mention the crime of the blockade of Cuba, is a sad example.

We have clearly warned the Government of the United States that the factors that encourage irregular migration and cause loss of life must be solved, such as the failure on its part since 2017, of its obligation, according to the bilateral agreements in force, to grant no less than 20,000 visas per year for migrants; the existence of the Cuban Adjustment Act; privileged treatment with political motivation; restrictive pressures on regular transit countries; and the reinforced economic blockade.

Today's announcement that the processing of migrant visas will return to the United States Embassy in Havana is a positive step.

Cuba reiterates its willingness to move toward a better understanding with the Government of the United States and to develop civilized and even cooperative relations between the two countries, on the basis of mutual respect, sovereign equality and without prejudice to our independence and sovereignty, despite profound differences.

We highlight the valuable commitment and recent demonstrations by Cubans and descendants of Cubans in all latitudes and in this country, of respect for Cuba's sovereign rights and the rejection of the ruthless aggression of the United States, in particular the economic blockade.

I also deeply appreciate the statements

of Heads of State and Government in this general debate, the historical support of this Assembly and the expressions of solidarity with Cuba by governments, personalities, political organizations and solidarity, social and popular movements around the world.

Today, that solidarity and support are still essential.

Mr. President:

Despite the enormous challenges, the Cuban people and government have not ceased in their efforts to advance in the construction of a more just, democratic, prosperous and sustainable socialist society.

We defeated COVID-19 with resources, our own vaccines and the strength of our Public Health and science system. We were able to collaborate modestly with the sending of 58 medical brigades, at the worst moment of the pandemic, to 42 countries and territories.

We work to recover the economic and social life of the country, support the transformation of our communities and sustain and expand social programs.

We continue to improve our legal system, of our socialist state of law and social justice, to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights for all Cuban women and men and to enrich the social justice system that several generations have enjoyed.

On Sept. 25, after an extensive process of participation and popular consultation, the legislative referendum on a novel and inclusive Families Code will take place. It will be an exercise of genuine direct democracy and effective power of the Cuban people.

Mr. President:

The "unity in diversity," proposed by then-President Raúl Castro, is possible in the countries of the South and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, which is becoming increasingly strengthened and is creating the conditions for our region to move toward higher forms of integration and cooperation, based on the postulates of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace.

We appreciate the dignified position taken by several countries in our region in the face of arbitrary exclusions in hemispheric forums.

We renew our support and solidarity with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, its constitutional president Nicolás Maduro Moros and the civic-military unity of its people, in the face of attempts to destabilize and subvert the internal order of that sister country. We reject the application of unilateral coercive measures against Venezuela.

We denounce the imperialist attempts to destabilize the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity of Nicaragua. We reiterate our firm support for the sister Nicaraguan people and its president, Daniel Ortega.

We stand in solidarity with the Caribbean sisters and support their legitimate demand for reparation for the harmful effects of colonialism and slavery. They need and deserve to receive fair, special and differentiated treatment.

We reaffirm our historic commitment to self-determination and independence of the people of Puerto Rico.

Haiti needs a special contribution from the international community for its reconstruction and development. Humanity owes a debt to that founding Republic.

We support the legitimate claim of President Alberto Fernández and the people of the sovereignty of the Republic of Argentina over the Falkland Islands, South Sandwich and South Georgia and the surrounding maritime spaces.



Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez at U.N. Sept. 21.

We express our total solidarity with the Argentine vice president, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, who, victim of unjust and unfounded judicial and media harassment, recently suffered a vile assassination attempt.

We reiterate our firm commitment to peace in Colombia. The manifest readiness for peace of the current President Gustavo Petro and the parties concerned deserve the support of the region and the international community.

The necessary resources must be provided to support the Agenda 2063 of the African Union, which sets out the road map for the development of that sister continent.

We advocate the search for a peaceful and negotiated solution to the imposed situation on Syria, and we demand the cessation of external interference and full respect for its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We support a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict, which guarantees the real exercise of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to build their own state within the pre-1967 borders, with their capital in East Jerusalem, and the end of the Israeli occupation of the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

We reaffirm our invariable solidarity with the Saharawi people.

We reject the unilateral coercive measures imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

We condemn the imposition of unjust unilateral economic measures against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and external interference in its affairs.

We oppose interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Belarus.

We reaffirm our rejection of the imposition of unilateral sanctions against the Russian Federation.

