



Week of action to insist

Cop City won't be built

Dianne Mathiowetz  
Atlanta

Stop Cop City Solidarity has called a Week of Action for June 24-July 1, beginning with a kickoff barbecue and continuing with multiple protests throughout Atlanta. The call to action states in part: “We must continue to uplift the spirit of our beloved comrade Tortuguita, who was murdered in cold blood by the Georgia State Patrol on Jan. 18 while defending Weelaunee — the forest they loved and called home. We must ensure that the police and their corporate stakeholders never complete their project of death and destruction.”

New strategies to fight Cop City

Within a day of the massive community turnout at the June 5 Atlanta City Council meeting — where, despite 16 1/2 hours of public comment opposing the over \$67 million of taxpayer money to build the militarized police training center in the Weelaunee Forest, the Council approved the expenditure — a new strategy to stop “Cop City” was announced on the steps of City Hall.



Demonstrators outside Atlanta City Hall, January 2023.

Representatives of multiple organizations, including Community Movement Builders, the NAACP Legal Fund, Movement for Black Lives, Working Families Party and Black Voters Matter, described the referendum process to allow the people of Atlanta to vote on the fate of Cop City. The first step was taking place as their press conference was occurring.

A representative of the Union of Southern Service Workers delivered the wording of the petition, which was admitted by the close of the press briefing to the City Clerk.

The approved petition language was to be returned to the referendum campaign within seven days, but there was a delay due to a minor technicality. Once

the language is returned, in the following 60 days, over 75,000 signatures of Atlanta voters, who were registered as of November 2021, have to be gathered. Once the necessary number has been vetted, the referendum language revoking the Cop City lease and all its provisions will be on the November ballot in Atlanta.

This electoral strategy is occurring in tandem with the protest demonstrations, rallies and other events during the upcoming Week of Action, directed at the building contractors, donors and board members of the Atlanta Police Foundation. The list includes well-known businesses like Delta, Chick-fil-A, Home Depot, Coca Cola, Bank of America and AT&T. These wealthy corporations, who form the privately run foundation, are the political and financial muscle behind Cop City.

While the call for the Week of Action originates from Atlanta, participation can be worldwide, since many of the entities listed are national and international profiteers.

For additional information on the referendum campaign, see [copcityvote.com](http://copcityvote.com) and the Week of Action, June 24-July 1, [stopcopcitysolidarity.org/mobilize](http://stopcopcitysolidarity.org/mobilize). □

Anti-trans fascists threaten all workers

By Betsey Piette  
Philadelphia

When the neofascist, racist, anti-trans, book-banning group Moms for Liberty comes to Philadelphia for their national summit June 29-July 2, those most at risk will be the workers at hotels, libraries, restaurants and other venues where M4L plans to meet.

For weeks activists have protested outside the Philadelphia Downtown Marriott, calling on the hotel to cancel the reservation of this known hate group and urging people to call the Marriott with the same message. At the Philadelphia Pride march June 4, speakers alerted the thousands gathered there to the danger of this upcoming convention, which features Donald Trump, Ron DeSantis and other GOP presidential candidates as speakers.

This would be the first time Trump holds a rally in Philadelphia.

While UNITE HERE has attempted to organize a union for Marriott workers, pushback from management derailed the efforts. Speakers at protests outside the Marriott have raised that many of the workers are Black, Brown and LGBTQ+. Without union protection, their jobs are on the line if they speak out against M4L.

The week before Memorial Day, through anonymously



Protest outside Philadelphia Museum of the American Revolution, June 16, 2023.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

leaked news, workers at the Museum of the American Revolution (MAR) first learned their bosses had agreed to host the opening “Welcome to Philadelphia” reception for M4L. The workers hadn’t been told earlier, even though the contract was negotiated in December 2022. (Philadelphia Gay News, June 5)

Speaking at a rally outside the museum on June 9, Jazmyn Henderson with Act Up Philadelphia said: “When we protest somewhere, we think about the workers. The MAR told its workers that they aren’t allowed to make a statement opposing the M4L event there June 29,

but we know that the workers are 100% against it. “This group is classified by the Southern Poverty Law Center as extremist, yet MAR management says: ‘We want to give everybody the right to speak.’ As a trans woman, my identity is not your opinion. To make this an equal situation, MAR’s ‘both sides are able to speak’ ignores the reality that one side wants to live free and unoppressed, while the other wants to take our rights away.

“This is not about money. Less than 1% of MAR revenue comes from hosting events. They don’t lose anything by canceling.”

Philadelphia Gay News reported that the negative reaction of MAR staff, which includes employees who are members of the LGBTQ+ community, was “immediate and extreme. Not only did the employees individually voice their objections to the administrative staff, a petition was quickly pulled together, signed by over 60% of the museum staff and submitted to the museum President and CEO, Dr. R. Scott Stephenson.”

