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Unions tell bosses: We won't take it anymore!

Actors, writers, shut down Hollywood

By Martha Grevatt

Members of the Writers Guild (WGA) have been on strike since May 2 against television and film studio giants like Netflix, Amazon, Sony, Disney, Fox and others. They were joined July 13 by actors in Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. This united strike has effectively shut down studios in Hollywood, New York City and elsewhere.

Actors and writers face similar issues. The studios are using new technology — including digitization, streaming

and artificial intelligence — to shrink the workforce and reduce workers' income. As SAG-AFTRA President Fran Drescher explains, "the entire business model has been changed." SAG-AFTRA and WGA members need contracts that reflect the new model and protect their jobs and living standards. (CBS News, July 13) The union is demanding an 11% wage increase for every member.

The video of President Drescher's militant speech announcing the strike has gone viral, with over 300,000 views. In it she proclaims that, "We stand in solidarity, in unprecedented unity. ... Big business cares more about Wall Street than you and your families. ... At some point you have to say no, we're not going to take this anymore."

entire negotiating team posed together for photos, they had their fists raised.

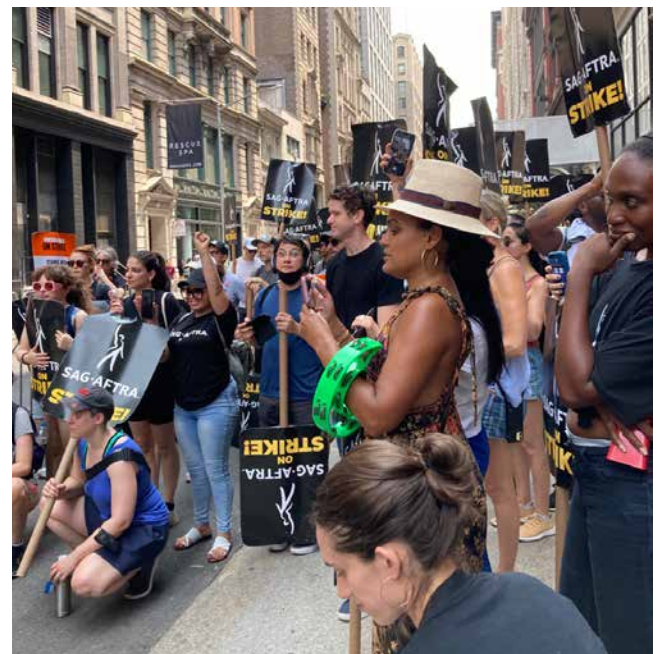
More strikes coming!

With the expiration of the United Parcel Service contract with the Teamsters union fast approaching, dozens

Continued on page 2



Teamsters Local 623 holds practice picket line at main gate of Hog Island UPS facility, Philadelphia, July 13, 2023.



SAG-AFTRA picket line outside Netflix, Warner Bros. and Discovery offices, New York City, July 17, 2023.

Centennial of Lenin's death, Jan. 20-21, 2024 Int'l Assembly Against Imperialism

By Larry Holmes
First Secretary, Workers World Party

Workers World Party invites you to mark the 100th anniversary of the death of Vladimir Lenin on Jan. 21, 2024, with an International Assembly Against Imperialism. We encourage all those who view this as an important occasion to join us in building this assembly. Our hope is to devote this occasion to advancing the struggle against imperialism and for revolution.

The U.S.- and NATO-instigated war in Ukraine, and the growing danger of the extension of the war into Asia, will be high on the agenda of this anti-imperialist assembly. However,

this is just a starting point. All the struggles that are linked together by the global class struggle will be on the assembly's agenda.

This includes the Palestinian liberation struggle, the defense of Cuba, the climate crisis, the struggle to free Puerto Rico, the struggles against racism and fascism, and struggles for the liberation of people with disabilities, women and gender-oppressed and LGBTQIA2S+ people. It includes the struggle of the global working class against capitalist exploitation.

Lenin's legacy

Lenin is most widely known as the principal leader of the Russian

revolution. Those who are more familiar with Lenin's contributions know that, among other things, he analyzed the laws governing imperialism (the highest stage of capitalism), clarified the nature and purpose of the state, and developed both in theory and practice the kind of professional organization of revolutionaries that is necessary if the objective is revolution.

Lenin and the struggle against racism

For many, Lenin's most meaningful contribution was elevating the question of colonialism in the

Continued on page 11

Lenin and the Working Class

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4, 5

TEAR DOWN THE WALLS

Texas heat kills

Mutulu Shakur honored

Reprieve for Keith Lamar

No to life without parole



No to APEC! People Before Profits!	3
Ⓢ Tributes to Minnie Bruce Pratt	6
Editorials: Horner's nest of misogyny	10
Organized crime in Vilnius	10

Portland Pride weekend: visibility and protest

By Lyn Neeley
Portland, Oregon

Tens of thousands of Portland’s LGBTQ2S+ community and supporters attended a weekend of events during Portland Pride July 14 and 15. On July 14, the Trans March ended at the waterfront festival in front of the main stage. An hour later, the Dyke March, four blocks long, took off.

There were over 90 drag performers at the Pride events, including Flawless Shade. This year’s Miss Gay Pride and former Miss Gay Oregon, Shade explained that Pride weekend is a chance for the LGBTQ2S+ community to celebrate, to come out of isolation and be together. But, she said, the parade is first of all a protest. It’s about fighting for freedom. Pride is about visibility to show Portland who the community is at a time when it is under attack.



Portland, Oregon, July 14, 2023.
PHOTO: ALISON GAYLOR

Actors, writers, shut down Hollywood

Continued from page 1

of Teamsters Local 623 members and supporters from other unions and progressive organizations held a “practice” picket line and rally on July 13 at the main gate of the Hog Island UPS facility in Philadelphia. UPS Teamsters around the country are practicing for a possible strike when their contract expires Aug. 1.

The union is up against the country’s second-largest delivery service, after the U.S. Postal Service, and moves 6% of the entire U.S. gross domestic product. UPS made record profits in 2022. If the 340,000 UPS Teamsters walk out Aug. 1, it will be the largest private sector strike in U.S. history.

On the question of whether there will be a strike, Teamsters International President Sean O’Brien explains that it’s up to UPS. If the company isn’t willing to pay all UPS workers — including the majority who work part time — what they believe they deserve, they are ready to walk the picket line. Over 20,000 members registered for a live update from President O’Brien July 16.

Solidarity between unions is growing. United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain traveled to New Hyde Park, New York, to join President O’Brien in a UPS strike preparation rally. The Teamsters union members will honor UAW picket lines in the event of a strike at Ford, General Motors or Stellantis — or all three — when their contracts with the UAW expire Sept. 14. President Fain declined to begin negotiations with the traditional “handshake across the table” with company representatives, opting instead to shake hands with rank-and-file autoworkers outside the plants.

According to Association of Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA) President Sara Nelson, there could be a “Summer of Strikes” as AFA members begin their own practice pickets at Alaska Airlines and United Airlines. “There’s more solidarity than we’ve ever seen before. ... It’s everyone across the working class, and that solidarity is rising up, especially with this Gen Z leading us, and we’re not gonna take it anymore!” (MSNBC, July 16)

Joe Piette contributed to this article.

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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this week

- ♦ In the U.S.
 - Unions tell bosses: We won’t take it anymore! . . . 1
 - Portland Pride weekend: visibility and protest . . . 2
 - Jul 29: Protest APEC—carriers of debt and war . . . 3
 - Bay Area activists launch anti-APEC coalition . . . 3
 - WWP remembers Minnie Bruce Pratt 6
 - Struggle for reproductive justice in Ohio 7
 - Drop the charges on the Tampa 5! 10
- ♦ Around the world
 - Int’l Assembly Against Imperialism. 1
 - Fidel Castro on the right to be Marxist-Leninists . . 8
 - U.S. activists visit Nicaragua 8
 - Israel can’t crush Palestinian resistance 9
 - Protests to call for end of Korean War 9
- ♦ Tear down the walls
 - Heat wave: Texas prison officials are murderers . . 4
 - Mutulu Shakur 4
 - Reprieve granted to Keith Lamar. 4
 - Incarcerees organize against life without parole . . 5
- ♦ Editorial
 - Hornet’s nest of misogynist enablers. 10
 - Organized crime in Vilnius 10
- ♦ Noticias en Español
 - Asamblea Internacional Contra el Imperialismo. . 12

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Come to Seattle July 29

Protest APEC – carriers of debt and war

By Danny O'Brien
Seattle

For the first time in over a decade, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum has been holding its meetings in the U.S., first in Palm Springs, California, in February and then in Detroit in May. It is now gearing up to meet in Seattle. Capitalist trade ministers will attend a series of meetings here from July 29 to Aug. 21. On their first two days, these ministers will confront a large mass of conscientious workers who will vehemently oppose their conference. These workers are not deceived by APEC's thin veneer of corporatist and neoliberal buzzwords and recognize it as a moving cog in brewing war plans and continued exploitation from the imperialist United States.

APEC: tool of imperialism

APEC was founded in 1989 as an intergovernmental forum and “free trade agreement” (FTA) among 12 original member states in the Asia-Pacific region. Today, APEC has a total membership of 21 countries, while excluding Laos and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). APEC functions in much the same way as similar organizations, such as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (formerly NAFTA) or the Organization of American States, with less direct U.S. involvement but no less potential for U.S. capital to benefit. From APEC's inception, its meetings have been subject to huge protest mobilizations of the people — in the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Thailand, the Philippines and other host nations. Free trade agreements are a haunting and powerful framework and device deployed under neoliberal capitalism. Its deals often result in the poorer “developing” countries accumulating massive debt through loans and military sales, while chipping away at workers' rights and working conditions worldwide through endless deregulation. As transnational companies accumulate capital and the well-oiled neoliberal machine deregulates any barriers to accumulation, more free trade agreements are created. Despite the crippling debt this wreaks on countries exploited by such agreements, the imperialists receive their short-lived dopamine rush and crave more, gumming the works with bureaucratic and financial messes that strangle the rest of the world. In 2020, a highly controversial and protested Asia-Pacific regional FTA which had been in negotiation since 2011, known as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), was officially signed. It took effect in 2022. In May last year, President Joe Biden announced the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), something he ominously described as “writing the new rules for the 21st century economy.” IPEF members exclude China, North Korea and Laos. It has been heavily criticized for being such a clear, hawkish attempt at distancing the economies of the U.S. and China.



Manila, the Philippines, Nov. 19, 2015. PHOTO: COMMUNITY ALLIANCE FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE

The United States' hosting of APEC and the forming of IPEF coincide with the large-scale and long-term shifting of imperial momentum toward the Asia-Pacific region — in Uncle Sam's own rhetoric, “a pivot to Asia.” This year has seen massive milestones on the path of that pivot, no doubt foreshadowing high tensions and warmongering at the upcoming conference. One major milestone, Gen. Michael A. “Mike” Minihan's memo, sets the stage boldly.

Premeditated war with China?

