

No to U.S./NATO wars!

By John Catalinotto

Jan. 16 — The antiwar actions scheduled Jan. 13-23, in at least 50 U.S. cities, come as another escalation is threatened in the U.S.-NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine.

Reflecting NATO's escalation, the Danish newspaper, The Worker, reported last week that the U.S. was poised to unload tanks at the Aarhus port to drive overland to Ukraine. German imperialism was about to send its own tanks to the reactionary Kiev regime. In both countries antiwar groups plan protests.

The United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) scheduled its call to action to coincide with the Jan. 16 holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. At many rallies, organizers recalled or played King's April 1967 speech, when the Civil Rights leader castigated the U.S. war against Vietnam.

Reports to Workers World, in order received by Jan. 16, include:

No to NATO in New York City, Times Square, Jan. 14. Hundreds joined the rally called by Answer. Setting the political tone for the participants, Sara Flounders of UNAC — who is a contributing editor to Workers World — slammed NATO's role as a U.S.-led force for oppression of peoples and nations around the world. (Hear her talk at: youtu.be/BL2rSDjCI_U)

Following an hour of education and agitation, the crowd marched and rolled downtown on Seventh Ave. to bring the



Times Square, New York City, Jan. 14.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO



WW PHOTO: JIM MCMAHAN

Seattle, Jan. 16. 40th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Day march.

message to others in Manhattan. While the original call emphasized a demand for negotiations, many of the signs held by participants had the slogan, "No to NATO!"

Boston Common, Park Street Station, Jan. 14. Antiwar activists gathered in a sleeting rain for a rally and speak-out near the newly unveiled bronze statue: "The Embrace," dedicated to King and his spouse, Coretta Scott King — who had met in Boston in the 1950s. The statue's "Freedom Plaza" base pays homage to 65 additional Civil Rights leaders. The activists recommitted to strengthening the U.S. workers' struggle against the evils of poverty, racism and militarism — as Dr. King taught.

Chanting "Money for jobs and education, not for war and nuclear conflagration!" "Cuba sí, bloqueo no!" and "No war but class war!" trade unionists,

immigrants, LGBTQ+ and disability rights activists, veterans, socialists and youth coalesced with a chorus of demands — including "Defund the Pentagon, Abolish NATO!" and "Fund Human Needs, Not U.S.-NATO Wars!"

Indigenous prayer offerings were made, and the Black National Anthem was sung.

Workers World Party youth leaders shared news from the Venceremos Brigade's recent 51st trip to Cuba. Mairead Skehan Gillis said, "We need to fight for our own revolution here. We saw how beautiful socialism can be."

Will Hodgkinson spoke on the growing imperialist war danger and threats against China. He was cheered when he concluded, "People are saying no to endless war! Down with the U.S. empire! No to imperialism and yes to peace!"

San Francisco, downtown. Jan. 14. Demonstrators ignored the threat of heavy rain to protest the U.S./NATO-provoked war in Ukraine and to demand "No expansion of NATO." Several speakers, including Mike Wong of Veterans for Peace, warned about U.S. military plans to provoke wars against both Russia and China. The theme of the Answer-led demonstration was "Negotiations Now — Peace in the Ukraine — No NATO Expansion."

Several speakers, including Judy Greenspan of Workers World Party, sharpened the demands to include ending U.S. militarism, occupation and threats against

Russia, China, Palestine, Haiti and Cuba. Greenspan and several speakers condemned the U.S.-imposed sanctions against one-third of the world.

West Harlem, New York City, Jan. 13. People filled St. Mary's Episcopal Church for a discussion opening the joint antiwar activities. Presentations by the Rev. Annie Chambers, co-chair of the National Welfare Rights Union; Margaret Kimberley, Black Agenda Report executive editor; and Omowale Clay, December 12 Movement, showed the relationship between the battle against white supremacy at home and against imperialist war abroad. Kimberley called NATO "an illegitimate

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San Francisco, Jan. 14.

PHOTO: ANSWER BAY AREA



WW PHOTO: MAUREEN SKEHAN

Boston union activists join antiwar action, Jan. 14.



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Amazon Labor Union wins again at NLRB

By Martha Grevatt

“The ALU is officially a certified UNION! This is a HUGE moment for the labor movement! Solidarity everyone! Let’s continue to fight for what we deserve!”

This jubilant statement was tweeted out Jan. 11 by the Amazon Labor Union after the National Labor Relations Board officially named it the sole bargaining representative for workers at Amazon’s JFK8 warehouse.

The NLRB issued its ruling over nine months after the ALU won a representation election by a wide margin at the Staten Island, New York, facility. Rejecting all 25 of Amazon’s objections to the election results, the Board gave Amazon until Jan. 25 to file a “request for review.”

Once the ALU won the election April 1, 2022, Amazon could have immediately begun negotiations with the union for a first contract. Instead the union-busting behemoth chose to delay its obligations by filing spurious charges, alleging election misconduct against the ALU and the NLRB. At Amazon’s request the NLRB moved the hearing on the charges from New York City to Phoenix, further burdening the union.