We condemn the unfounded campaigns of discredit against the People's Republic of China and the attempts to damage its territorial integrity and sovereignty. We reiterate our unwavering support for the One China principle.

We advocate a serious, constructive and realistic diplomatic solution to the current war in Ukraine, by peaceful means and in accordance with the rules of international law, which guarantees the security and sovereignty of all.

Mr. President:

Cuba will continue to raise its voice to reject domination and hegemony, unilateral coercive measures, genocidal blockades and the intention to impose one culture and one model on the world.

We will never renounce the defense of the independence, sovereignty and self-determination of peoples, without foreign interference or intervention.

For our glorious past, for the present and future of the new generations of Cubans, with the leadership of President Miguel Díaz-Canel, we will resist creatively and fight tirelessly until we achieve our dreams of peace and development, with equity and social justice for Cuba and for the world.

Thank you very much. □

Morality, Iran and the U.S.

Maybe people talked to you with excitement this week — seeing everywhere those photos of women in the streets of Iran, standing on top of cars, burning cars, protesting the death of a woman in custody after her arrest by the “morality police.”

Maybe you were furious after the U.S. Supreme Court ruling struck down the national right to abortion access and thought: What if there was that kind of mass protest here, anger after *Roe v. Wade* pouring people into the streets, police stations burning and —

Oh. Wait.

There’s already been that level of protest and more in the U.S. Since 2015 millions of people have marched against cop killings, led by Black Lives Matter. A police station was burned in Minneapolis, and cop cars burned in Seattle and Philadelphia.

And U.S. cops have kept killing people. Sandra Bland. Breonna Taylor. George Floyd. Elijah McClain. Michael Brown. Tony McDade. More than 5,000 people have been fatally shot by on-duty police in the last seven years, the victims disproportionately Black.

The killing system is still in place in the U.S.

We are working for the millions to come out against the U.S. “morality police”—the patriarchal, white-supremacist, Christian-nation folks, who are now the majority on SCOTUS and in the legislatures of many states.

They are using laws instead of guns to condemn people to death — physical, intellectual and emotional death. To punish any women, gender-nonconforming people, and children pregnant through rape, to attack trans people who need medical treatment to stay strong against bigotry and physical attack, to deny school children factual information about history and health.

The “morality police” are stalking through every state in the U.S. — so why is the corporate media whipping up so much high-toned indignation and scorn toward the “theocratic government” of Iran?

How hypocritical for U.S. opinion-makers to “take the side of women” in Iran — now that 20 years of U.S. war against Afghanistan’s Taliban, ostensibly to “liberate women,” has left that country broken, its women and families in dire poverty.

So now you might say: “But how can you defend Iran’s government?”

We say: We are Marxist-Leninist communists, and our enemy is our own ruling class. The U.S. government aims to destroy Iran, which it considers an enemy, by exploiting any legitimate grievances of the women living there. Washington tries to sow chaos and weaken Iran’s government, preferring the relations it has with the Saudi monarchy, despite that regime’s intransigent repression of women’s rights.

The U.S. has placed Iran under sanctions and is trying to defang it economically and militarily, just as the U.S. tries to subvert or crush any nation maintaining independence from the U.S./NATO gang within global capital.

As independent communists, we don’t “pile on” a nation at the bidding of U.S. rulers.

And we extend solidarity to working and oppressed peoples within those nations to organize to govern their own destinies — independent of U.S. subversion — as was true of the 1978 communist-led revolution in Afghanistan that made great advances for women, before CIA-backed reactionary forces undermined that attempt at human liberation. Washington armed the forces that murdered women teachers during the Afghan civil war.

We refuse to march in lockstep with U.S. capital and its machinations. We know that no intervention by U.S. imperialism can liberate women or other oppressed sectors of another nation. Guarding its profits, capitalist imperialism will always sacrifice women while claiming it will “save” them.

The U.S. capitalist class seeks to dominate working and oppressed people — including all women — with white-supremacist, patriarchal, anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-disability laws and prejudice.

We are dedicated to overturning this deadly U.S. ruling class. □

New Family Code approved by Cubans 2-to-1

Continued from page 1

With the large majority of votes counted, the president of the National Electoral Council, Alina Balseiro Gutiérrez, announced in a Sept. 26 live broadcast that the Code will be law.