On Feb. 1, the Department of the Air Force accidentally leaked a memorandum from Gen. Minihan, intended to be between commanders, which exposed his belligerency: “My gut tells me we will fight [China] in 2025. ... We spent 2022 setting the foundation for victory. We will spend 2023 in crisp operational motion building on that foundation. ... Drive readiness, integration and agility for ourselves and the Joint Force to deter, and if required, defeat China.” (airandspaceforces.com, Jan. 30) Gen. Minihan revealed premeditation about this coming war, referring in his End State section of the memo to “a fortified, ready, integrated and agile Joint Force Maneuver Team ready to fight and win inside the first island chain.” Despite all the public relations the Air Force could muster to try to cover up the fallout from this leak from the horse's mouth, it is clearly stated that Pentagon strategists regard China as the U.S.'s main enemy and have developed plans to wage war with Beijing in the near future. With that in mind, workers and communists must look to the Asia-Pacific region with a vigilant eye for the strings that Washington and its allies are currently pulling. In February, an Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement went into effect, announcing five new U.S. military bases in the Philippines: Cesar Basa Air Base, Fort Magsaysay Military Reservation, Lumbia Air Base, Antonio Bautista Air Base and Mactan Benito Ebuen Air Base. In April, the agreement added four more: Naval Base Camilo Osias, Camp Melchor Dela Cruz, Balabac Island and Lal-lo Airport. This massive and quick militarization

and mobilization of the Pentagon budget is aimed at increasing U.S. readiness and agility to strike or surround China. On March 13, the AUKUS (Australia, Britain, U.S.) military alliance tightened its noose, announcing an arrangement to supply Australia with a nuclear-powered submarine. The White House public statement stressed that Australia would not be allowed to repurpose the submarine to carry a nuclear explosive device and that Australia should not seek to enrich any uranium or try to acquire any nuclear weapons.

Nuclear subs and semiconductors

Despite these public denials, a nuclear-powered submarine armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles and torpedoes is still a very dangerous weapon, and it has arrived in the Asia-Pacific region. On June 16, another nuclear-powered submarine arrived in Busan, South Korea. The pretext for its delivery was missile tests conducted by North Korea.

The economic resources most at stake in these brewing war plans are semiconductors, the vast majority of which are manufactured at the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company. U.S. strategists say they will keep the company under U.S. control and as detached from China as possible. They even worked out a deal during former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's 2022 visit to Taiwan for a TSMC factory in Arizona. The phrase “semiconductors are the new oil” has popped into public discourse in the corporate media, and Washington's rhetoric towards Taiwan has been about increasing military buildup. Wisconsin Republican Rep. Mike Gallagher flat-out said, “We need to arm Taiwan to the teeth right now.” (Defense News, May 24) In conclusion, the U.S. has established nine new bases in the Philippines in less than six months, even as its military pacts moved high-value weaponry to Australia and South Korea — both countries a ballistic stone's throw away from China. Politicians' and corporate media's rhetorical focus is on Taiwan and its semiconductors, coupled with preemptively establishing semiconductor production within U.S. borders. Together these are a clear sign that Washington is fortifying its offensive capabilities in the Asia-Pacific region, reshuffling the chessboard, while spinning and strewing economic chokeholds and jingoistic webs around China — in preparation for a coming war. But the working class in the U.S. wants no part of imperialist war! These kinds of wars lower wages, inflate prices, hike up the cost of fuel and take humanity far too close to the brink of extinction with nuclear threats. The only war of use to the workers is a class war against the capitalists who oppress and exploit them.

Join Workers World Party, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, the Resist U.S.-Led War Movement, Anakbayan, People Over Profit and many other comrades at the Peoples' Summit Against APEC in Seattle this July 29-30! Register at tinyurl.com/3drz5r96/.

Bay Area activists launch new anti-APEC coalition

By Judy Greenspan
San Francisco

A broad coalition of Filipino progressive organizations, anti-imperialist groups, labor and other supporters gathered on July 11 in front of San Francisco City Hall. This was part of a countrywide push to demand “No to APEC! People Before Profits!” The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, an imperialist and neoliberal collective body, is set to be hosted in San Francisco in November, when heads of state from 21 countries of the Pacific Rim will meet to discuss continuing exploitation, occupation and oppression for the peoples of that region. Besides President Joe Biden, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of the Philippines will be present. According to leaders of the anti-APEC coalition, the purpose of

this Indo-Pacific Strategy is to increase imperialist military presence in the region and to threaten war against China. Terry Valen of the International Migrants Alliance USA stated in a press statement released before the rally: “The U.S. Biden Administration has been using APEC to push its overall Indo-Pacific strategy, backed by its intensifying military presence ... bringing us closer and closer to war.” The coalition — which is composed of more than 50 grassroots organizations, including the International League of Peoples' Struggle, BAYAN USA, Anakbayan, People Over Profit and Workers World Party — is organizing protests across the country, especially in the Pacific Northwest. APEC will hold its next set of meetings in Seattle from July 29-30, and the recently formed Pacific Northwest People

Over Profit Coalition is planning a militant response to this U.S.-led band of bankers and militarists. (workers.org/2023/07/72096) To join this new coalition, go to linktr.ee/no2apec. □



Demonstration against APEC, San Francisco, July 11, 2023. PHOTOS: SAVANNAH KUANG

Heat wave: Texas prison officials are murderers

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

Prisoners are dying almost every day in Texas due to the extreme heat. They are dying in cells, dorms, fields, factories and kitchens. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) has a policy, AD10.64, which says people are allowed to go to “respite” areas if being affected by the heat. In reality, their policy is nothing but a cruel and deadly lie.

Since a heat wave gripped Texas this June, at least nine prisoners, including two men in their 30s, died of heart attacks or unknown causes in prisons lacking air conditioning, according to the Texas Tribune. (June 28)

Major daily newspapers around the state are editorializing about the heat in prisons. Activists, families and friends of incarcerated people are organizing against these horrific deaths. This issue is becoming as hot as the prison cells.

The Texas prison system incarcerates 118,277 people in 98 facilities located throughout the state. According to research by Julie Skarha, an environmental epidemiologist from Brown University’s School of Public Health, 271 prisoners died of heat-related causes in non air-conditioned Texas prisons between 2001 and 2019. (Texas Prisons Community Advocates Facebook)

Many more suffer from heat exhaustion each year, reporting dizziness, nausea, heat rashes, and muscle cramps. Yet it’s been 11 years since Texas has classified a death as heat-related.

TDCJ Communications Director Amanda

Hernandez claimed that Texas prisons have had no heat deaths since 2012. She told the New York Times: “Much like those Texans who do not have access to air-conditioning in their homes, inmates are able to keep themselves cool by other means: ice water, fans,” and “access to air-conditioned respite areas when needed.” (June 29)

Sounds nice, but the reality is that this is not happening.

Heat exhaustion, heatstroke, heart attacks and passing out occur every minute that you are reading this, as reported on the Facebook page of TDCJ Polunsky [Prison] Wives, Girlfriends, Friends and Family. There, Korean Gooden wrote: “I’m soooo sick of this damn prison since my husband has been here, always on lockdown or it’s some bs with this prison. My husband had a seizure because of the heat and his insulin being low. The damn officers did f—king nothing. This is the second time this has happened. It’s too damn hot.”

Another woman wrote on that page: “I don’t know what else to do anymore. My husband said they still ain’t passing out water. He has been asking to go to medical and they have ignored him. He passed out and busted his head open on the concrete floor. His celly has been tending to him. His celly, not a doctor or nurse.”

Families are having to use GoFundMe to raise money to bury loved ones. On a page entitled, “Laying T.J. to Rest,” is the statement: “My name is Kristie Williams. On June 23, our family received a phone call that my brother T.J. had passed away. His death was a result of him being made to be outside working in the field in Huntsville

with little to no water, with a state of emergency heat advisory in place. He had made it known the day prior that he was extremely exhausted and so thirsty and wasn’t being given water. The next morning, he was still made to go back out in the extreme temperatures resulting in him collapsing and not being able to be resuscitated.”

Workers World spoke with a prisoner at the Polunsky Unit who said that he hadn’t been allowed to shower in over a week. “They say we get three showers a day but that is a lie,” he said.

Young and old dying from the heat

A post on the Texas Prisons Community Advocates’ Facebook page from the sister of a prisoner at the TDCJ Lucile Plane State Jail read: “So many women are dying here from heat. A 23-year-old died yesterday. She asked the guard for ‘respite’ to go sit in a room with AC for a few minutes. They denied her. Then she tried getting a cold shower but started throwing up and died. “My dorm waited seven hours for water yesterday. We hardly ever have drinking water. Two women died and laid in their bunks for four hours before medical picked them up. There are over 3,000 women here and not just old women are dying. Young healthy women are also dying from the heat.”

On the same page a man’s family posted his remarks: “It is so hot that I am covered with a heat rash from my head to my toes. They have fans on my wing but only one works.”

A mother posted on the TPCA page about her daughter: “She has been there seven years. She has nine months to go.

She’s sweating profusely all the time. Can’t sleep. She works in the kitchen. So you know, it’s like 120, 130 degrees in there and people or fainting people are seizing and falling on the floor. Heat-related seizures are very common in the summer months in prison. And I don’t mean common like one a day. I mean common like three or four a day.”

There were four bills in the Texas legislature this spring that would have provided money for air conditioning. Two passed in the House, but Texas senators killed a bill that would have established a prison temperature standard of 65-to-85 degrees, with funding of \$545 million for the first two parts of a four-phase air-conditioning installation plan. Despite a \$32.7 billion budget surplus this year, the legislature allocated no funds specifically for prison air conditioning.

A press conference and demonstration at the Capitol in Austin took place on July 18. A mock cell will be brought to the Capitol’s south steps where people can sit in the 105-degree predicted heat for that day, in the sun, and get a taste of what is the reality for prisoners under a “heat dome.” □



Mutulu Shakur

By Akinyele Umoja

This article was originally published in Black Agenda Report on July 12.

Mutulu Shakur passed away [on July 6] just seven months after being paroled. Like other political prisoners he was released only when he was terminally ill. The U.S. has more political prisoners and incarcerates them for 30, 40, 50, and even 60 years, far longer than any other country.

The New Afrikan Independence Movement and revolutionary Pan-Afrikanists salute our freedom fighter, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, who joined the Ancestors on July 7, 2023. Dr. Shakur was a grassroots organizer, teacher, soldier, anti-repression activist, healer, and unifier of the youth and street forces (whether in the community or inside prison walls).

Dr. Shakur defined himself as a revolutionary nationalist, Pan-Afrikanist, and anti-imperialist. He joined the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) as a teenager in 1966. He was also a signer of the Declaration of Independence of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika (PGRNA) in 1968 and a founding member of the New Afrikan People’s Organization (NAPO) in 1984.

Dr. Shakur lived underground for four years due to his involvement in the New Afrikan Freedom Fighter wing of the Black Liberation Army (BLA). Dr. Shakur was captured on February 12, 1986, and convicted on conspiracy charges that included revolutionary acts of expropriation of capitalist institutions to support movement institutions, including armed defense capacity, providing material support to the Afrikan liberation struggle (particularly in Zimbabwe). The imperialist prosecution also included the 1979 liberation of freedom fighter Assata Shakur from imprisonment in the charges against him.

During his captivity in federal prisons, Dr. Shakur organized and provided political education and health care to his fellow prisoners and continued to be a human rights advocate. Dr. Shakur continued to be a target of political repression during his captivity. He was constantly harassed and unjustly segregated from other prisoners, despite his work to bring peace, literacy, and end violence in prisons he was held in.

The conditions of his captivity significantly compro-

mised his health. He battled strokes, COVID-19 and cancer as a result of his confinement and isolation. Dr. Shakur was released from captivity in December 2022 due to a vigorous campaign for compassionate release by grassroots activists, artists, clergy, elected officials, and academics. He continued to advocate for the national liberation of New Afrika, the freedom of political prisoners, and people’s medicine in the last months of his life. Dr. Shakur also championed the leadership of women in the national liberation and human rights struggle.