Hundreds of union supporters packed the NLRB’s virtual hearing, at one point reaching the maximum allowed by zoom. Viewers watched the ALU’s officers and organizers face off with Amazon’s high-paid attorneys. The hearing officer in Phoenix dismissed all the charges; this month’s ruling officially certifies the ALU as “the representative of the appropriate bargaining unit.”

Amazon has already stated its intent to appeal the decision. The company doesn’t have a legal leg to stand on, but is using every allowable step in the process to



Memorial for Springfield, Virginia, Amazon worker Poushawn Brown, outside Jeff Bezos’ mansion in Washington, D.C., Jan. 8. Brown died of COVID-19 two years earlier, after being assigned to test co-workers for the virus without proper protection.

stave off having to sit down and negotiate with the ALU. Amazon is probably hoping it can wear the union down, but the ALU’s tweeted 2023 New Year’s resolution is: “win a contract to better the material conditions of the working class.”

Solidarity everyone! Demand Amazon stop its legal maneuverings and stalling tactics — recognize the union now!

Martha Grevatt is a retired Chrysler (now Stellantis) worker who served on the executive boards of United Auto Workers Locals 122 and 869.

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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California’s heinous sterilization program

By Monica Moorehead

U.S. prisons are notorious for being concentration camps for workers and the poor, including hugely disproportionate numbers of Black, Latinx and Indigenous people. Rich people rarely see the inside of these camps where torture and inhumane neglect work hand in hand.

One of the most egregious and brutal aspects of the U.S. prison system has been the forced sterilization of women for so-called scientific exploration.

The Guardian reported on Jan. 5 that at least 600 known women in California prisons had been given full hysterectomies, either against their will or without their knowledge. The largest number was during the height of the eugenics movement in the 1930s, with a smaller number

of women sterilized over the past decade.

Eugenics was a dehumanizing pseudoscientific movement, spurred on by racist doctors who used enslaved African women as guinea pigs. Doctors altered or completely destroyed their reproductive systems by surgery without anesthesia, justifying their actions by the white-supremacist theory of “racial improvement” and “planned breeding.”

Doctors in Puerto Rico, still a U.S. colony, during the 1930s falsely pushed women into sterilizations as the only means of contraception. Between 1947-1948, 7% of Puerto Rican women were sterilized; and by 1956, one out of three women suffered the same fate. (unidosus.org/blog/2021/12/16/)

During the same period, the “Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro

Male” from 1932 until 1972 took place when Black men were infected with syphilis, a contagious venereal disease, when there was no cure, to “study” the effects of the untreated disease. After penicillin became widely used to treat syphilis, the men were still denied treatment. So many, including those in prison, suffered slow, painful, needless deaths.

A little known reparations program

Now the state of California is offering those who were sterilized a \$15,000 payment as reparations for this heinous crime against humanity, conducted throughout the state prison system, one of the largest in the world. The problem is that those who are eligible for this payment are either dead, are disqualified by narrow rules and regulations or are not aware that the offer exists.

According to The Guardian, “The state has approved just 51 people for payments out of 310 applications. There is one year left to look before the \$4.5 million program shuts down, and the challenges remain steep. State officials have denied 103 people, closed three incomplete applications and are processing 153 others — but they say it is difficult to verify the applications, as many records have been lost or destroyed.” Just three of those approved are in their 80s or 90s.

The article goes on to say: “A state audit found 144 women were sterilized between 2005 and 2013 with little or no evidence they were counseled or offered alternative treatments. State lawmakers responded by passing a law in 2014 to ban

sterilizations in prison for birth control purposes, while still allowing for other medically necessary procedures.”

California sterilized 20,000 people with mental health or physical disabilities, starting in 1909 until 1979, when the state’s eugenics law was repealed. It was the largest such program in the country. These experiments reportedly inspired the Nazis to begin their own eugenics movement.

Moonlight Pulido, an Indigenous woman, was sterilized in 2005 without her knowledge while serving a life sentence. The doctor told her that he was removing two cancerous growths that could have been malignant. This explanation was the basis for her giving her consent for the operation. Her reaction to being sterilized was one of shock and grief.

She stated, “I’m Native American, and we as women, we’re grounded to Mother Earth. We’re the only life-givers; we’re the only ones that can give life, and he stole that blessing from me. I felt like less than a woman.”

She stated that getting the \$15,000 in reparations was the most money she had ever had. She may be eligible for more funds, depending on how much of the \$4.5 million for the program is left once the deadline comes and goes.

Of course, no amount of payment can ever restore what was stolen from those who were sterilized — the right to control their reproductive system. □



Photo of Mary Franco, deceased sterilization victim. PHOTO: JAY C HONG

After release from prison Statement by Ana Belén Montes

Ana Belén Montes spent 20 years in a federal prison in the U.S. This Puerto Rican woman was convicted of espionage regarding her work in the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency. Anti-imperialists consider her a hero, and many have defended her and worked for her release. They made the following statement public.