The vote culminated a years-long democratic process among the Cuban people to update the 1975 Family Code, which codified gender equality in law. Mandated by a new Constitution passed in 2019, multiple versions were drafted and sent to the National Assembly for People’s Power in 2021, which approved a draft to be submitted to the Cuban people for discussion and debate.

Between February and April of this year, 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 and other community organizations. These meetings offered proposals and amendments to the working draft of the proposed Code. Over 400,000 proposals were offered by the people; these were submitted to the National Assembly of People’s Power for evaluation, and a revised draft returned to the people again for further discussion and proposals.

After reviewing all proposals and revisions, the National Assembly voted on the 25th version of the Code submitted, unanimously approving that and sending it to the referendum vote.

Unlike in the U.S., where reactionaries in state after state are 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 were able to cast a ballot in the referendum, if they chose to do so.

LGBT+ people, women, pregnant people, people with disabilities and more

The new Code establishes the right of all Cubans to form a family, regardless of sex or gender identity. A variety of family forms are recognized, including multiparental families and allowing parental rights to be shared among an extended and nontraditional family that could include grandparents, stepparents and surrogate mothers.

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

Noteworthy in the new Family Code is defense of people with disabilities in matters of relationships and family. Caridad del Carmen Valdés Díaz, professor of law at the University of Havana, said, “The changes included in the Family Code seek to provide the people with motor, sensory or psychic disabilities with the possibility of exercising their rights as any other person, in absolute equality.” (Granma, Sept. 5)

Cuban Minister of Justice Oscar Silvera Martínez emphasized that the law “is



Members of the LGBT community carry a giant Pride flag during the parade marking the country’s International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, in Pinar del Rio, Cuba, May 17, 2018.

more solid because it is impregnated with popular sovereignty, revolutionary essence, protection of rights and a high human value ... and does not regulate rigid or preestablished family models but, instead, favors everyone having access to the protection of institutions of a family nature.” (Telesur, Aug. 18)

Ultraright opposition fomented in the U.S.

On the island there was some right-wing opposition to the Code based on conservative religious beliefs. Contrary to anti-communist stereotypes, religious bodies, including the Catholic church, are not forbidden in Cuba; they simply are not allowed to set political principles for the country.

After casting his vote in the referendum, President Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel said: “There are people who, by faith or creed, have not understood that the Code doesn’t deny the type of family they defend, but rather gives guarantees for other types of families.” (Resumen Latinoamericano-US, Sept. 26)

More insidious was the neofascist campaign against the Family Code organized from the U.S. on social networks and right-wing media. The aim was to incite Cubans to vote “no” using the argument that supporting the bill means supporting the Cuban government.

Díaz-Canel clarified: “It is not a problem of convictions, reasoning or feelings; there are people who adopt that position because they consider that, if it is a Code within the Revolution, then it should not

be approved.”

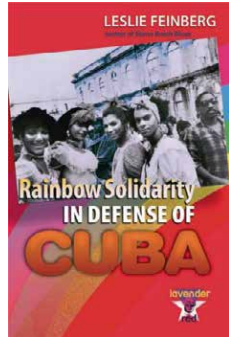
Cubans — in defiance of anti-communist propaganda and the very real hardships of the U.S. blockade — once more have proved that they never stop searching for justice, and they never stop “making the Revolution.”

Bill Sacks, an organizer and participant with the Venceremos Brigade, breaking the travel blockade for over 50 years, contributed extensively to this article. In 1975 Pratt lost custody of her two young children under the anti-LGBTQ+ “crime against nature” law in North Carolina.



In the annual LGBT Pride parade in Havana, Cuba, marchers carry a banner that reads in Spanish: “I am part of the revolution — I also am Fidel,” a chant widespread in the country after Comandante Fidel’s death in 2016.

Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba by Leslie Feinberg



This groundbreaking book is a compilation of 25 articles about same-sex love and sex/gender variance in Cuba’s pre- and post-revolutionary history.

Available, along with complete Lavender & Red series, as free download at workers.org/books.

COMMENTARY

‘Puerto Rico is not for sale’

By Deborah Rodriguez

On Sept. 23, 1868, el Grito de Lares erupted in the town of Lares, Puerto Rico, the island’s first armed uprising for independence and against Spanish colonial rule. Farmers, enslaved Africans and workers led a revolt for Puerto Rico’s independence, to abolish slavery and to end worker abuse and exploitation via the “libreta de jornalero” or day-laborer’s passbook. They fought for social and economic improvements and control of the archipelago’s finances.