Dr. Shakur’s political legacy must include the fight against political repression and state violence. He taught much of the Black Liberation Movement about political repression as the Director of the National Task Force for Cointelpro Litigation and Research. He also fought for the release of the Wilmington 10, Imari Obadele and the Republic of New Afrika 11, Assata Shakur and other



ARTWORK: SOPHIA DAWSON

BLA prisoners of war, and Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt). We must continue to challenge political repression and call for the freedom of the movement’s political prisoners as the state intensifies its criminalization of our resistance.

Mutulu Shakur. Live like him.
Dare to Struggle. Dare to Win.
Free the land. Free ’em all.

Akinyele Umoja is a scholar-activist and author of We Will Shoot Back (NYU Press, 2013) and co-editor of the “Black Power Encyclopedia: From ‘Black is Beautiful’ to Urban Uprisings” (Greenwood, 2018).

You can Read more on Mutulu Shakur’s contribution to revolutionary medical care and his work at Lincoln Hospital here (originally published August 4, 2021). wwp.pub/mutulu

REPRIEVE GRANTED.

~~11-16-2023~~
1-13-2027

Hello everybody:

I've just learned that the governor has issued a reprieve in my case, meaning that the projected execution date of November the 16th has been moved and is now scheduled to take place on January 13th, 2027. This means I have an additional 3 1\2 years with which to effect my escape from this nightmare. As many of you know, three years can come and go in the blink of an eye, so let's take this time to double our efforts, energy and resolve to end this madness once and for all, and for good!

Thanks so much for all the love and support. It is from each of you that I have been given the faith and belief that the best possible things are still possible. The only thing left to do is make that a reality, and we will. I just know it. I'm taking it all in, pausing to catch my breath, and regroup. Let's keep moving forward everybody. Let's keep demanding justice. We're almost there.

Onward, forward-let's go!!!!
Much love,
~Keith

GRAPHIC: JERICHO MOVEMENT

Keith Lamar is one of five prisoners on Ohio's death row who were framed on murder charges after the 1993 Lucasville prison rebellion. When his legal appeals were exhausted, he was scheduled for execution — state-sponsored lynching — on Nov. 16, 2023. In mid-July, his execution was delayed until Jan. 13, 2027, giving Lamar and his supporters more years to fight for clemency.

Incarcerees organize unprecedented seminar against life without parole

Part 2



By Joe Piette

A group of incarcerated worker leaders at Pennsylvania's State Correctional Institution Coal Township united last year around the idea that if state legislators and officials could meet and talk to those sentenced to life without parole (LWOP), unfair, repressive laws might be changed. Amazingly, from behind bars, they were able to organize an unprecedented gathering called "A Criminal Justice Reform/Lifers Seminar" on May 23 inside SCI Coal Township.

This is part two of the interviews conducted by Joe Piette with seminar organizers.

Robert Pezzeca is 46 years old, grew up in the Philadelphia area and, at 21, was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

RP: "After seventh grade I just started getting into trouble and stopped going to school, and then I went to juvenile jail ... This was in New Jersey, notorious at the time for having extremely violent juvenile facilities. And these are the types of places that just made you a worse human being. The time in your life when you're being molded into becoming an adult. I was being molded into becoming a violent teenager."

Both his parents worked, but "we still grew up in poor sections of Bucks County and Philadelphia. And it wasn't an easy upbringing. But my parents did the best they could. Sadly, they were both addicted to drugs."

Workers World: Should you and incarcerated people serving life without parole get a second chance?

RP: "I'm a child survivor of sexual abuse. And back in the '80s, no one cared about that. So for me until I got past that, I wasn't able to grow up mentally. Physically, sure, but mentally and emotionally — no. I was not a good child. I was not a good teenager. I wasn't a good person, period."

"But 25 years later, I've grown to become a really good person. I've done some really good things in prison. I'm trying to show society we have changed; many of us have changed. I didn't plan to commit my crime. I am absolutely guilty of it though. I didn't plan it. I did not want it to happen. But it happened, and this isn't the movies or TV — I can't take it back. All I can do is try to show that I owe a debt to society. I took something from the world that should not have been taken — a person's life."

"I made a horrible choice that night. I'm doing everything that I can do to atone for my crime. I can't wash the blood away. But I can try and make up for it. And that's the thing I've been trying to do for at least the last 10 years. I am in no way perfect. I make a lot of mistakes here. But hurting someone is not something I'll ever repeat."

The May 23 seminar was Pezzeca's idea. After getting the permission and cooperation of SCI Coal Township Superintendent Thomas McGinley, Pezzeca and another lifer Derrick Stevens eventually put together a list of 30 lifers "who had transformed" to participate in the proposed event.

With the help of his partner Kathleen and sister Jen, and co-organizer Stevens' relatives, they spent five months sending hundreds of letters and making many phone calls to legislators, officials and others to attend the event. Finally, they chose a date and got permission from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PA DOC) central office.

SB 135 would open up parole to lifers

Derrick Stevens is 46 years old. Born and raised in South Philadelphia, Stevens dropped out of school after the 10th grade and was sentenced to life without parole at 20.

WW: Should you and other incarcerated people serving life without parole get a second chance?

DS: "I was able to obtain my GED in prison. I've learned communication and so many other skills. I'm a Certified Peer Specialist; that's my job in here. I help my peers with their challenges and their stress when it comes to mental health. I think my nature is to help people. We just completed a course through Bucknell University on science and technology."

"If you ask the staff, they will tell you lifers are the most model prisoners. We are the mentors. We are the ones who give back to the community. In the last 10 years, lifers here have raised over \$100,000 for various community causes. Lifers increase their education, even though in Pennsylvania, not more than 10% of lifers are allowed to enroll in academic, vocational or treatment programs."

"These are some of the issues we wanted to discuss with officials on May 23. We wanted to talk about alternatives to life without parole, about the impact our crimes have made on our victims, their families, communities and society as a whole. We had victims' advocates come in, because we wanted to build a bridge with them. We wanted to show remorse. We wanted to be more productive and helpful when it comes to victims' families."

Stevens described the provisions of proposed Senate Bill 135, which would open up the possibility of parole for many lifers.

DS: "SB 135's criteria allows those convicted of second-degree murder to be paroled after 25 years behind bars after reaching 55 years of age. For first-degree murder convictions, they must be incarcerated 35 years and be at least 55 years old to be eligible for parole. Other rules include a good prison record, paid restitution and at least one academic achievement. You are ineligible for parole if the conviction involved the murder of a law enforcement official or someone under 18."

Stevens says what he's learned over the years can be summed up in three points.

DS: "The older generation taught me we need education. Most of us coming into prison don't know who we are or where we come from. Secondly, we can't judge everybody by their looks. Lastly, never give up hope."

Education and jobs, not prison!

Derrick Cramer is 46 and grew up in Snowshoe. When he was 24, he was arrested in York County, just after his mother had died and he had a newborn son. Since his conviction, he's lost his father, a sister and a grandmother.

DC: "Other guys have been here a lot longer than me. I wake up every day, and I see some of these guys around here still pushing forward and going to the law library to fight their cases. I mean, it's hard. It is hard to do that every day after you've been told no so many times — it's really hard."

WW: "Why do you deserve a second chance?"

DC: "We don't believe we deserve anything, but we're trying to change people's ideas of who we are today. We spend time every day trying to atone for what we did. I dropped out of school in 11th grade, because I was more worried about drugs and drinking. Now I've got my GED. I've become very educated. I completed National Center for Construction Education and Research Core level one, level two and HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) courses."

"I've gotten three job certifications through Ferris State University for the HVAC industry. And I have my EPA certifications for HVAC. I'm a tutor in the HVAC vocational school now. I mentor other guys, and older guys mentor me."



Derrick Cramer

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

"I just don't think the same as I did when I was 24 years old. You look back, then you took everything for granted, and now you don't take anything for granted. I try to better myself somehow each day, learn something, try to help somebody else if I can. When I was younger, that was never part of my thinking."

"I was very addicted to drugs and alcohol. I don't say that as an excuse, but since that day I haven't touched drugs or alcohol and never would again, knowing what I did to my family and somebody else's family by taking away a loved one from them. I made the commitment that I would never put myself in that situation ever again."

"We organized that seminar to let people see who we are today — that we're not who we were 23 years ago. It's like a snapshot, a picture of you when you went to jail, when they hear your name, that's what they think about: 'Oh, yeah, he committed murder.' They don't think about 23 years later — what I am right now."

An eight-member panel supervised the release of over 300 juvenile lifers following a U.S. Supreme Court ruling. It resulted in an extremely low recidivism rate of 2%. (tinyurl.com/4zfsaxty) Cramer thinks a similar panel could be created when a new bill is passed that would handle the thousands of lifers who would be eligible for a second chance.

DC: "Gov. Shapiro's budget for the PA DOC will be almost \$3 billion this year. That's a big chunk of money for a system that has a 60% recidivism rate! That's a failing business." [Comparatively, Cramer is pointing out the 2% recidivism rate of lifers after release.]

DC: [To lower the recidivism rate for all people] "I think they should set up vocational schools, where incarcerated people get real job training. And you move on from there to on-the-job training, earning paychecks to put money in the bank for when you are released. I think that would benefit everybody."

Cramer knew Pezzeca 17 years ago in SCI Huntingdon. Pezzeca was sending letters to legislators, and Cramer thought it was a waste of time.

DC: "But all those years of writing to people — that's how he made connections — that's how he put the May 23 event together."

Cramer agreed to speak on May 23. He noted that prison staff rarely shake the hands of incarcerated people.

DC: "Going out there and you got senators and representatives and people from the central office willing to shake your hand and get to know you. To me, it was a system shock. And then to have to get up and speak. It was a very overwhelming experience, but I was glad to be a part of it." □



ARTWORK: MONICA TRINIDAD

Workers World Party reme

By Monica Moorehead

Minnie Bruce Pratt was already a renowned lesbian poet, author and anti-racist activist even before she joined Workers World Party over 20 years ago. She became a managing editor of Workers World/Mundo Obrero newspaper following the death of her longtime partner and spouse, Leslie Feinberg, in 2014.

Minnie Bruce and I became political kindred spirits, working together as managing editors and on the education committee. We were both born in segregated Alabama — she in Selma and me in Tuscaloosa, she being white and me being African American. Although our experiences growing up were different as night and day, our hatred of white supremacy and our joining the Party as a vehicle to fight it, brought us even closer.

In 2016, when I was the WWP presidential candidate, Minnie Bruce organized a dynamic meeting of young people in the town where she was living, Syracuse, New York, for me to speak on our program of revolutionary struggle. The next day as we drove to Rochester for another meeting, we talked about taking a trip together to Seneca Falls, New York, where the feminist movement arose in the 1800s and also to the Adirondacks to visit the gravesite of abolitionist John Brown.

Since Minnie Bruce died on July 2, I feel painful regret that we never took that trip together to deepen our camaraderie. I am grateful that Martha Grevatt and I were able to visit her in hospice care on June 23.

I will miss everything Southern about her — her voice, her warmth, her personal and political sensitivity and most of all, her lifetime commitment to the abolishment of the most horrific scourge known to humankind — capitalism. Minnie Bruce Pratt, your legacy will live on now and for future generations of revolutionaries until a better world is truly in birth.