Here is an update and current image of Ana Belén Montes, after her release from prison. ... We share with you the only authorized statement she wanted to share and make public, sent through her lawyer Linda Backiel on Sunday, Jan. 8, 2023.

“I am more than happy to touch Puerto Rican soil again. After two rather exhausting decades and faced with the need to earn a living again, I would like to dedicate myself to a quiet and private existence. Therefore, I will not participate in any media activities. ...

“I encourage those who wish to focus on me to focus instead on important issues, such as the serious problems facing the Puerto Rican people or the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba. February will mark the 61st anniversary of the economic embargo against Cuba, enacted by President John F. Kennedy and later tightened by the U.S. Congress.

“Who in the last 60 years has asked the Cuban people if they want the United States to impose a suffocating embargo that makes them suffer? Also worthy of attention is the pressing need for global cooperation to halt and reverse the destruction of our environment. I as a person am irrelevant. I am unimportant, while there are serious problems in our global territory that demand attention and a demonstration of brotherly love. ...”

No further interview or comment will be granted or authorized by her.



Ana Belén Montes

Likewise, her lawyer, Linda Backiel, indicated that this statement issued at Montes’ request will be “the only public expression authorized by or on behalf of her in relation to her release from prison. Please respect this decision and her privacy.”

Jan. 8, 2023 □

License to Kill

By Anabela Fino

The writer is an editor of the Portuguese weekly newspaper, Avante, which published this article Jan. 14. Translation: John Catalinotto

The international repercussions of the police murder of George Floyd in 2020 testify to the power of social networks and, simultaneously, their brevity. The indignation generated by the images of police brutality went around the world, fed genuine indignation, mobilized protests and forced institutions and corporate media to admit that racist police violence is an unsolved problem in the United States.

Two years later, the issue is off the agenda, creating the illusion that the

problem is, if not solved, at least reduced. Nothing could be further from the truth.

A preliminary report from Mapping Police Violence reports that police in the U.S. killed 1,176 people in 2022, the highest number of police murders in a single year since these records began being kept a decade ago. According to the same source, there were only 12 days in 2022 when police did not kill anyone. All in all, we arrive at the macabre average of three people killed per day and almost 100 murdered per month. There were 31 more victims of fatal police violence in 2022 than in 2021, a year in which 1,145 people were murdered.

The phenomenon is neither new, nor does it occur in violent crime settings. The data show that since 2013, the number of victims of fatal police violence has always

been over 1,000 per year. Only 31% of those killed were in a situation linked to a possible murder.

Unsurprisingly, the records show African Americans are disproportionately targeted by police violence; one in four people killed is Black, even though Black people make up only 13% of the U.S. population. Also, the data show that impunity reigns supreme: Between 2013 and 2022, there were no consequences for the officers who committed over 98% of these murders. This is democracy — American style.



Cleveland, May 30, 2020 after George Floyd’s murder. The Black community still lacks justice. WW PHOTO: SUSAN SCHNUR

More information is available at mappingpoliceviolence.org. □

Black NFL coaches face increased injustice

At the beginning of the 2022 season, there were only three Black head coaches in the NFL, whose players are an estimated 60% African American. Following the end of the regular season Jan. 9, now the number is down to just two.

That’s because the Houston Texans fired Lovie Smith, a coach who once took the Chicago Bears to the Super Bowl, just one season after he was hired, when the team had finished with 3 wins, 13 losses and one tie (3-13-1).

The two remaining African American coaches are the Pittsburgh Steelers’ Mike Tomlin and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers’ Todd Bowles. Three other head coaches, Ron Rivera (Washington Commanders), Robert Saleh (New York Jets) and Mike McDaniel (Miami Dolphins) are of Puerto Rican and Mexican descent, Lebanese descent, and biracial, respectively.

The firing of Smith, after just one season, should be viewed within a broader social context of racial disparity.

The NFL was founded in 1920. Fritz Pollard, in 1921, became the first Black coach. Some 68 years later, Art Shell became the second Black head coach in the NFL, for the then-Oakland Raiders. Only 24% of head coaches in the 100+ year history of the League have been Black, while 99.9% of the billionaire NFL owners have been white.

A damning report released on Sept. 21, 2022, by the Washington Post showed data confirming that Black coaches are twice as likely to be fired compared to white coaches, if their teams have either a winning record or stay even.

The report states that while Black head coaches perform on the same level as white coaches, they have faced a more difficult path toward becoming head coaches than their white counterparts. Black coaches have had to serve significantly longer terms as mid-level assistants, are more likely to be given interim jobs than full-time coaches and

are held to a higher standard when it comes to keeping their jobs.

On Feb. 1, 2022, Brian Flores, who is Black and Honduran — was fired as head coach of the Miami Dolphins. Flores then filed a class action lawsuit in a New York federal court charging the NFL with racial discrimination in hiring practices.