It is 154 years later, and Puerto Rico is still under colonial rule. The U.S. replaced Spain and created a neocolonial relationship with the archipelago. The U.S. has awarded some concessions under the guise of “freedom,” but in reality there is little control left to the Puerto Rican government or its people. This has been most noticeable since the creation of the PROMESA Act and its Fiscal Control Board, which is authorized to manage the country’s finances.

Under the guise of restructuring Puerto Rico’s debt, the Junta has sold off essential

services to private companies, including the electrical grid, which is currently under the control of LUMA Energy. The utility company has been relentless in its treatment of the Puerto Rican people by outsourcing jobs, imposing seven price increases for services within one year and leaving people without energy for hours, sometimes even days, with its constant blackouts.

Still under colonial rule

It is 154 years later, and workers in Puerto Rico are still exploited. In recent years, workers have protested the cuts in their wages and pensions. After Hurricane Maria, the island suffered an exodus of health care professionals, due to the crumbling health care system that left people in a precarious state during a very distressing time. Doctors who were already underpaid were not being fully compensated, necessitating their departure from Puerto Rico because their wages were compromised.

In 2022, public workers, namely teachers, protested the first wage increase in over 14 years, which was a mere \$400. This amount was added to an already

dismal wage, and there were threats to cut pensions even more. In addition, the workers faced rising prices of goods and essential services, such as with LUMA, and an increase in housing costs.

It has been five years since Hurricane Maria ravaged Puerto Rico, and now the people are witnessing the effects that Hurricane Fiona has had on the already crumbling system on the island. If Puerto Ricans were ever under the impression that being under Yankee rule benefits our people, the last 154 years are revealing. In the last few years, the deteriorating conditions have been laid bare, and the people’s anger has been brewing and can no longer be suppressed.

On Sept. 25, at the Puerto Rican parade in Philadelphia, I saw my people waving our flag high with pride, listening to our music, dancing and enjoying themselves. In the midst of it, a small but mighty group, my comrades, the Philly Boricuas, were handing out propaganda denouncing the selling of the island to exploitative hedge fund managers and “crypto bros.”

Drowned out by the booming songs, wailing salsa and reggaeton beats with



Statue of Dr. Ramón Emeterio Betances, called father of the Puerto Rican nation, who said ‘I don’t want colonial status, either with Spain or the United States. I want my country to be free, sovereign and independent’

each flyer handed out, we thought to ourselves: “Despierta Boricua! Puerto Rico no se vende, se defiende!” (“Wake up Boricua! Puerto Rico is not for sale! It defends itself.”) □

Youth join global strike for climate justice

By Kathy Durkin

Climate strikers in Bengaluru, India, one of 450 global locations, were among hundreds of thousands demanding “climate reparations and justice” Sept. 23. Young people in Asia, Africa and Europe joined a coordinated Global Climate Strike that called for wealthy countries to pay reparations to poorer countries that have been the hardest hit by the disasters caused by global warming.

Demonstrators emphasized the more frequent, ferocious and deadly heat waves; floods; wildfires; and droughts wreaking havoc worldwide, causing devastation to villages, homes, livelihoods and human life. These protests occurred six weeks before the upcoming COP27 climate summit, where impoverished nations plan to demand rich capitalist countries pay for the destruction caused by the climate crisis.

Youth walked out of schools, colleges and workplaces in 100 countries from New Zealand and South Korea to Italy, Germany and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In Kinshasa, the DRC’s capital,



Climate strikers in Bengaluru, India, Sept. 23.

the main demand was “Act for Africa, protect our planet!” Some 20,000 German youth in Berlin, demanded their government establish a 100 billion Euro fund to meet the climate catastrophe. (Guardian, Sept. 23)

Coordinator of the protests, Fridays for Future, said at its website: “Colonizers and

capitalists are at the core of every system of oppression that has caused the climate crisis” and called for “decolonization, using the tool of climate reparations.” It says demands must be met from “Indigenous, Black, anti-patriarchal and diverse marginalized communities to get their lands back, giving resources to communities

most affected by the climate crisis.”

The statement recognizes that “climate struggle is class struggle” and said that for years, “the ruling class, primarily through corporations and governments from the Global North ... have exercised their power, gained through colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy and exploitation, to destroy the Earth and its occupants with no remorse. ... They deliberately sacrifice the Global South’s ecosystems and peoples for their ‘economic growth.’”