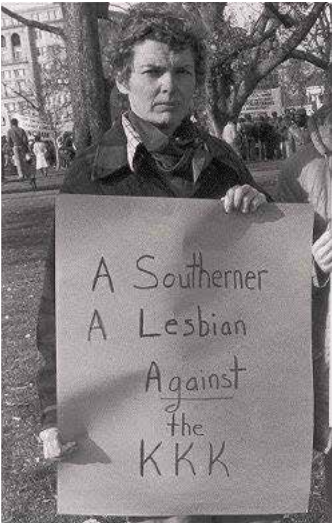
Go to minniebrucepratt.net.

Here are more remembrances of Minnie Bruce Pratt:

We are forever grateful to our dear friend and comrade, Minnie Bruce Pratt, for her profound interventions and contributions to workers’ struggles in our region.

Two of our fondest memories of Minnie Bruce include her August 2015 visit to Boston in support of our comrades and leaders of United Steelworkers Local 8751 — the Boston school bus drivers’ union — who had been fired by the racist, union-busting Veolia/Transdev corporation. Her trips to the bus yards and interview with Local 8751 leader Georgia Scott, who was from Minnie Bruce’s home state of Alabama, will never be forgotten by the workers. (tinyurl.com/4cjb8fu8)

Her memory, life’s work and sensuous, fierce poetry



1982



With Leslie Feinberg

PHOTO: GENDER OUTLAWS

will inspire generations at the Sexual Minorities Archive in Holyoke, Massachusetts, where on July 7, 2017, Minnie Bruce presided over the grand opening and dedication of the Leslie Feinberg book collection in the Sylvia Rivera room. (workers.org/2017/06/31638/)

Live like Minnie Bruce Pratt!

Boston branch of WWP

I knew Minnie Bruce best from working with her on the WWP education committee starting in 2018. She had brilliant skills from editing and being a college professor. We persevered in developing 12 classes, based on topics that most represent our Party’s politics, that included once a month classes for candidates joining the party. However, my deep hearted connection to Minnie Bruce evolved from experiencing her as a mentor.

She was there for me through many calls, me sobbing, trying to make sense of seemingly insurmountable challenges with new candidates. Minnie Bruce always offered a levelheaded perspective. She had deep rooted politics from her background in the women’s and LGBTQ2S+ communities, her time with Leslie, experience in the party and perhaps from being a mother who lost her children because she had the courage to come out early as a lesbian in the South.

Lyn Neeley
Portland WW branch

One of my most favorite memories was when Minnie Bruce and I went to Durham, North Carolina, for Pride Week in September 2018. We marched in the Workers World contingent in the parade and shared moments speaking at different events there. Some of them were sponsored by WWP. She was so influential in my life that it would not be the same without having known one of the most profound lesbian revolutionaries who touched so many lives — and we carry on some of those every day. Minnie Bruce Pratt, ipresente! Build A Workers World!

Renée Imperato
LGBTQIA+ caucus of WWP



Minnie Bruce Pratt, Georgia Scott, and Martha Grevatt, in Boston, 2015.

WW PHOTO: STEVAN KIRSCHBAUM



Supporting union drive at Amazon in Alabama, 2021.

Dear Minnie Bruce, I want to thank you for your consistent, loving embrace and inclusion of all oppressed people globally. You were a teacher both in a classroom and as an editor of Workers World newspaper, well known for your fierce love and your gut hatred of racism and bigotry. I’m especially thinking about what isn’t noticed — your selfless ability to work with young and older comrades on hundreds of their articles.

Along with your own substantial body of work, every word beautifully crafted, you helped hundreds of comrades and activists shape their thoughts. You didn’t just quickly edit articles and move on to the next task. You found time to call or connect back and explain changes, suggest preferable formulations or a better opening. I treasured the personal Minnie Bruce touch.

I’m remembering with tears and a smile your and Leslie’s visits to my little Jersey City garden to watch the fireflies. We shared our love of Jersey City at a time when it was still gritty, industrial and low-rent.

So many late nights of PATH train rides home. You both loved your fourth-floor walkup — a railroad apartment with skyline views from every window. We tested coffee shops and listened to Leslie’s antenna, measuring what was safe space.

We traded plant cuttings. A favorite was the Dottie plant (named for WWP founder, Dorothy Ballan) because it confirmed that life continues and contributions take new roots. All that you gave to the struggle for a new world doesn’t end with you. Those little roots proliferate in new soil. Thank you Minnie Bruce!

Sara Flounders
WW contributing editor

While we crossed paths over all our years in Workers World, becoming one of the paper’s managing editors offered me the wonderful opportunity to work closely with Minnie Bruce. When I first started as a managing editor four years ago, she was my mentor, carefully guiding me through the complicated process, reassuring me I could be up to the task.

She was always gracious in staff meetings, but perhaps my fondest memories were when just managing editors would meet at the end of each session, and Minnie Bruce would say, “Ain’t nobody here but us chickens.” We eventually learned this was from a jump blues song, played by Louis Jordan and his band, clearly a link to her Southern upbringing. She is already sorely missed by the editorial staff.

Betsey Piette
Philadelphia WW branch

I met Minnie Bruce when she started dating Leslie Feinberg. I had read her poetry and really appreciated her bold anti-racist positions. When Minnie Bruce and Leslie got together, I was so happy to see the blending of communism and feminism in a couple so much in love.

From Minnie Bruce I learned about the radical art movement which developed during the Great Depression. We were at a pre-COVID-19 WWP party conference and began discussing art within bourgeois society.

During the depression, there was a section of the WPA (Works Progress Administration) which employed artists of all creative fields. It was quite a radical mix. Many of the murals painted in the 1930s still exist today in post offices, government buildings and other public spaces.

After WWII, the hammer of anti-communism fell on all areas of public life. No longer was art depicting working people promoted. The bourgeoisie wanted people to see only empty random visions, not anything even remotely suggesting fightback and the innate dignity of workers and oppressed people.

No area of life is untouched by the class in power. This is what I learned from Minnie Bruce Pratt.

Susan Schnur
Cleveland WW branch

Members Minnie Bruce Pratt



Protesting Trump's inauguration, 2017. WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

After discussing articles I had written for the paper, we began tentatively talking about our huge losses – Minnie Bruce of Leslie, her long-time partner and me of my spouse Che of 33 years. It was like a hand reaching across the telephone line. But it was a soft voice filled with tears, and colored with a touch of the South. I was awed by the amount of pain she was in. She missed Leslie badly. I think we were both stunned by our newly emerged grief.

Empathy is a powerful human emotion. Minnie Bruce's for me was a soothing balm.

Phebe Eckfeldt, Women and Gender Oppressed Caucus of WWP

I first met Minnie Bruce Pratt at a March 2015 WWP memorial for Minnie Bruce's partner Leslie Feinberg, when I spoke, honoring Leslie's magnificent record of solidarity with disabled people.



With Leslie Feinberg, defending Iran. WW PHOTO: MIKE OTTO

I reminiscenced about how Leslie, after noticing my neurodivergent difficulties with maintaining my personal appearance, instead of making fun of me, offered to give me free haircuts.

When I conceived my idea which Leslie Feinberg's writings had first suggested to me about writing about the rainbow of disabled oppression, Minnie Bruce became my writing coach and adviser. She also arranged a meeting of the WWP Educational Committee with the WWP Disability Justice and Rights Caucus, to discuss developing the curriculum for a candidates' and seasoned comrades' class on disabled oppression, which the DJRC now hopes to launch very soon.

**Edward Yudelovich
New York WW branch**

I had the chance to work with Minnie Bruce on many occasions. She was always cheerful, but always vigilant during demonstrations. When I had articles to write regarding LGBTQ2S+ issues, she was always ready to smooth out the article, always being sensitive to my feelings. I stayed with her and Leslie a few times and was always welcomed. A very dynamic revolutionary has passed, leaving a legacy of struggle for us to follow.

**Marge Maloney
Buffalo WW branch**

Minnie Bruce and I worked closely during the 2018 education worker walkout in West Virginia. It was a tough time when material challenges arose. There were "left" forces on the ground, such as the anti-union Socialist Equality Party and Industrial Workers of the World, who were trashing the teachers' unions.

As an educator and experienced communist, Minnie

Bruce provided a lot of advice in dealing with other groups, as well as disgruntled members, when they felt the unions "sold them out." She also edited most of the articles I wrote about the education worker walkouts in both 2018 and 2019.

Minnie Bruce always enjoyed meaningful conversations and she always encouraged me to write for the paper. It was an honor to have known her, because I knew of her prior to joining the Party. I met her life partner Leslie Feinberg at an Anti-Racist Action-sponsored event long before I joined the Party. I was fortunate to have shared that story with her. She had an impact on so many people and she will be missed.

**Jeremy Radabaugh
a.k.a. Otis Grotewohl
WW contributing editor**

Minnie Bruce is missed deeply by everyone in Workers World Party, especially those of us who put out this newspaper every week. We miss her hard work, her steadfast reliability, her skills, her insights and so much more.

She did so much to help me become a managing editor. Sometimes I got stuck and sometimes I just needed a second opinion.

We also miss Minnie Bruce in the WWP labor fraction. She took copious notes of our calls, but more than that we miss her voice.

Thank you, Comrade Minnie Bruce Pratt!

**Martha Grevatt
Cleveland branch**

Dear Ben Weaver and Ransom Weaver, My name is John Catalinotto, and have been one of the managing editors of Workers World newspaper since 1982, so you know that I had the good fortune of working closely with your mother, Minnie Bruce, for the last nine years.

I know it must be excruciating for you two to lose her and I wanted to send you



With her sons, Ransom and Ben Weaver in Philadelphia, 2009. WW PHOTO: LESLIE FEINBERG



Monica Moorehead visits Minnie Bruce, Syracuse, New York, June 23, 2023. WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

and her grandchildren and all her family my condolences.

You've probably heard that Minnie Bruce was not only a talented and effective communist organizer, writer and editor, but her presence on any party committee made work flow smoothly, with humor and with love, which one felt despite the limitations of Zoom and phone meetings. She merged Alabama hospitality with her understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of her fellow humans to make everyone feel valuable.

I thank her for doing the same for me at monthly phone conversations during the past year, as we discussed the challenges of presenting class struggle politics in novels and poems. Minnie Bruce contributed to literature and to humanity, and helped all she worked with grow.

**John Catalinotto
New York WW branch**

Struggle for reproductive justice advances in Ohio

**By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland**

Ohio is one of many states whose legislatures rammed through harsh legislation denying abortion access after the Supreme Court of the United States overturned Roe v. Wade on June 24, 2022. Under Ohio's law, abortions are banned after six weeks of pregnancy.

But a Hamilton County judge put the law on hold on Sept. 14, 2022, in response to legal challenges. Abortions are currently being performed in Ohio, but the conservative-majority Ohio Supreme Court can decide to reinstate the ban.

However, on July 5, Ohioans for Reproductive Freedom and Protect Choice Ohio announced that they had collected over 710,000 signatures supporting an amendment to the state constitution enshrining access to abortion.

This is well above the 413,000 signatures of registered voters needed to place the issue on the ballot.

This is a tremendous achievement, made possible by a grassroots campaign of hundreds of volunteer petitioners. "We know that we are going to win in November. We are poised to put this – put abortion rights – in the hands of the voters, and we're excited to announce this first victory on that," said Sri Thakkilapati, a founder of Ohioans for Reproductive Freedom. (NBC News, July 6)

The right-wing legislators who voted to deny abortion access came up with a nefarious scheme to disenfranchise the pro-reproductive justice majority: Issue 1. In a special election

Aug. 8, approved by the Ohio Supreme Court, voters will decide whether or not to amend the state constitution to require a 60% supermajority of voters to pass subsequent constitutional amendments. This

supermajority would make it more difficult to pass the abortion access amendment, which is the goal of its backers.