A general open forum was held May 30, where all employees and staffers at every level could attend and voice their concerns. The forum was attended by Stephenson and by most of the museum’s senior administrators. According to staff, the forum was highly

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TEAR DOWN THE WALLS

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# The significance of Juneteenth

By Monica Moorehead

*This article first appeared on workers.org June 20, 2022.*

This year marks the first anniversary of Juneteenth as an official federal holiday since it was signed into law June 17, 2021, by President Joe Biden.

The day is a recognition that on June 19, 1865, enslaved Black people were liberated in Galveston, Texas — two and a half years following the enactment of the Emancipation Proclamation made by President Abraham Lincoln. Many Black people were either kidnapped to countries like Cuba or Brazil, where slavery still existed until the late 1880s, or even murdered by Texas enslavers.

Many Black people view Juneteenth as the “second day of independence,” following the U.S. “independence” from Britain in 1776. Even before Juneteenth — also known as “Freedom Day” — was made a legal holiday, Black people celebrated this anniversary of their emancipation all over the U.S. with marches and rallies, along with an array of social and cultural events. But the bourgeois media paid little to no attention to these celebrations.

The federal holiday will no doubt help to raise consciousness of the significance of the day for millions of people who have very limited knowledge of the heinous crime of slavery and the heroic struggle to overturn it — with rebellions led by enslaved people like Denmark Vesey, Gabriel Prosser and Nat Turner, and white allies like John Brown.

It took a bloody Civil War, where the Confederacy was defeated on the battleground in 1865, to eventually end chattel slavery, granting legal freedom but also opening the path to semi-slavery for Black people. These are important historic and political events that in one degree or another are absent from the mainstream history books.

What led to this federal holiday — similar to the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday enacted in 1986 — was the present-day mass struggle against racist police brutality and other forms of white supremacy under the banner of Black Lives Matter. This struggle reached its peak following the



public lynching of George Floyd in May 2020, when millions of people took to the streets that summer with the main demand, “Defund the police!”

Of course, the liberation of Black people did not begin nor will it end with Juneteenth. The suppression of Black Reconstruction in the aftermath of the Civil War meant the goal of granting Black people full bourgeois democratic rights was abruptly cut short.

The white-supremacist counterrevolution laid the basis for today’s reality of Black people in disproportionate numbers being relegated to a second-class status, with some of the worst housing, education, health care and nutrition in the country, along with being subjected to mass incarceration and police terror.

And now with Juneteenth being elevated on a national level, the ruling class and its media mouthpieces will attempt to co-opt this holiday by finding ways to make profits and by putting their own spin on “looking back at the past,” as a diversion from granting full equality.

Instead, Juneteenth should be a clarion call for reparations for the descendants of once-enslaved people, whose unpaid labor was superexploited by white plantation owners. The inspiration of Juneteenth can inject a heavy dose of anti-racist solidarity to help move the classwide struggle forward by workers of all nationalities, ages and genders, uniting to organize for a liveable wage and more humane working conditions. □

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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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# The real answer to end state repression

By Monica Moorehead

Two recent developments prove once again that police terror and extralegal terrorism are inextricably tied to white supremacy under capitalism. On June 2, an African American mother of four children, Ajike Owens, was fatally shot by her white neighbor, 58-year-old Susan Lorincz, in Ocala, Florida.

The 35-year-old Owens, affectionately known as “AJ,” was unarmed when she died of a bullet wound to the chest. Lorincz had attempted to defend the shooting by using Florida’s controversial “Stand Your Ground” law, which says that a person who feels threatened by someone has the right to use deadly force if necessary to protect themselves. This is the same law used by the vigilante George Zimmerman, who fatally shot an unarmed 17-year-old Black youth, Trayvon Martin, in 2012 in a Sanford, Florida, gated community. Zimmerman was exonerated of this heinous crime.

Lorincz was finally arrested days later, with charges of manslaughter with a firearm, culpable negligence, and assault and battery in Owens’ death, once the police had dismissed the Stand Your Ground claim she had made. The Stand Your Ground law has been used by other racist vigilantes besides Zimmerman to try to justify assaults against people of color in Florida.

Owens went to Lorincz’s house to confront her, after Lorincz accused her children of trespassing near her property in a field and threw a Rollerblade at them, hitting one of the children. She had used racist slurs against the children. Lorincz shot Owens when she knocked without even opening the locked metal door, while Owens’ nine-year-old stood next to her.