It concludes, “The richest capitalist 1% must be held responsible for their actions. Their profit is our death and suffering.” The coalition calls for people’s power, led by the most marginalized.

The struggle against the climate disaster must be aimed at the capitalists who ravage the earth in search of superprofits with no concern for its inhabitants or for the planet’s well-being. Fighting for reparations is an excellent goal, but ultimately there must be a concerted global effort to oust capitalism and build a socialist world, which is the only way to ensure the preservation of the Earth and every living being on it. □

On 50th anniversary of Philippine martial law

‘Never Forget, Never Again’

Sept. 24 — Dozens of people from ANAK Bayan and other local left organizations including Workers World Party met in Clark Park in Philadelphia on the 50th anniversary of Ferdinand Marcos’ 1972 declaration of martial law in the Philippines.

A special presentation was made to honor Baltazar “Bal” Pinguel, Bayan Deputy Secretary General and a former political prisoner who braved imprisonment and death threats to challenge authoritarian regimes in the Philippines. He moved to the U.S. as a political asylum refugee and lived as an antiwar political activist in Philadelphia, before he passed away in 2017.

Sister Gertrude, a Catholic Assumption nun, shared her experiences organizing resistance during the first Marcos regime.

Bringing the struggle of the people for a just society to the current year, Anakbayan Philly member Tarig shared his experiences as a member of the international observer mission to the Philippines during the voting that ended May 9.

The election of Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., son of the dictator who ruled the Philippines 1965-1986, was marred by blatant vote buying, a disturbing level of red-tagging and a number of incidents of deadly violence. Many voters were unable to cast their vote, and the International Observer Mission reported that the vote failed to meet the international standard of a free, honest and fair election.

The IOM report concludes: “Owing to the Philippines’ history of colonialism under Spain and the United States of America and its enduring ties with the U.S. ruling elite, contemporary political leaders still bear the marks of colonial collaboration.” (The complete report can be read at tinyurl.com/7jse9njj.) Besides the speeches, music, a dance performance and

refreshments provided cultural highlights to the event. Part of the program included a lesson in how to chant “The people united will never be defeated!” in the Philippine Tagalog language: “Ang Tao, Ang Bayan Ngayon Ay Lumalaban!”

— Report and photo by Joe Piette





Hay largas colas mientras las familias buscan bancos de alimentos en todo Estados Unidos, aquí en Phoenix, Arizona, el 29 de junio.

Una acusación al capitalismo moderno

Imagínese que el gobierno de Joe Biden y el Congreso hubieran acordado gastar 54.000 millones de dólares para impulsar la atención sanitaria en Estados Unidos mientras las variantes del COVID-19 seguían cobrándose más vidas. En lugar de que la esperanza de vida disminuyera por segundo año consecutivo, se habrían salvado más vidas.

Esos 54.000 millones de dólares no cubrirían el coste de un sistema sanitario nacional, pero sería un comienzo. En cambio, la administración Biden destinó ese dinero a la compra de sistemas de armamento para ampliar la guerra en Ucrania. Otros 813.000 millones de dólares se gastaron en el Pentágono. Financiar y ampliar la economía de guerra permanente, con más amenazas contra Rusia y China, ha sido la prioridad de Biden desde que asumió el cargo.

Ahora, la esperanza de vida media en Estados Unidos, basada en los datos de 2021, es de sólo 76,1 años, la más baja que se ha registrado desde 1996. Es el mayor descenso — 2,7 años en total — en casi 100 años, desde el comienzo de la llamada “gripe española” en 1918 — que en realidad comenzó con los soldados estadounidenses reunidos en Kansas para la Primera Guerra Mundial.

Para la gente de color, las cifras son más graves. Para los negros, la esperanza de vida media se redujo a 75,4 años. Desde 2019 los indígenas y los nativos de Alaska experimentaron una caída en la esperanza de vida de 71,8 a 65,2 años.

Las muertes por COVID-19 y el aumento del número de personas que mueren por sobredosis se reconocen como las principales causas de los descensos. Las muertes por accidentes y muertes no intencionadas son un factor importante; según el Centro Nacional de Estadísticas de Salud, muchas de ellas proceden de sobredosis de drogas.