But passing Issue 1 will not be so easy, with armies of phone bankers, door knockers and postcard writers making sure the public knows about the election and why the anti-democratic measure should be defeated. Labor unions are among the groups mobilizing their members to assist in this campaign.

Stronger than expected early voting suggests that Issue 1 might get trashed Aug. 8 – and then the right to abortion access will be legally protected after the November vote. □



Boxes holding some of the petitions containing 710,000+ signatures for amending the Ohio Constitution to enshrine the right to abortion access, delivered to the State House in Columbus, July 5, 2023.

Our right to be Marxist-Leninists

By Fidel Castro

This commentary, reprinted from Havana Times, was given May 7, 2015, by late Cuban President Fidel Castro Ruz. We share this now in honor of the 70th anniversary of the attack on the Moncada Barracks, which launched the Cuban Revolution.

The 70th anniversary of the Great Patriotic War will be commemorated the day after tomorrow, May 9. Given the time difference, while I write these lines, the soldiers and officials of the Army of the Russian Federation, full of pride, will be parading through Moscow's Red Square with their characteristic quick, military steps.

Lenin was a brilliant revolutionary strategist who did not hesitate in assuming the ideas of Marx and implementing them in an immense and only partly industrialized country, whose proletariat party became the most radical and courageous on the planet in the wake of the greatest slaughter that capitalism had caused in the world; where for the first

time tanks, automatic weapons, aviation and poison gases made an appearance in wars, and even a legendary cannon capable of launching a heavy projectile more than 100 kilometers made its presence felt in the bloody conflict.

From that carnage emerged the League of Nations, an institution that should have preserved peace but which did not even manage to stop the rapid advance of colonialism in Africa, a great part of Asia, Oceania, the Caribbean, Canada and a contemptuous neo-colonialism in Latin America. Barely 20 years later, another atrocious world war broke out in Europe, the preamble to which was the Spanish Civil War, beginning in 1936.

After the crushing defeat of the Nazis, world nations placed their hopes in the United Nations, which strives to generate cooperation in order to put an end to aggressions and wars, such that countries can preserve the peace, development and peaceful cooperation of the big and small, rich or poor states of the world.

Millions of scientists could, among other tasks, increase the chances of the survival of the human species, with



billions of people already threatened by food and water shortages within a short period of time. We are already 7.3 billion people on the planet. In 1800, there were only 978 million; this figure rose to 6.07 billion in 2000; and according to conservative estimates, by the year 2050 there will be 10 billion.

Of course, scarcely is the arrival to Western Europe of boats full of migrants mentioned, traveling in any object that floats; a river of African migrants, from the continent colonized by the Europeans over hundreds of years. Twenty-three years ago, in a United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development I stated: "An important biological species is in danger of disappearing given the rapid

and progressive destruction of its natural life-sustaining conditions: man." I did not know at that time how close we were to this.

In commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Great Patriotic War, I wish to put on record our profound admiration for the heroic Soviet people, who provided humankind an enormous service. Today we are seeing the solid alliance between the people of the Russian Federation and the state with the fastest growing economy in the world: the People's Republic of China. Both countries, with their close cooperation, modern science and powerful armies and brave soldiers constitute a powerful shield of world peace and security, so that the life of our species may be preserved.

Physical and mental health, and the spirit of solidarity are norms which must prevail or the future of humankind, as we know it, will be lost forever. The 27 million Soviets who died in the Great Patriotic War, also did so for humanity and the right to think and be socialists, to be Marxist-Leninists, communists, and leave the dark ages behind. □

U.S. activists visit Nicaragua to mark revolutionary gains



Geothermal workers and U.S. delegation members in Managua, July 14, 2023.

Special to Workers World

Workers World Party members from Boston and Portland joined the Jubilee House Community's solidarity delegation in Nicaragua to learn about the country's gains under the Sandinista National Liberation Front-led government since the triumph of their revolution July 19, 1979.

Included in this tour of achievements was a meeting with geothermal plant workers proudly showing off the process of extracting geothermal energy at the Momotombo Power Company, where energy is sustainably and renewably sourced without taking up much space and without the need for future expansion. □



WWP members, Danny O'Brien and Mairead Skehan Gillis (second, third from left) present WWP and SanctionsKill Campaign literature to Bruno Gallardo, FSLN Deputy Minister (left) and Juan Carlos Sánchez, FSLN Director of Planning (right), Managua, July 14, 2023.

On the 70th anniversary of Moncada Celebrate the Cuban Revolution with Workers World

Workers World/Mundo Obrero joins with the Cuban people in celebrating the 70th anniversary of an event which changed the course of history for their island nation. On July 26, 1953, Cuban revolutionaries boldly attacked the Moncada garrison in Santiago de Cuba and simultaneously conducted a siege of the army barracks in Bayamo.

These courageous acts were aimed to strike a blow against the brutal U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. Although the military goals were not achieved and the struggle suffered a temporary setback, the armed struggle had reached a new stage that continued until the dictatorship was overthrown on Jan. 1, 1959. As the guerrilla forces fought in the mountains, an underground movement spread across the country.

Cuba has not only developed in every sphere since the socialist revolution, this island nation has carried out acts of international solidarity to aid oppressed countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia, whether with military might or aid by the Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade with medical personnel and supplies. This assistance has been given generously, despite the horrific blockade implemented against Cuba by Washington for 61 years.

Even during the pandemic, despite having a dearth of medical supplies, Cuba shared their COVID-19 vaccines with countries denied them by the imperialist West. Due to the dedication and meticulous efforts of their scientists and health care workers, nearly all of their own population has been inoculated with Cuban-produced vaccines.

In recognition of their heroic work in dealing

with this health crisis, 50,000 representatives of the health and science sectors were invited to lead the 2022 May Day march in Havana, and were thanked by Cuba's leaders.

International support of Cuba and its people is ever more important now due to the restrictions on travel, trade and financial transactions imposed by the Trump administration, and continued by Biden's.

Cuba has deservedly won the support and respect of peoples around the globe. Workers World/Mundo Obrero has shown our unwavering solidarity with this socialist country on this newspaper's pages and in countless activities on the streets.

WW needs your support!

If you appreciate our coverage, it's time to join the Workers World Supporter Program. WW depends on its readers' backing. The program was established 46 years ago so readers could help WW publish anti-racist, working-class truth and build campaigns needed to



Some of the heroes of Moncada as they were freed from prison by a people's campaign in 1955. Fidel Castro, front, center.

fight against capitalism and for revolutionary change leading to socialism.

Since the early 1990s, the fund has sponsored workers.org, where news and analysis of global and domestic issues and struggles are posted continually. The website is a resource for political activists. It contains first-hand accounts by writer-activists in many countries, translated by our staff. Timely articles written by writer-organizers keep the newspaper current on union drives and worker activism, as well as anti-war, anti-racist, women's, LGBTQ2S+ and other progressive movements.

While WW's staff members are volunteers, the 12 issues printed and shipped each year and the website incur expenses. Although many online publications require payments to read their articles, WW does not. **Our articles are free to all readers.**

Join the WW Supporter Program!

Can you donate \$50, \$100 or \$200 a year or more? Donating \$50 or more will entitle you to receive 12 print issues a year, an email link to articles posted online, and, upon request, a copy of the book "What Road to Socialism?" (Download this and other WW books at workers.org/books)

By donating to this fund, you can help get class truth to more readers. Write checks, either monthly or annually, to Workers World. Include your name, address and email; write "Supporter Program" on the memo line. Mail to Workers World at 121 West 27th St., Suite 404, New York, NY 10001.

We are thankful for your help in building Workers World!

Jenin: 2002 and now

Israel can't crush Palestinian resistance

By Sara Flounders

The writer traveled to the occupied West Bank during the Second Intifada representing the International Action Center. She gained access to Jenin in April 2002 when Israeli Defense Forces were barricading the destroyed refugee camp.

The densely populated Jenin refugee camp was bombarded with days of Israeli air attacks and ground raids, starting July 3. The attack involved over 1,000 troops, mostly drawn from elite commando units, who invaded the densely populated residential area. They attacked on the ground with tanks and snipers, and from the sky with drones and attack helicopters launching rockets. Israel has an official policy of collective retaliatory punishment.

The White House once again underscored what it called Israel's "right to defend" itself. The Biden administration's unconditional backing emboldens the escalating Zionist violence against Palestinians.

At least 120 Palestinians have been killed by soldiers and settlers in near-daily Israeli raids in the West Bank in 2023. The current assault on the Jenin refugee camp shares similarities with the "Battle of Jenin" in 2002. Then Israeli attack helicopters, commando forces and infantry were deployed into the Jenin refugee camp, resulting in the deaths of at least 52 Palestinians.

The destruction of homes and businesses was widespread.

I witnessed the onslaught of the Second Intifada, the militant revolutionary uprising against decades of occupation in the early 2000s in the West Bank — the blocks of ruined cinder block homes, the overwhelmed hospitals, the devastation and rubble from bulldozers and bombs caused by the 2002 Zionist attack on Jenin.

In 2002, in the face of world condemnation of this most extreme attack on Jenin, it was U.S. diplomatic and massive media support that went to great effort to sugarcoat Israeli war crimes.

Insidious role of Human Rights Watch

The U.S. not only had weapons to ship and diplomatic support to provide, but also well-financed organizations that could speak hypocritically in the name of human rights. In every global crisis, these organizations will step forward to issue reports of political assistance to support U.S. imperialist aims.

In 2002, international bodies and United Nations bodies resoundingly called for a war crimes investigation of the Zionist massacre in Jenin. There was a world outcry. The U.S. government used Human Rights Watch (HRW), a notorious NGO funded by the U.S. Congress through the National Endowment for Democracy, to divert and railroad the call for an international inquiry.

The Israeli military conveniently lifted the total lockdown of Jenin's desperate civilian population to give HRW investigators a special opportunity to gain



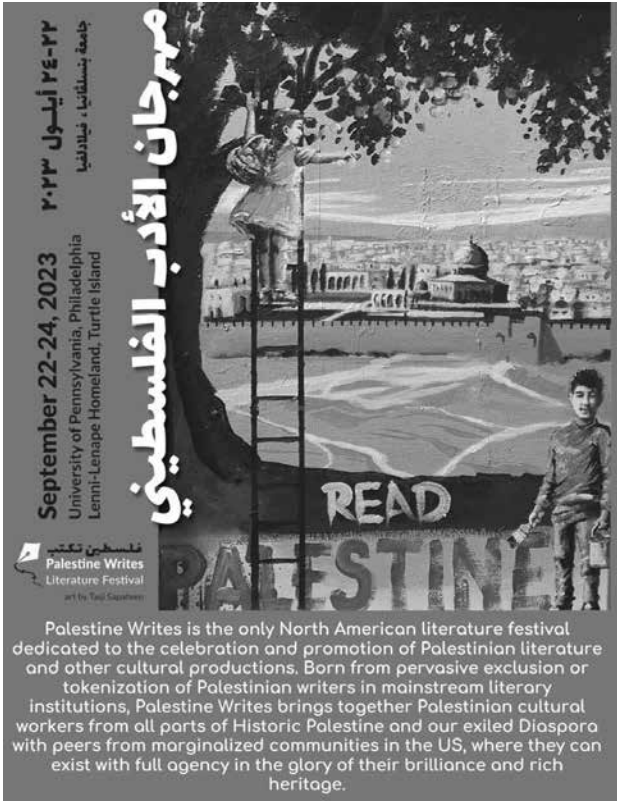
PHOTO AL MAYADEEN ENGLISH

Palestinian women rally on 47th anniversary of Land Day in occupied Palestine, March 30, 2023.

entrance into the barricaded Jenin refugee camp. In the confusion of the continuing military lockdown and bulldozers plowing up roads, electric lines and plumbing, I was one of a few supporters of the Palestinian movement, who, with local Palestinian help, managed to slip through unobserved. I passed through the Israeli checkpoints and patrols along with the HRW delegation.