An introduction to the lawsuit stated, “As described in this Class Action Complaint, the NFL remains rife with racism, particularly when it comes to the hiring and retention of Black Head Coaches, Coordinators and General Managers. Rules have been implemented, promises made — but nothing has changed. In fact, the racial discrimination has only been made worse by the NFL’s disingenuous commitment to social equity.” (workers.org/2022/02/61578/)

Since that lawsuit was filed, the situation for hiring Black head coaches has gotten even worse. This, even though in March 2022, the NFL codified an

expansion of the “Rooney Rule.” This rule requires two interviews with candidates of color, a group expanded to include women, and a requirement for every staff to include an assistant coach for offense who is a person of color or a woman.

In 2003, the Rooney Rule was established to guarantee that every NFL owner interview at least one “minority” candidate for a head coaching or front office job. That rule has been weakened or outright ignored, leading to a dismal lack of Black head coaches in the most popular U.S. professional sport — football, a sport that makes billions of dollars in profits for its owners off the backs of the players.

In this case of injustice toward Black coaches, an important lesson on this MLK holiday should be that empty promises won’t help. It will take direct intervention — especially by the players — to force the majority white owners to put into effect long-term affirmative action policies. □

Thousands protest latest Israeli repression

By Betsey Piette

Since Jan. 7, thousands of Palestinian and Israeli protesters have taken to the streets in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa and cities in occupied Palestine. The actions are in response to a series of repressive measures imposed since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s far-right extremist government took office in December.

One of the most egregious acts was to enforce a ban on carrying Palestinian flags in public, through a directive issued by Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir. The Palestinian flag has long been recognized as a symbol of resistance to the Israeli occupation. Now people arrested for carrying the flag under the ban can be sentenced to up to a year in prison. Ben-Gvir has ordered police to tear down Palestinian flags wherever they are found in public.

Over 20,000 activists joined forces in a “Together against fascism and apartheid” protest in Tel Aviv Jan. 7. A week later on Jan. 14, over 100,000 protesters turned out in Tel Aviv and two other cities, again defying the ban on flags and denouncing Netanyahu’s government as “criminal.” Protesters challenged “reforms” proposed by the ultraright-wing government; these are meant to make it easier for parliament to annul Israeli Supreme Court rulings, including those curtailing West Bank Zionist settlement expansion.

In Jerusalem’s Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood on Jan. 13, left-wing Israeli activists joined Palestinian activists in raising the Palestinian flag, defying the directive. There is no sign of a letup in protest actions.

Neofascists take control of government

Netanyahu’s government includes far-right and fascist allies in key posts, seeking to intensify and codify Israeli apartheid, through the passage of laws prohibiting Palestinian rights and the erosion of any state bodies, like the courts, which have provided even minor relief. Ben-Gvir, who plays a central role, was previously convicted of incitement to racism and supporting a Zionist terrorist organization after advocating the ethnic cleansing of

Palestinians in 2007.

Ilan Pappé, author of “The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine,” writing in the Palestine Chronicle, Jan. 14, notes that Netanyahu might be the least extreme member of his new government. Netanyahu’s coalition includes ultraorthodox Jews, who had initially opposed Zionist sovereignty in Palestine but with few exceptions now support colonization in the West Bank, the siege of Gaza and harsh and aggressive policies to take over public space for Israeli Jews only.

A second group includes ultranationalist Jews in favor of expropriating even more Palestinian land in the West Bank. They support the policies of the Israeli army and the actions of Zionist settler vigilantes who harass Palestinians, shoot at them and uproot their orchards, in an effort to pressure more Palestinians to leave.

Both groups promote stricter apartheid measures inside Israel, where 1 in 5 citizens are Arabs, most of them descendants of people who remained in Palestine after the founding of Israel following the Nakba in 1948. These groups also promote crusades against the LGBT+ community and a stricter marginalization of women in public spaces. Many secular Jews from the Likud Party who are also participating in this formation are marginalized.

Punished for appeal to U.N.

In early January, the Palestinian Authority urged the United Nations General Assembly to pass a resolution calling on the International Court of Justice to “render urgently an advisory opinion on Israel’s prolonged occupation, settlement and annexation of Palestinian territory.” In response to the Palestinian appeal, the U.N. General Assembly asked the ICJ to render an opinion on the legal consequences of Israel’s 55-year-old occupation.

One week later, Israel’s Security Cabinet responded by passing a series of punitive measures including a moratorium on Palestinian construction in a part of the occupied West Bank called Area C, which is 60% of occupied territory under Israeli control.

The Security Cabinet took other measures intended to further strangle Palestinians economically. They voted



People waving Palestinian flags attend a rally to support Palestinians in Istanbul, Turkey, Jan. 14.

to immediately withhold taxes and tariffs collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority and transferred \$39.5 million of revenues already collected for the Palestinian Authority to a fund for so-called “victims of terrorism” and their families — i.e. Zionist settlers.