MUNDO OBRERO editorial

El 2 de septiembre, el gobierno de Biden dejó de proporcionar los 15.000 millones de dólares necesarios para el programa de pruebas caseras gratuitas de COVID-19, lo que aumenta el riesgo de una mayor propagación de esta enfermedad y la carga financiera de las pruebas para los pobres y los trabajadores.

Para el país capitalista considerado el más desarrollado del mundo, esto es toda una acusación. Estados Unidos sigue siendo el único país capitalista importante que no proporciona asistencia sanitaria a las masas, millones de las cuales no están aseguradas.

La capacidad de una sociedad para proporcionar un nivel de vida equitativo se mide por la provisión de atención sanitaria, vivienda, empleo con salarios dignos, alimentos nutritivos, educación y seguridad medioambiental. Incluso antes de que surgiera la pandemia de COVID-19 a principios de 2020, la economía capitalista estadounidense estaba demostrando ser inadecuada en todas estas medidas.

La caída de los resultados en matemáticas y lectura

El salario mínimo ha permanecido estancado desde principios de la década de 1980. Los esfuerzos por conseguir un sistema nacional de salud han fracasado repetidamente. Ahora, las mediciones nacionales del rendimiento de los estudiantes en lectura y matemáticas han experimentado un descenso espectacular, según un estudio publicado la semana pasada. La Evaluación Nacional del Progreso Educativo, que evalúa a los estudiantes de 9 años, descubrió que las puntuaciones cayeron más de lo que lo habían hecho en 30 años.

Una vez más, se puede culpar a la pandemia del COVID-19, que hizo imposible el aprendizaje en persona para la mayoría de los estudiantes durante 2020 y 2021. Pero hay otros factores que contribuyen a la crisis de la

educación en EE.UU., como la histórica escasez de profesores cualificados dispuestos a volver a las aulas tras sus experiencias durante la pandemia.

Se estima que 1 de cada 4 profesores ha abandonado el sistema, creando una escasez catastrófica de docentes. En muchos distritos escolares, entre cientos y miles de puestos de enseñanza quedaron sin cubrir cuando las escuelas abrieron recientemente. Varios distritos escolares informan de que no pueden abrir las aulas. En Filadelfia, dos escuelas concertadas anunciaron su cierre justo al comenzar el nuevo año escolar, dejando a cientos de familias en apuros.

Además del agotamiento de los profesores inducido por la pandemia, los bajos salarios y la financiación insuficiente de las escuelas, muchos distritos se enfrentan a una guerra cultural política cada vez mayor, ya que los políticos estatales y los consejos escolares locales aprueban políticas que restringen lo que los profesores pueden decir sobre la historia de Estados Unidos, la raza, el racismo, el género y la orientación sexual y las cuestiones LGBTQ+. Muchos profesores están abandonando sus puestos de trabajo porque se niegan a cumplir con estas directivas supremacistas blancas.

La relación entre el descenso de la esperanza de vida y la disminución de los resultados de los alumnos en los exámenes es más complicada que la pandemia del COVID-19. El sistema capitalista estadounidense sigue valorando las ganancias por encima de la vida humana y mantiene su dominio histórico sobre los trabajadores y los pueblos oprimidos mediante la supremacía blanca sistémica.

Debe ser aplastado y sustituido por un sistema socialista basado en las necesidades humanas en el que se dé prioridad a la atención sanitaria, la vivienda, la educación y los salarios dignos. El futuro de la humanidad depende de esto. □

Por qué ‘aprender a vivir’ con las muertes por COVID?

Si escribes para el New York Times, espera que te asignen artículos condenando a China por causar a su pueblo enormes molestias e incomodidades para evitar las muertes masivas por el coronavirus.

El New York Times comparte claramente el punto de vista de la clase capitalista de que la prioridad del mundo debe ser volver a los negocios como de costumbre, para seguir obteniendo beneficios sin tener en cuenta el peaje del virus en la clase trabajadora mundial. Su mensaje: Convivir con el virus, ignorar su presencia y no molestarnos con la recopilación de estadísticas sobre las tasas de infección y las muertes por COVID-19.

Lástima de los pobres comentaristas del Times encargados de escribir estos sucesivos artículos que atacan a China por las políticas contra el COVID-19 que evitaron las muertes masivas experimentadas en Estados Unidos y gran parte de Occidente. Mes tras mes, producen diatribas que aparentemente no son verificadas por sus editores.

La mayoría de sus estadísticas son fácilmente refutadas por el propio sitio web del Times, “Tracking Coronavirus Vaccinations Around the World”.