The report and photos we provided were sharply different from the sanitized report from HRW. Our reports and photos were intended for the Arab media and alternative and antiwar media, which were anxious for coverage.

HRW conceded that there were at least 52 deaths and perhaps many more bodies under the rubble, along with thousands of injured people and refugees. Hospitals were overflowing. HRW stated that many of the civilians were killed willfully or unlawfully; others were used



as "human shields." Their report listed the numbers of known deaths.

But the Human Rights Watch report's sly wording included in their endless reports — and repeated in all the U.S. corporate media — stated that this indiscriminate killing of Palestinian civilians did not constitute evidence of a "massacre" or a "war crime." HRW knew very well that only that headline was needed.

This was the headline run by all the corporate media. It wrapped up their coverage nicely. It was repeated endlessly. This report was then announced while — at the same time — the United Nations bowed to Israeli and U.S. demands and withdrew their request to investigate war crimes in Jenin.

Israeli crimes can't defeat Palestine!

Today, both Israeli and U.S. wars are so openly brutal, using cluster bombs, artillery shells, drone attacks and armored tanks on city streets in civilian areas, that they don't bother with painstaking efforts to deny or cover up their crimes. Instead, the Biden administration just gives a green light and emboldens the extreme right-wing government in Israel while denouncing Palestinian so-called "terrorism" and "extremism." This support is bipartisan, echoed by both Democrats and Republicans.

Once again, U.S.-funded organizations, such as Human Rights Watch, have been willing to support U.S. wars — weapons shipments to Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Yugoslavia, and Ukraine — while they back Israel's continuing war against the Palestinians, claiming these wars are a "defense of human rights." But the reality is all too clear.

The Zionists' apparatus and the fascist settlers openly declare that they will continue to target the new wave of militants. But overwhelming military force has failed to crush the resistance, despite the use of the most extreme measures and destruction.

Due to the continuing fascist attacks, Palestinians are left with no choice but armed resistance. Today, the whole world overwhelmingly supports Palestine and the Palestinian people's right to resist.

Like Gaza, Jenin is a symbol of Palestinian resistance. Its refugee populations hold a fierce, collective memory of the 1948 Nakba — or catastrophe — the forced removal and dispossession of 750,000 Palestinians. These refugee camps have been a source of resistance to Zionism for decades.

Now Israel faces a tactical defeat. Israeli brutality has failed to break this heroic Palestinian resistance. It is reaching a new stage of greater unity and new tactics throughout the occupied West Bank, within the 1948 borders and in Gaza.

This is a reality that Zionist bombing and new waves of war propaganda can't change. Palestinian activist and author of "Mornings in Jenin," Susan Abulhawa, who lives in the U.S., told Workers World: "I'd say Israel was the devil. But that implies it's here to stay. That racist settler colonial project is nearing its end." □

70 years after 1953 ceasefire

Protests to call for end of Korean War

By Joe Piette

July 27 marks 70 years since the Korean War armistice was signed. In just three years, an estimated 4 million people — more than half of them Korean civilians — had been killed by the time of the 1953 ceasefire agreement.

And up to this year, seven decades later, the ceasefire is still a fragile one, made ever more dangerous since the U.S. first introduced nuclear weapons in South Korea in 1958, unilaterally abrogating paragraph 13d of the Armistice Agreement and breaking it despite concerns by its allies in the United Nations.

Joseph Han, acclaimed author of the novel "Nuclear Family," explained why he's traveling all the way from Hawai'i to Washington, D.C., to join a protest march on July 27: "This past year, the U.S. announced plans to deploy a nuclear submarine to South Korea, bringing us closer

to war as profit intended; U.S. Forces Korea attempted to renovate a firing range in Changwon, South Gyeongsang Province, igniting concern for public safety by local residents; U.S. troops have tested their THAAD missile defense system during their 'Warrior Shield' live-fire training exercise in Pocheon; and residents of Seoul were told to evacuate after receiving a false alert, resulting in widespread panic and fear, feelings those of us in Hawai'i remember as we received our own false alert in 2018.

"Though we wish to live without worry, as war continues to ramp up, we are being conscripted to the side of fear, insecurity, and death. Militarization never keeps us safe."

The Korean War is the longest-standing overseas U.S. conflict, except perhaps for U.S. involvement in the violent Zionist occupation of Palestine since 1948. The still-unresolved status of the war in Korea could result in a major military confront-

tation at any moment as the geopolitical situation in the Korean peninsula and northeast Asia rapidly deteriorates. Korea is on the frontline of the U.S.'s new Cold War against China — and the steady drumbeat for war shows no signs of letting up.

U.S. officials of both capitalist parties are barreling toward a new hot war in the region that could easily spiral into a catastrophic nuclear conflict. Building strong opposition to U.S. war maneuvers in Korea and throughout the Asia-Pacific region is more important than ever before.

Officially ending the Korean War would be a first step toward lowering tensions and shifting resources away from eternal wars and toward more basic human needs, such as healthcare, education, housing and the environment.

The 70 years of sanctions, isolation and military threats have only denied North Korea's population the necessities of life, prevented the reunification of Korea and

prolonged the state of war in Korea. It's time to end the Korean War and reunite Korean families, demilitarize the Korean Peninsula and reduce the risk of nuclear war in northeast Asia.

Protests planned in Washington and Korea on armistice anniversary

To mark the 70th anniversary of the Korean Armistice, advocates from around the U.S. will converge on Washington, D.C., to call on President Joe Biden and Congress to officially end the Korean War and replace the armistice with a peace agreement.

A major goal of the activities is catalyzing Congressional and public support for the Peace on the Korean Peninsula Act



Continued on page 10

Hornet’s nest of misogynist enablers

This time even the Supreme Court of the United States “liberals” got it wrong. On June 27, in a 7-to-2 ruling reversing a lower court’s decision in *Counterman v. Colorado*, SCOTUS prioritized so-called “free speech” over protecting millions of victims of stalking — primarily women and gender-oppressed people.

According to Colorado Public Radio, Billy Raymond Counterman targeted Colorado singer Coles Whalen for years on Facebook, with thousands of messages describing “physical sightings” he had of her, and angry expletive-filled threatening messages, including telling her to “die.” (tinyurl.com/47xmr4v7)

Whalen wasn’t Counterman’s first victim. He had been arrested for threatening two other women, saying he would “bash their heads in” and “rip their throats out.” Yet with the court’s new ruling, such threats would be perfectly acceptable because the “Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment requires proof of intent” in order to be considered “true threats.”

The majority decision, written by Justice Elena Kagan, found Counterman’s stalking — which caused Whalen to leave her job and move out of Colorado for personal safety — comparable to political parody or angry commentary made by protesters at demonstrations. Despite ample evidence that Counterman was intentionally stalking Whalen, the justices decided his “inadvertently threatening speech cannot be criminalized.”

Justices Roberts, Alito, Kavanaugh, Jackson, Sotomayor, and Gorsuch concurred. In essence, the so-called liberal justices colluded with neo-conservatives to legalize stalking — supporting men’s “right” to harass over women’s right to feel safe. This is not just a question of the intent of language. During oral arguments, Chief Justice Roberts joked about Counterman’s cyber death threats to Whalen, and received laughter from other justices. (Slate, April 21)

The majority opinion puts the burden on

a stalking victim to prove the perpetrator was aware of the threatening impact of their behavior. Under this ruling, in order for online speech to legally be considered a “true threat,” the court has to prove the stalker was aware their posts could be interpreted as threatening.

As noted in the Guardian: “The more deluded the stalker, the more protected the stalking.” (June 28)

In Whalen’s case, police took her report seriously, leading to Counterman’s conviction. Yet in half of all reported cases, police take no action and few arrests are made. Meanwhile, around 54% of female homicide victims had reported being stalked before they were killed.

When SCOTUS struck down *Roe v. Wade* in the Dobbs decision June 24, 2022, it was the white, male, and neo-conservative justices who voted with the majority opinion. In this ruling on stalking, the decision came from several justices who one might hope would be supportive of women and other victims of gender-based discrimination and violence.

Equally concerning is that in their next session, the Supreme Court will hear a case on a similar issue. A domestic abuser is appealing his conviction for violating a federal law prohibiting the possession of a firearm because he is the subject of a restraining order. Last year, SCOTUS struck down a New York law placing restrictions on obtaining a license to carry a handgun in public, claiming it violated the Second Amendment.

The Supreme Court, from its very inception, was designed to protect the interests of the capitalist class. Any decision that ran counter to this — *Roe v. Wade* is one example — must be credited to the broad social movement of oppressed people fighting for basic rights over 50 years ago.

Workers World says abolish the undemocratic Supreme Court, along with the rest of the racist, sexist, misogynist capitalist state. □

Organized crime in Vilnius

To evaluate the NATO summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, this July it helps to observe it in the framework of what this military alliance’s meeting really is: an international gathering of the heads of criminal gangs and some local stooges. If that argument seems to stretch reality, consider these points:

The major NATO countries, plus Japan, control world banking and the movement of funds. They dominate the media, the weapons and information; they bribe local leaders of poor countries to obtain resources at a steal and they punish those who resist by seizing funds and shutting down trade — Venezuela, Iran, Cuba, Russia.

NATO members use agents who disrupt and overthrow opponents, or try and fail (Belarus, Syria). They invade countries and murder leaders (Iraq, Libya, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan). The boss of bosses — U.S. imperialism — squeezes the others, who must provide money and troops and buy arms if they want a share of the loot stolen from the laboring people of the world. The main difference between them and civilian organized crime is that the latter has less destructive power at its disposal.

In the 1990s, without the Warsaw Pact, NATO grew from a North Atlantic operation into one in business worldwide. A big leap coincided with the 1999 war that destroyed Yugoslavia. That whipped all the local West European organized crime leaders into line behind Washington, perhaps with some reluctance. Regarding the proxy war the U.S. provoked in Ukraine, so far they have submitted.

If local leaders — for example, those in Berlin — started to look like they might make their own deal, they would

be warned: Remember the explosion that took out the gas pipelines in the North Sea bringing German industry inexpensive gas from Russia. Berlin got the message.

To be part of the crime syndicate, the West European former colonialist powers have to give in to the White House and the Pentagon. They get a cut, maybe smaller than they want, but it’s better than having their pipelines bombed.

The newer NATO members — the Baltic countries, those from the Balkans and Eastern Europe — only get enough to enrich a few of the top capitalists and government gangsters. They have to buy weapons from U.S. arms dealers, then sell their youth cheap to die in the wars.

And what happened at the summit? President Joe Biden promised to keep the proxy war in Ukraine going as long as the last Ukrainian youth kept fighting. He promised to send cluster bombs — illegal killers of civilians — and depleted uranium weapons that harm people and the environment. And this when the Ukrainian “counter-offensive” is collapsing and making the cost of the war itself a crime.