Global unity needed against Zionism

Even before the Nakba in 1948 forced the exodus of 700,000 Palestinians and the destruction of over 500 Palestinian villages, Israeli Zionists were carrying out attacks on the Indigenous population that amounted to ethnic cleansing. Decades of settler colonialism have witnessed the seizure of more Palestinian land and cultural expropriation, with growing repression against any resistance. The actions of the current government appear intent on finalizing this ethnic cleansing.

It is imperative that all forces globally who are in solidarity with Palestine and oppose the Israeli occupation join forces. Palestinians need this unity more than ever. No conditions should be placed on how Palestinians in occupied territories carry out their resistance.

The solidarity movement within the U.S. must condemn President Joe Biden’s latest omnibus bill, which contains millions of dollars intended for the expansion of Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine. □

No to U.S./NATO wars!

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structure in service of imperialism.”

John Parker, Socialist Unity Party, California U.S. Senate Candidate, who recently traveled to Donbass, and Melinda Butterfield, Struggle-La Lucha co-editor and author of “U.S. Proxy War in Ukraine & Donbass,” revealed how Ukraine’s Kiev regime, placed in power by a U.S.-manipulated coup, waged war on the people of Ukraine’s southeastern Donbass region for eight years before Russia had intervened.

Representatives of many organizations, including

Richie Merino from UNAC, made short solidarity statements before the meeting ended.

Seattle, MLK Day Jan. 16. At the 40th annual MLK Jr. march, many people carried antiwar signs and banners, chanting “Money for jobs and education, not for war and occupation.” After the march, some people attended the grand reopening of Seattle’s Northwest African American Museum.

Contributors: Maureen Skehan, Judy Greenspan, and Jim McMahan.



Times Square, New York City, Jan. 14. WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

Despite the blockade

Cuba’s health care system is extraordinary

By Lyn Neeley and Toni Arenstein

The day the 51st Venceremos Brigade left for Cuba, Dec. 27, 2022, some 262 people in the U.S. died of COVID-19. Out of Cuba’s 11 million people, only 30 tested positive for COVID-19 that same day.

The brigade of more than 70 people from around the U.S. visited Laboratorios Farmacéuticos Oriente in the city of Santiago de Cuba, the main city of Cuba's east. The laboratory forms part of Cuba’s extraordinary scientific medical organization.

Scientists in the laboratory have developed three vaccines that are 92.83% effective in preventing death and the more severe symptoms of COVID-19. They created three boosters that are compatible with Pfizer and Moderna (messenger RNA or mRNA) vaccines. Cuba was the first country to develop a vaccine for children from 3-11 years old.

When the Venceremos Brigade delegation entered the laboratory facility, a room full of heroes — Cuban nurses and health care workers — stood and applauded. One woman held her hands to her heart and reached out to us, as if we were the heroes.

Cubans acknowledged the work of young people in developing the vaccines. At the height of COVID-19 in Cuba, young medical students did contact tracing house-by-house, searching for those with symptoms. They educated people about the importance of wearing masks and washing hands.

Cubans support the isolation centers, which house people in quarantine. And many medical students were among the 44,000 Cubans who volunteered for clinical trials during production of Cuba’s vaccines.

The Laboratorios Farmacéuticos Oriente is conducting multiple lines of research. The blockade caused shortages of saline solutions necessary for intravenous (IV) drips for dehydrated patients and the delivery of drugs. Cuba has now developed their own saline solutions, which have saved lives all over the world.

Cuba’s Abdala and Soberana vaccines against COVID-19 have proven to be safe with few side effects in Cuba and in other countries. And they have proven more effective against the omicron variant than vaccines given in other countries.

The Cuban vaccines can easily be exported, because they are stable at temperatures above 30 C (86 F). Eight countries are already using them, and others are evaluating them.



Leading scientists at Cuban pharmaceutical laboratory speak to Venceremos Brigade delegation.

WWW PHOOT: MAIREAD SKEHAN GILLIS

According to a Jan. 5 article in Granma (English), “The Abdala and Soberana vaccines use the RBD antigen, that is, the spike (S) protein region, which binds to the virus receptor in the cell,” and this helps the body produce antibodies that act against different variants of the virus. “Several groups of scientists around the world and over 20 scientific journals have published papers supporting this hypothesis.” (tinyurl.com/rktbbd3k)

Cuba has developed IV solutions and equipment that make it possible for people to administer their own intravenous treatment at home. Cuban science produces products for hemodialysis for kidney failure. Cubans 100 miles away can receive regular free transportation to kidney centers, where they are also fed for the day. What would cost a person in the U.S. \$200 is free for Cubans, even while all Cubans must struggle with the blockade.

Medical care is a right

There are no private hospitals in Cuba. Medical care is a fundamental right of Cuba’s citizens and is written into the Cuban constitution. Cuba’s medical system prioritizes nurses’ rights as workers and guarantees free health care for all Cubans.

The for-profit medical system in the U.S. has provoked nurses to strike to protest unsafe patient care, based on the low nurse-to-patient ratio. In situations where one nurse to four patients was standard, nurses may now have 10-20 patients. This shortage of nurses has caused patient deaths and increased stress on nurses,

causing many to leave the profession and increase the overall shortage.