Escribiendo para el Times el 7 de septiembre, Vivian Wang afirma que la política de “cero-COVID” de China “va demasiado lejos”. Wang sugiere que China se una al resto del mundo y aprenda a vivir con el coronavirus. Pero, ¿cómo sería eso para China?

Los hechos no mienten

Como Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) ha señalado en repetidas ocasiones en respuesta a los artículos del Times, si China hubiera adoptado el mismo enfoque ante la pandemia que Estados Unidos, habrían muerto 4,5 millones de chinos más.

En Estados Unidos, con una población de 331,45 millones de habitantes, han muerto más de un millón de personas desde el brote inicial a principios de 2020.

MUNDO OBRERO editorial

El país sigue viendo picos de muertes por COVID-19 en 2022 por variantes omicrón. Actualmente hay 450 muertes por COVID-19 por día en los Estados Unidos, aproximadamente 160.000 muertes por año si la tendencia continúa — un hecho no mencionado por Wang o el columnista del Times Austin Ramzy escribiendo desde Hong Kong.

Hasta la fecha, China, con una población de 1.400 millones de habitantes, sólo ha registrado 5.226 muertes por COVID-19 hasta esta primavera, cuando un brote en Hong Kong elevó la cifra a 15.000. Ramzy escribió el último ataque del Times a China el 8 de septiembre. La política china de “cero COVID”, afirma, “ha sido un lastre para la economía, los viajes y la vida cotidiana de China”, ya que los cierres provocaron “escasez de alimentos y otras necesidades diarias en algunos casos”.

Tal vez, dado que escribe desde Hong Kong, el Sr. Ramzy no era consciente del arrastre que el COVID-19 tuvo en la mayoría de las economías occidentales, incluido Estados Unidos, donde la escasez de alimentos y de productos de primera necesidad, como el papel higiénico, fue realmente una crisis diaria. Al menos en China, la mayoría de la gente sobrevivió a los inconvenientes, a diferencia de los millones de personas que murieron en Europa y Estados Unidos.

Al parecer, Ramzy tampoco se molestó en investigar el PIB de China, que crecerá un 2,2% en 2020 y un 8,1% en 2021. Según FAIR, Goldman Sachs proyecta que el crecimiento del PIB de China para 2022 será del 3,0%, frente al 1,3% de Estados Unidos.

Polémica por las vacunas

Ramzy culpó a China de “no vacunar a las personas mayores”, citando las miles de muertes que se han producido este año en Hong Kong por la oleada de omicrón. No menciona que el sistema sanitario de Hong

Kong sigue el modelo occidental y es totalmente independiente de las políticas de vacunación de China.

Él, y otros escritores del Times ocupados en atacar a China por negarse a aprobar las vacunas occidentales de ARNm, olvidan reconocer que los programas de vacunas desarrollados por las principales compañías farmacéuticas estadounidenses están demostrando estar lejos de ser adecuados para detener el resurgimiento de las nuevas variantes. Lo que empezó siendo un caso “rompedor” entre las personas vacunadas en Estados Unidos, que contrajeron la COVID-19 en el verano de 2021, se está convirtiendo en la norma. No así con las vacunas de China.

Los artículos del Times que atacan a China comenzaron al principio de la pandemia. Algunos de los primeros que sugerían que los laboratorios chinos podrían haber sido los responsables de la fabricación del virus fueron posteriormente demostrados como falsos por la Organización Mundial de la Salud y otros científicos internacionales.

Una de las principales diferencias entre la China socialista y los Estados Unidos capitalistas quedó al descubierto por el fracaso del sistema sanitario estadounidense, impulsado por el lucro, para satisfacer las demandas de la crisis del COVID-19. Esto se sigue experimentando en 2022, cuando miles de trabajadores de la salud se lanzan a los piquetes en huelgas masivas en todo el país.

No se puede negar que China, como estado obrero, tiene políticas diseñadas para beneficiar y proteger a la clase trabajadora. Y China ha proporcionado asistencia en materia de vacunas a otros trabajadores de todo el mundo. Los escritores del Times atacan con frecuencia la política china de COVID-19 por ser “política”, pero ignoran la agenda del Times como una importante voz política de la clase dominante capitalista estadounidense y mundial.

¿Cuántas vidas se perderán por estas políticas de “seguir como siempre”? □