Biden is not only part of state-sponsored organized crime, he’s a war criminal!

Not satisfied with risking a major war with Russia, the NATO summit stated that People’s China was its strategic enemy. Thus it not only extended the proxy war against Russia, but started planning the next war against China.

Imperialism is worldwide crime. Very well-organized worldwide crime. And NATO is its business model. □

Drop the charges on the Tampa 5!

Actions held July 12 in front of New York City Hall, shown, and in 13 other cities demanded “Justice for the Tampa 5!” and “Drop the charges on the Tampa 5!”

The Tampa 5 were brutally arrested at a March 6 campus protest, organized by Students for a Democratic Society at the University of South Florida against Florida Governor Ron DeSantis’ attacks

on education. The Tampa 5 are Chrisley Carpio, Gia Davila, Laura Rodriguez, Jeanie Kida and Lauren Pineiro. The students and workers were shoved, beaten, and arrested and are now facing heavy felony charges.

At their second court hearing on July 12, the case was continued to August 9.

— Report and photo by Sara Flounders



100 YEARS OF RESISTANCE TO U.S. COLONIALISM!

“Puerto rico es mi única patria, y mi única nacionalidad, la puertorriqueña”
Juan Marí Bras

CELEBRATE our 125 years of RESISTANCE to U.S. Colonialism in Puerto Rico!

Tuesday, July 25th, 2023 @ 5:30pm-7pm The Mural of El Che and Don Pedro in El Barrio E105th St. and 3rd Avenue.

The ProLibertad Freedom Campaign
www.ProLibertad.org * ProLibertad@Hotmail.com

Puerto Rico solidarity action in New York City.

Call for end of Korean War

Continued from page 9

(H.R.1369) which is now backed by 33 members of Congress. The proposed legislation lays the groundwork for establishing a peace agreement and finally ending the Korean War.

This three-day-long national gathering is being organized by Korea Peace Action; National Mobilization to End the Korean War, led by Women Cross DMZ the Korea Peace Now! Grassroots Network; and a broad coalition of peace activists, humanitarian aid groups, organizations representing veterans, POW-MIAs, faith traditions and Korean Americans whose families remain divided by the demilitarized zone that bisects the peninsula. This action will coincide with similar peace mobilizations in South Korea, organized by Korean peace partners there.

July 27 activities will include an 11:30 a.m. press con-

ference at the House Triangle (on the U.S. Capitol’s East Front), with Korea Peace champions and Congressional leaders, a 1:00 p.m. community grief ceremony and a 5:00 p.m. rally at Lafayette Square in front of the White House calling for peace in Korea. After the rally, participants will march to the Lincoln Memorial, where a vigil honoring all the families who have been harmed by 70 years of war and near-war will end the day’s program.

On July 28, strategists and activists organizing for peace in Korea will gather for a day-long conference with three major points on their agenda: The Human Costs of Unending War; The Threat of Nuclear War; and Prospects and Challenges for a Peace Agreement.

While in the U.S. Air Force, Joe Piette was deployed in 1967-8 to Osan Air Base, 64 miles south of Seoul, South Korea, part of a unit that dropped propaganda leaflets from high altitude over North Korea when the wind cooperated. □

Centennial of Lenin’s death, Jan. 20-21, 2024

Int’l Assembly Against Imperialism

Continue from page 1

working-class movement, advancing the struggle for national liberation and self-determination as critical to the global class struggle – and forging the solidarity necessary to unite the workers and the oppressed of the world to defeat imperialism and capitalism.

Lenin regarded racism and white supremacy, the ideological products of colonialism and neo-colonialism, as posing the most dangerous threats to the working class.

What’s often not entirely understood, even by some who consider themselves adherents of Leninism, is that Lenin’s thinking about imperialism was fundamentally centered on its impact on the working class. Lenin understood that the growth of imperialism afforded the ruling classes – especially in the most advanced imperialist countries – the means to divide and stratify the working class on the basis of living standard, race and gender. This ability to divide the working class is one of the main pillars of imperialism.

This is why the struggle against imperialism is, in effect, the struggle against all of the stratification, chauvinism and backwardness that capitalism relies upon to render the working class hopelessly divided. The building of a new international revolutionary workers’ movement, based on unconditional solidarity with the struggle of oppressed people for self-determination, was one of the goals to which Lenin devoted his final years.

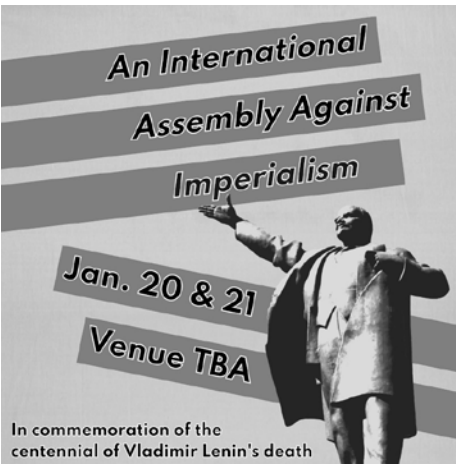
The essence of Lenin was the search for the means, the strategies and the organizations that the working class requires to make revolution – and the commitment to struggle against having any lesser ultimate goal, as he understood that capitalism could not be reformed.

Crisis of system will only get worse

The capitalist ruling class is seldom, if ever, honest with itself – even in private, much less in public. Often the closest it gets to honesty is at exclusive gatherings, like the World Economic Summit in Davos, Switzerland. The official report issued at the end of the last Davos meeting, in January 2023, stated: “As 2023 begins, the world is facing a set of risks that feel both wholly new and eerily familiar.

“We have seen a return of ‘older’ risks – inflation, unsustainable levels of debt, trade wars, capital outflows from emerging markets, widespread social unrest, geopolitical confrontation, ecological crisis and the specter of nuclear warfare – which few of this generation’s business leaders and public policy-makers have experienced.” (tinyurl.com/yup2ru8j)

This was written a month before the



collapse of a handful of important banks, marking the beginning of a new crisis of the global financial system which could evolve into something even more catastrophic than the collapse of 2008. In every way that dangerous developments can be measured – be they war, the economy, the pandemic or the climate – at present, the magnitude of these combined crises which are feeding off each other is without historical precedent.

Capitalism and imperialism are headed in the direction of greater explosions, greater violence, steeper cliffs to fall off of, and bottomless plunges. The world and all forms of life are at the mercy of a dying capitalist system that refuses to go quickly and quietly, instead insisting on torturing society – and threatening its existence until capitalism is forced into the dustbin of history.

When a system is no longer able to take social development further, it starts to go backward. In one sense, this is the context in which to understand the attack on abortion rights, the white supremacist offensive against voting rights, the assault on LGBTQIA2S+ rights and the threat of fascism.

The problem in the struggle against imperialism

In its desperation to hold on to its waning hegemony, U.S. imperialism and its allies have turned Ukraine into a battlefield. In Asia, U.S. imperialism’s drive to contain and diminish China has catalyzed an enormous arms buildup and preparations for war. The imperialist war drive must be exposed and fought.

From a Leninist perspective, there is a profound contradiction in the way that imperialist war is being fought. As it stands, the world is dependent on China principally, but also on Russia and Iran, along with other countries – such as Cuba, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Venezuela and Nicaragua – to prevent U.S. imperialism from reestablishing its global empire.

This state of affairs – the existence of a bloc of allied, anti-imperialist countries – can only be a temporary solution

in fighting U.S. imperialism. Ultimately, the working-class movement, as part of its development into a global class aware of its own class interests, must become the dominant social force that is battling capitalism and imperialism on a world scale.

To some this may seem totally inconceivable, but it is not. It is no more inconceivable than the idea, and the necessity, for socialist revolution. Both battles are inextricably linked, and pivotal to the evolution of the global class struggle. We contend that it is only the working class that is capable of defeating war and fascism and making real change – i.e., making revolution.

Central to fixing the problem: the development of the working class

In general, the main problem that is holding back the working class, particularly in the U.S., is that it has yet to develop a mass movement that is class-conscious, organized, radicalized, oriented to class struggle, and independent of the capitalist political parties. Whatever obstacles stand in the way of such a development, however uneven the process of such a development may be, this development is the necessary next phase for the working class, the phase that will change history.

The capitalist ruling class has waged war, not only on the living standards of the working class, but also a war on the prospect of the working class developing into the most potent enemy of the capitalist system, capable of smashing it and opening a new chapter of human history.

In the wake of new technology and the digital economy, the capitalist class has even tried to cast doubt on the existence of the working class, always referring to it as the “middle class.” The labor bureaucracy has embraced this flawed terminology and even some “Marxists” dismiss the revolutionary potential of the working class.

The contemporary global working class is without a doubt more socially complex, more atomized, more politically divided, and most importantly, in a state of ever-increasing, constant and rapid transformation. This state, however, does not negate that objectively, the working class is not disappearing or shrinking. To the contrary, it is growing as more and more of society is forced out of what are considered the privileged strata and propelled into the majority of society, which capitalism openly disdains, exploits, oppresses and mercilessly discards.

Does the working class remain the social agent of revolution? We must critically pose this question and help to produce some of the answers that can affirm the role of the working class.

In the U.S., the main purpose that the

Democratic Party serves, and to an extent the Republican Party as well, is to prevent the independent development of the working class and to keep it tethered to capitalism and imperialism. Lenin wrote in “What Is to Be Done” that “The greatest hindrance to the development of the class consciousness of the proletariat was the tendency to subordinate the proletariat to the bourgeois.”

For too long, much of the leadership of the organized labor movement has been allowed to limit everything that the working class must break free of in order to develop. Once again, in the upcoming 2024 presidential elections, the organized labor movement will curtail whatever class struggles and worker organizing it’s involved in to focus on reelecting Democratic Party politicians.

Workers should not be relying on a capitalist party. It is a dangerous dead end and must be broken.

Working class is rising up

Indeed, workers are beginning to break away from past restraints and forge a new workers’ movement. There is a global strike wave that extends from France to India to the U.S. Militant young workers have begun a rank-and-file struggle to organize Starbucks, and this struggle has spread to other restaurant and store chains.

Amazon workers have made organizing inroads into this global, mega corporation that has vowed to crush any organizing attempts. Gig workers and migrant workers are organizing under the most difficult conditions. However, all of this is just the beginning.

How should we commemorate Lenin?

The best way to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Lenin’s death is to review, along with fellow comrades on as wide a basis as possible, what would be required – theoretically, politically, ideologically, organizationally and practically – to move the world towards the goals of Leninism.

The only way that such a lofty objective can even be seriously considered is if we proceed on the basis of seeing the state of the anti-imperialist movement, the working-class movement, and other important movements not merely as we’d like them to be, but as they are. Doing this will give us a true sense of how far we have to go, and what it is that can be done now, as opposed to what tasks must wait for changes in conditions.

Let’s use this Lenin centennial to analyze, study and determine new ways, better ways to advance and help the struggle to smash imperialism and to aid the revolutionary development of the working class. □

Asamblea Internacional Contra el Imperialismo

Continúa de página 12

Una vez más, en las próximas elecciones presidenciales de 2024, el movimiento obrero organizado reducirá las luchas de clase y la organización de los trabajadores para centrarse en la reelección de los políticos del Partido Demócrata.

Los trabajadores no deberían confiar en un partido capitalista, es un peligroso callejón sin salida y hay que romperlo.