Confronting the blockade

Speakers at the Cuban lab said that because of the blockade, Cubans have been forced to develop many types of medicines and plastic bandages, which were not otherwise available to them. They are able to get some medical supplies from Mexico, China and Italy, among other countries.

The speakers said the late Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro had encouraged the development of a biotech, pharmaceutical industry that trained scientifically skilled doctors and researchers. This infrastructure allows Cuba to produce many of its own medical supplies.

Cuba has sent 53 brigades to other countries and has over 28,000 Cuban health care professionals residing in 58 nations. One speaker said that Washington wrongly

accuses Cuba of producing bioweapons, but that the U.S. fails to mention all the people worldwide Cuba has been helping, including many in the United States. Cuba still offers vaccines to some people in the U.S. at low prices.

When asked about long COVID-19, the Cuban scientists said they are developing trials to measure the impact of the vaccine on frequency and duration of post COVID-19 symptoms. They said they send patients with long COVID-19 to specialists such as neurologists who work with them.

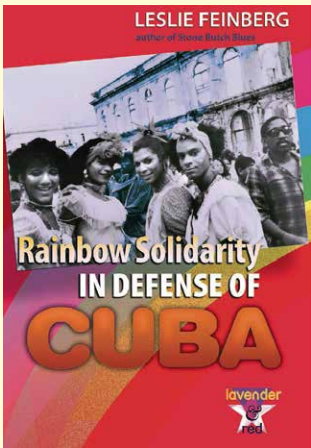
Cuba develops vaccines, medicines

Cuba has a rich history of developing vaccines or medicines for diseases that have hit Cuba hard, such as dengue, yellow fever, malaria and other respiratory diseases.

Cubans are also working on creating natural-based products such as moringa leaves, which have 7 times more vitamin C than oranges and 15 times more potassium than bananas. These products are loaded with calcium, protein, iron and amino acids, which help build muscle and contain antioxidants which boost the immune system. Cubans feed moringa leaves to animals and also turn the leaves into medicine.

When Evelyn, a brigadista on our trip, got a headache, the Cuban doctor discussed with Evelyn how stress affects her body. She told Evelyn that the stress medication Evelyn was taking was bad for her and provided her with a healthier Cuban medication. When Evelyn offered her money, the Cuban doctor said, “Oh honey, not here.” If this was the U.S., Evelyn would have been handed a bill to pay — not free medication.

Arenstein worked for 40 years as a nurse, including 20 years as a diabetes educator before retiring. Neeley is a retired science teacher.



Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba

By Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues*

This book is an edited compilation of chapters 86 to 110 from the Lavender & Red series in Workers World newspaper that began June 3, 2004.

Available online at workers.org/books

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Partido Demócrata se apresuró a aprobar, con un apoyo casi unánime, 68.000 millones de dólares en tres proyectos de ley distintos para financiar la guerra de Ucrania en 2022. La votación de noviembre por 37.700 millones de dólares para el nuevo año elevó la cantidad total para continuar la guerra en Ucrania a 105.500 millones de dólares.

Promesas fallidas del Partido Demócrata

Aunque el Partido Demócrata tenía una clara mayoría tanto en el Senado como en la Cámara de Representantes con Joe

Caos en el Congreso: acuerdos y trueques

Biden en la Casa Blanca en 2021-22, no consiguieron aprobar leyes sobre casi todas las promesas electorales que hicieron. Esto condujo a su actual revés.

El salario mínimo federal de 15 dólares, la baja médica y familiar remunerada, el preescolar universal, la universidad comunitaria gratuita, la ampliación de la vivienda asequible, la ampliación de Medicare y la opción de seguro público en la atención sanitaria que habían prometido no fueron más que palabras vacías. También lo fue rescindir los 2 billones de dólares de Trump en recortes de impuestos para los ricos, aunque la entonces portavoz Pelosi, demócrata por California,

llamó a los recortes de impuestos de Trump de 2017 una “estafa fiscal del GOP” de 2 billones de dólares.

La legislación para la vasta reconstrucción de la infraestructura se redujo a una pequeña parte de las promesas, junto con la protección de los derechos de voto y de los migrantes indocumentados. Las deportaciones de migrantes aumentaron, al igual que los asesinatos a manos de la policía. McCarthy está a favor de la guerra, a favor del gasto militar y en contra de casi todo el gasto en programas sociales. Para McCarthy, equilibrar el presupuesto significa negarse a aliviar la deuda estudiantil. El llamamiento del

bloque derechista a recortes presupuestarios mucho más drásticos para “equilibrar el presupuesto” ya forma parte de su agenda.

Las dolorosas nuevas rondas de recortes de gastos se producirán en programas de prestaciones y subsidios: sanidad pública, educación, cupones de alimentos, programas de almuerzos escolares.