La clase obrera se está levantando

De hecho, los trabajadores están empujando a romper con las restricciones del

pasado y a forjar un nuevo movimiento obrero. Hay una oleada mundial de huelgas que se extiende de Francia a la India y a EE.UU.

Jóvenes trabajadores militantes han iniciado una lucha de bases para organizar Starbucks, y esta lucha se ha extendido a otras cadenas de restaurantes y tiendas. Los trabajadores de Amazon han hecho incursiones organizativas en esta megacorporación global que ha prometido aplastar cualquier intento de organización. Los trabajadores subcontratados y los trabajadores migrantes se están organizando en las condiciones más

difíciles. Sin embargo, todo esto es sólo el principio.

¿Cómo debemos conmemorar a Lenin?

La mejor manera de conmemorar el centenario de la muerte de Lenin es revisar junto con los camaradas, sobre una base lo más amplia posible, lo que se necesitaría, teórica, política, ideológica, organizativa y prácticamente para mover al mundo hacia los objetivos del leninismo. La única manera de que un objetivo tan elevado pueda siquiera considerarse seriamente es si procedemos sobre la base de ver el estado del

movimiento antiimperialista, el movimiento de la clase obrera y otros movimientos importantes, no simplemente como nos gustaría que fueran, sino como son. Esto nos dará un verdadero sentido de lo lejos que tenemos que ir, y qué es lo que se puede hacer ahora, en contraposición a qué tarea debe esperar a que cambien las condiciones.

Utilicemos este centenario de Lenin, para analizar, estudiar y determinar nuevas formas, mejores formas de avanzar y ayudar a la lucha para aplastar al imperialismo y ayudar al desarrollo revolucionario de la clase obrera. □



Santiago de Cuba se prepara para celebrar el 70 aniversario del asalto al cuartel Moncada, acto que lanzó la Revolución Cubana.

Centenario de la muerte de Vladimir Lenin — 20 y 21 de enero de 2024

Asamblea Internacional Contra el Imperialismo

Por Larry Holmes
Primer Secretario, Partido Mundo Obrero

Les invitamos a conmemorar el centenario de la muerte de Lenin, el 21 de enero de 2024, con una Asamblea Internacional contra el Imperialismo. Animamos a todos los que consideren que se trata de una ocasión importante a que se unan a nosotros en la construcción de esta asamblea. Nuestra esperanza es dedicar esta ocasión a hacer avanzar la lucha contra el imperialismo y por la revolución.

La guerra instigada por Estados Unidos y la OTAN en Ucrania, y el creciente peligro de la extensión de la guerra a Asia, ocuparán un lugar destacado en el orden del día de la asamblea antiimperialista. Sin embargo, esto es sólo un punto de partida. Todas las luchas que están unidas por la lucha de clases global estarán en la agenda de la asamblea. Esto incluye la lucha de liberación palestina, la defensa de Cuba, la crisis climática, la lucha por la liberación de Puerto Rico, las luchas contra el racismo y el fascismo, por la liberación de las personas con discapacidad, las mujeres y las personas oprimidas por su género, y por la liberación LGBT+. Incluye la lucha de la clase obrera mundial contra la explotación capitalista.

El legado de Lenin

Lenin es más conocido como el principal líder de la revolución rusa. Los que están más familiarizados con las contribuciones de Lenin saben que Lenin, entre otras cosas, analizó las leyes que rigen el imperialismo (la fase superior del capitalismo), aclaró la naturaleza y el propósito del Estado, y desarrolló tanto en la teoría como en la práctica el tipo de organización profesional de los revolucionarios que es necesaria si tu objetivo es la revolución.

Lenin y la lucha contra el racismo

Para muchos, la contribución más significativa de Lenin fue elevar la cuestión del colonialismo en el movimiento obrero y avanzar en la lucha por la liberación nacional y la autodeterminación como algo crítico para la lucha de clases global, y forjar la solidaridad necesaria para unir a los trabajadores y a los oprimidos del mundo y derrotar al imperialismo y al capitalismo. Lenin consideraba que el racismo y la supremacía blanca, productos ideológicos del colonialismo y el neocolonialismo, eran las amenazas más peligrosas para la clase obrera.

Lo que a menudo no se entiende del todo, incluso por algunos que se consideran partidarios del leninismo, es que el pensamiento de Lenin sobre el imperialismo se centraba fundamentalmente en su impacto sobre la clase obrera. Lenin comprendió que el crecimiento del imperialismo proporcionaba a las clases dominantes, especialmente en los países imperialistas más avanzados, los medios

para dividir y estratificar a la clase obrera sobre la base del nivel de vida, la raza y el género. Esta capacidad de dividir a la clase obrera es uno de los principales pilares del imperialismo.



Por eso, la lucha contra el imperialismo es, de hecho, la lucha contra toda la estratificación, el chovinismo y el atraso en los que se basa el capitalismo para dividir sin remedio a la clase obrera. La construcción de un nuevo movimiento obrero revolucionario internacional basado en la solidaridad incondicional con la lucha de los pueblos oprimidos por la autodeterminación fue uno de los objetivos a los que Lenin dedicó sus últimos años.

La esencia de Lenin era la búsqueda de los medios, las estrategias y la/s organización/es que la clase obrera requiere para hacer la revolución, y el compromiso de luchar contra cualquier objetivo último menor, ya que entendía que el capitalismo no podía ser reformado.

La crisis del sistema sólo va a empeorar

La clase dominante capitalista rara vez o nunca es honesta consigo misma, ni siquiera en privado, y mucho menos en público. A menudo, lo más cerca que está de la honestidad es en sus reuniones exclusivas, como la Cumbre Económica Mundial de Davos (Suiza). El informe oficial publicado al final de la última reunión de Davos, en enero de 2023, afirmaba: “Al comenzar 2023, el mundo se enfrenta a una serie de riesgos que parecen totalmente nuevos y a la vez inquietantemente familiares. Hemos asistido al retorno de riesgos 'antiguos' -inflación, niveles insostenibles de deuda, guerras comerciales, salidas de capital de los mercados emergentes, malestar social generalizado, confrontación geopolítica, crisis ecológica y el espectro de la guerra nuclear- que pocos de los líderes empresariales y responsables de políticas públicas de esta generación han experimentado.”

Esto fue escrito un mes antes del colapso de un puñado de bancos

importantes, marcando el comienzo de una nueva crisis del sistema financiero mundial que podría evolucionar en algo aún más catastrófico que el colapso de 2008. En todas las formas en que se pueden medir los acontecimientos peligrosos, ya sea la guerra, la economía, la pandemia, el clima, en la actualidad, la magnitud de estas crisis combinadas que se alimentan unas de otras no tiene precedentes históricos.

El capitalismo y el imperialismo se dirigen hacia mayores explosiones, mayor violencia, acantilados más escarpados de los que caerse y zambullidas sin fondo. El mundo y toda la vida están a merced de un sistema capitalista moribundo que se niega a irse deprisa y calladamente, sino que insiste en torturar a la sociedad y amenazar su existencia hasta que se ve forzado a caer en el cubo de la basura de la historia.

Cuando un sistema ya no es capaz de llevar más lejos el desarrollo social, empieza a retroceder. En cierto sentido, este es el contexto en el que hay que entender el ataque al derecho al aborto, el ataque supremacista blanco al derecho al voto, los ataques a los derechos LGBTQ2S+ y la amenaza del fascismo. (ataques a los tribunales supremos, la rebelión en Francia contra el estado policial)

El problema en la lucha contra el imperialismo

En su desesperación por mantener su menguante hegemonía, el imperialismo estadounidense y sus aliados han convertido Ucrania en un campo de batalla. En Asia, la campaña del imperialismo estadounidense para contener y reducir a China ha catalizado una enorme acumulación de armas y preparativos para la guerra. La campaña bélica imperialista debe ser desenmascarada y combatida.

Desde una perspectiva leninista, existe una profunda contradicción en la forma en que se está librando la guerra imperialista. Tal como están las cosas, el mundo depende de China principalmente, pero también de Rusia, Irán, junto con otros países como Cuba, la República Popular Democrática de Corea, Venezuela y Nicaragua para impedir que el imperialismo estadounidense restablezca su imperio global.

Esta situación -la existencia de un bloque de países aliados y antiimperialistas- sólo puede ser una solución temporal para luchar contra el imperialismo estadounidense. En última instancia, el movimiento de la clase obrera, como parte de su desarrollo hacia una clase global consciente de su propio interés de clase, debe convertirse en la fuerza social dominante que luche contra el capitalismo y el imperialismo a escala mundial.

Para algunos este desarrollo puede parecer totalmente inconcebible, pero no lo es. No es menos concebible que la idea y la necesidad de la revolución socialista. Ambas batallas están inextricablemente unidas y son fundamentales para la evolución de la lucha de clases mundial.

Sostenemos que sólo la clase obrera es capaz de derrotar a la guerra, al fascismo y de lograr un cambio real: hacer la revolución.

Central para solucionar el problema: el desarrollo de la clase obrera

En general, el principal problema que frena a la clase obrera, particularmente en EE.UU., es que aún no ha desarrollado un movimiento obrero de masas con conciencia de clase, organizado, radicalizado, orientado a la lucha de clases e independiente de los partidos políticos capitalistas. Cualesquiera que sean los obstáculos que se interpongan en el camino de tal desarrollo, por accidentado que sea el proceso de tal desarrollo, este desarrollo es la siguiente fase para la clase obrera, la fase que cambiará la historia.

La clase dominante capitalista ha librado una guerra, no sólo contra el nivel de vida de la clase obrera, sino también contra la perspectiva de que la clase obrera se convierta en el enemigo más potente del sistema capitalista, capaz de aplastarlo y de abrir un nuevo capítulo de la historia de la humanidad. A raíz de las nuevas tecnologías y la economía digital, la clase capitalista ha intentado incluso poner en duda la existencia de la clase obrera, refiriéndose siempre a ella como “clase media”. La burocracia sindical ha adoptado esta terminología errónea e incluso algunos “marxistas” descartan el potencial revolucionario de la clase obrera.

La clase obrera mundial contemporánea es, sin duda, más compleja socialmente, más atomizada, más dividida políticamente y, lo que es más importante, se encuentra en un estado de transformación cada vez mayor, constante y rápida. Sin embargo, este estado no niega que, objetivamente, la clase obrera no esté desapareciendo ni reduciéndose, sino que, por el contrario, está creciendo a medida que cada vez más parte de la sociedad se ve obligada a salir de lo que se considera el estrato privilegiado, y a entrar en la mayoría de la sociedad a la que el capitalismo desprecia abiertamente, explota, oprime y descarta sin piedad.

¿Sigue siendo la clase obrera el agente social de la revolución? Debemos plantear críticamente esta cuestión y ayudar a producir algunas de las respuestas que pueden afirmar el papel de la clase obrera.

En EE.UU., el principal objetivo del Partido Demócrata, y en cierta medida también del Partido Republicano, es impedir el desarrollo independiente de la clase obrera y mantenerla atada al capitalismo y al imperialismo. Lenin escribió en su obra, “¿Qué hay que hacer?”: “El mayor obstáculo para el desarrollo de la conciencia de clase del proletariado fue la tendencia a subordinar al proletariado a los burgueses”.

Durante demasiado tiempo, a gran parte de la dirección del movimiento obrero organizado se le ha permitido limitar todo aquello de lo que la clase obrera debe liberarse para desarrollarse.