Los demócratas no lucharon por los desesperadamente necesarios programas sociales que prometieron cuando tenían la mayoría. Ahora culparán a los republicanos de los recortes sociales. Pero cooperarán, como siempre, en el gasto militar. □



GRÁFICOS: TRUTHOUT

La censura sobre la huelga de prisioneros en Pensilvania

Por Marie Kelly
Filadelfia

8 de enero, 2023 — Los trabajadores encarcelados cautivos en las prisiones de Pensilvania convocaron una huelga laboral en nombre del Colectivo Revolucionario Abolicionista de los Pueblos Subalternos (SPARC). La manifestación “para protestar contra las políticas opresivas del Estado” se convocó el año pasado y estaba previsto que comenzara este 6 de enero. (tinyurl.com/52m3n4t5)

En el momento de escribir estas líneas, se desconoce el resultado de la misma, ya que el represivo sistema carcelario dificulta enormemente la comunicación entre las personas encarceladas y las que están fuera.

¿Se ha producido la huelga? ¿Sigue en pie? ¿Fue reprimida y los organizadores represaliados, o el movimiento está creciendo?

“Reconocer una huelga de prisiones y su alcance va en contra de la sabiduría imperante en la administración penitenciaria”, explicó Jared Ware en Prisma el 11 de noviembre. “En 2018, en vísperas de la huelga nacional de prisiones, las asociaciones de prisiones abogaron por el uso de campañas de desinformación, cuando se trata de la resistencia de los presos, para gestionar la interrupción y desalentar una mayor participación.” (tinyurl.com/yexbdcxp)

Sabremos más a medida que las noticias lleguen a los familiares y aliados cercanos de los implicados. Sin embargo, que la huelga se haya producido no es el único factor determinante de la victoria.

Con el valiente espíritu de la Rebelión de Attica, estos activistas encarcelados en el Departamento Penitenciario de Pensilvania (PA DOC) no se dejaron intimidar por el riesgo que corrían al

convocar una huelga.

En primer lugar, se pusieron en contacto con sus compañeros y estudiaron sus quejas. Escucharon y aprendieron, una táctica organizativa fundamental.

A continuación, los miembros del SPARC redactaron una lista de reivindicaciones:

- acabar con el acoso sexual y las violaciones por parte del personal de los centros de mujeres;
- acabar con el acoso y el racismo en todos los centros;
- aumentar los salarios de todos los trabajadores: salario mínimo para los trabajadores cualificados y los trabajadores informáticos;
- acabar con la externalización del correo a Florida;
- acabar con la externalización del economato a Secure Pak;
- Acabar con los precios abusivos de las tabletas;
- permitir las visitas por vídeo en las tabletas;
- aprobar la Ley Geriátrica;
- acabar con la cadena perpetua por asesinato en segundo grado;
- permitir la libertad condicional para los condenados a cadena perpetua;
- comida adecuada y comestible servida a la temperatura requerida;
- poner fin a los abusos en régimen de aislamiento;
- permitir a los presos de la RHU (Unidad de Alojamiento Restringido) pedir comida;
- abrir la sala de visitas a los niveles anteriores a la pandemia;
- abrir todos los comedores;
- proporcionar más tiempo de recreo/ejercicio al aire libre seguido de duchas;

- criterios para [obtener] la conmutación en lugar de decisiones arbitrarias;
- libertad condicional para todos después de 15 años;
- sentencias planas;
- días de picnic familiar en las visitas;
- visitas conyugales;
- y celdas individuales para quienes las deseen.

Solidaridad entre prisioneros en Alabama y Pensilvania

En una declaración emitida en noviembre de 2022, SPARC categorizó al DOC de PA como el “enemigo de la seguridad pública y los derechos humanos”.

Al revisar las demandas, uno sólo puede imaginar las crueles y deplorables condiciones a las que estos miembros de la clase trabajadora se enfrentan cada día. Se les niegan las necesidades humanas básicas: alimentación adecuada, actividad física, higiene, vivienda y vínculos familiares afectuosos. Además, están constantemente amenazados por un sistema punitivo opresivo.

Los activistas encarcelados del SPARC subrayaron su solidaridad con los huelguistas encarcelados de Alabama. Esto es una referencia a la huelga de miles de trabajadores encarcelados en 31 prisiones de Alabama. Esa huelga comenzó en septiembre de 2022 e interrumpió el funcionamiento normal de las instalaciones, cuando los trabajadores encarcelados de los servicios de alimentación, lavandería y otras áreas participaron en un paro laboral.

Algunas de las reivindicaciones de Alabama son las mismas que las planteadas en Pensilvania, incluida la eliminación de la cadena perpetua sin libertad condicional y la agilización de los procesos de puesta en libertad de personas

mayores y permisos médicos.

Con un toque de ironía, los miembros del SPARC expresaron su afinidad con Alabama afirmando que Pensilvania es Filadelfia y Pittsburgh, con Alabama en medio. Las tendencias ultraderechistas del centro de Pensilvania están bien documentadas. También es donde se encuentran las instalaciones penitenciarias estatales, que emplean a residentes procedentes de algunas de las poblaciones más racistas y supremacistas blancas.

Estas poderosas palabras de los activistas del SPARC ponen de relieve de forma convincente que el Estado carcelario es irremediablemente defectuoso y debe ser abolido: “En el SPARC llevamos años organizándonos en las cárceles de Pensilvania. Hemos estado construyendo nuestro movimiento centrándonos en abordar las luchas que se están produciendo en este momento. Está claro por el hecho de no volver al procedimiento normal pre-COVID que la administración tiene la intención de mantenernos bajo restricciones elevadas indefinidamente. No sólo eso, sino que hay muchos problemas con el sistema de injusticia de Pensilvania que no están siendo remediados por políticos y abogados.

“Tenemos la intención de poner de nuestra parte. Las prisiones son modernas plantaciones de esclavos, que sólo dan beneficios a nuestros explotadores si trabajamos. Cuantos más seamos los que nos neguemos a trabajar para el amo de los esclavos, menos podrá funcionar el sistema.

Tenemos el poder de cerrarlo y cambiar las condiciones para mejor”.

Solidaridad con nuestros compañeros de detrás de los muros. Su valor debe inspirarnos. Su audaz acción constituye una victoria. ¡Liberadlos a todos! □

Caos en el Congreso: acuerdos y trueques

Por Sara Flounders

La disfunción del Congreso de Estados Unidos se puso de manifiesto en las 15 rondas de votaciones para el cargo de “Presidente de la Cámara” (Speaker of the House).

La rivalidad, los intercambios, los tratos, las concesiones secretas y públicas, dentro del Partido Republicano, e incluso las refriegas físicas estuvieron a la vista. Las múltiples votaciones y las peleas abiertas en el hemiciclo son un preámbulo de la próxima sesión.

Durante el teatro de las numerosas votaciones, la Cámara de Representantes se paralizó. Sin un Presidente de la Cámara elegido, ningún otro órgano de la Cámara puede funcionar, ni siquiera convocar reuniones, ni los nuevos miembros de la Cámara pueden jurar sus cargos.

Como los republicanos tenían mayoría (una mayoría exigua, 222 republicanos, 212 demócratas) en la Cámara, eligieron al Presidente de la Cámara, que está justo detrás del vicepresidente en la

lista de sucesión a la presidencia. Pero se necesitaban 218 votos para convertir en Presidente de la Cámara a Kevin McCarthy, un republicano conservador de California con ocho legislaturas en el Congreso.

Finalmente, el 7 de enero, al quinto día de regateo y tras 15 rondas de votaciones, se cerraron los acuerdos. McCarthy consiguió los votos suficientes para asegurarse el puesto. Entonces, la 118ª Cámara de los EE.UU. tomó juramento a sus nuevos miembros a las 12.30. Fue la votación más larga y disputada desde 1859, justo antes de la Guerra Civil estadounidense.

Concesiones a la ultraderecha

Un grupo fascista y ultraderechista del Partido Republicano, denominado Freedom Caucus, había bloqueado las 14 primeras votaciones. ¿Qué concesiones se hicieron para conseguir sus votos? El bloqueo, como el de la semana pasada, puede producirse fácilmente en todas las decisiones del Congreso en esta sesión.

Los economistas capitalistas dicen que

les preocupa el impacto desestabilizador sobre las finanzas capitalistas: ¿Habrá pagos puntuales de miles de millones de dólares por facturas del gobierno? ¿Cumplirá el gobierno con el pago de la deuda nacional?

La cuestión más importante es qué pueden esperar los pobres y los trabajadores de este próximo Congreso.

El recién elegido presidente de la Cámara, McCarthy, agradeció al ex presidente Donald Trump por ayudarle a conseguir los votos, diciendo a los periodistas: “No creo que nadie deba dudar de su influencia. ... Estuvo conmigo desde el principio”. (msn.com, 7 de enero)

Los recortes en gastos de defensa, fuera de los límites

Los medios de comunicación se han centrado en la posibilidad de que los recortes incluyan el gasto en defensa.

Los cientos de miles de millones de dólares destinados al Pentágono aumentan cada año, independientemente de si los republicanos o los demócratas están

en la mayoría o detentan la presidencia. Incluso cuando se proponen recortes, los aumentos entran por la puerta de atrás en la financiación suplementaria para guerras separadas. Según un estudio de la Universidad Brown en 2017, desde 2001 las guerras de Irak, Afganistán y Siria ya habían costado 5,6 billones de dólares. Ahora la financiación suplementaria recauda miles de millones para la guerra en Ucrania.

McCarthy sabe, cómo lo sabía la anterior presidenta Nancy Pelosi, que ambos partidos aprobarán los fondos para el interminable gasto del Pentágono. Las gigantescas corporaciones militares y sus grupos de presión garantizan esta votación, con enormes beneficios en juego. Todo lo que McCarthy dice de que los republicanos quieren una “visión de conjunto” significa que su partido quiere su parte del tren del caldillo.

Históricamente, tanto republicanos como demócratas cooperan en los aumentos del presupuesto militar. El