## Guilty of discriminatory conduct

Two weeks after the fatal shooting of Ajike Owens, on June 16 the Department of Justice released a damaging 89-page report of a three-year investigation that found the Minneapolis police guilty of a racist pattern of discrimination targeting Black and Indigenous communities.

The report was initiated following the public lynching of George Floyd May 25, 2020, by racist cop Derek Chauvin, that created an international mass outcry of protests with the popular demand of “Defund the police!” Chauvin, who was convicted of second-degree murder, is currently serving a 22-year prison sentence.

Even before the Floyd murder, Black

people had been complaining for many years of abuse suffered at the hands of the Minneapolis police. “This is not a secret,” said Bridgette Stewart, a lifelong Minnesotan, who is Black and who has regularly spent time at the site of Mr. Floyd’s murder. “This is something that’s been going on in Minnesota for many, many, many, many years — longer than I’ve been alive.” (Washington Post, June 16)

The Post article raised some major components of the investigation including: patrolling neighborhoods of color “without a legitimate, related safety rationale”; violation of Americans With Disabilities Act by targeting people with behavioral health issues, including sending police officers to mental health calls when it wasn’t warranted and where their “response is often harmful and ineffective”; and violating the First Amendment rights of Black Lives Matter protesters, where “M.P.D. officers frequently use indiscriminate force, failing to distinguish between peaceful pro-



Minneapolis youth burn police station in response to George Floyd’s murder, May 28, 2020.

testers and those committing crimes.”

The report includes well-known cases that are reminders to many people in Minneapolis of these numerous acts of brutality like the fatal police shooting of Justine Ruszczyk, an unarmed white woman; a Christmas tree at a police station with racist decorations; and white-supremacist remarks made by an officer to young Somali people about the bigoted movie, “Black Hawk Down.”

There were also incidents when an officer threw a handcuffed man to the ground face first, an officer drew his gun on a teenager over the suspected theft of a \$5 burrito, and an officer repeatedly punched a protester who was already

restrained.

The report stated that after Floyd’s murder, Minneapolis “officers suddenly stopped reporting race and gender in a large number of stops,” despite a department requirement to collect that data. About 71% of traffic stops before Floyd’s death had race statistics, compared with about 35% after the murder.

## Outcome of the report

In light of this report, the federal government has put the Minneapolis police under a consent decree. This means that there will be certain federally mandated “reforms” like those in consent decrees affecting police departments in Baltimore, Maryland; Seattle; Albuquerque, New Mexico; New Orleans; and other cities, assigned after complaints were made.

What this consent decree may look like concretely in Minneapolis remains to be seen, but the bigger question is whether or not such decrees will permanently eliminate police brutality in any form — and the answer is no.

There may be a reduction of brutality



Ajike Owens

abuse in check — unless there is a massive movement that makes demands to arrest and charge them with their crimes, like in the case of the Floyd murder.

In Vladimir Lenin’s classic book, “The State and Revolution,” written over a century ago, Lenin quotes extensively from Frederick Engels’ seminal book, “The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State,” using Engels’ succinct explanation of the state and its role in class society: “The state is, therefore, by no means a power forced on society from without. ... Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel.

“But in order that these antagonisms, these classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it became necessary to have a power, seemingly standing above society, that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of ‘order’; and this power, arisen out of society but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state.”

Lenin goes on to say that the state is made up of special “bodies of armed men and prisons.” In contemporary society, those armed bodies also include women. The main point is that in order to eradicate the state, which also includes the courts, the media, government officials and border patrol, and white-supremacist and fascist elements like the Proud Boys, Susan Lorincz and others that are an extension of the state, you have to eradicate the root cause of class antagonisms that gave rise to the state — the capitalist system itself.

This is why to demand “abolish the police” is the only solution to all the empty consent decrees that don’t even begin to address the societal problems of the haves and have nots. □

# Global solidarity with Writers Guild strike

By Monica Moorehead

The International Affiliation of Writers Guilds (IAWG), Federation of Screenwriters in Europe (FSE) and UNI Global Union (UNI-MEI) organized global in-person and social-media protests June 14 in a “Screenwriters Everywhere: International Day of Solidarity” with the Writers Guild (WGA) strike that began on May 1 — International Workers Day. Many of the actions took place outside local offices of the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers.

Writers in at least 35 countries including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany,

India, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, South Africa, South Korea and Ukraine participated in these actions.

IAWG Chair Thomas McLaughlin stated: “The companies that seek to exploit and diminish writers are global; our response is global, and the victory gained in America will be a victory for screenwriters everywhere.” (National Public Radio, June 14)

These international writers unions have issued guidelines urging members not to scab, taking jobs away from WGA members. Jobs are being offered by transnational conglomerates like Amazon, Netflix and Disney, which are driven to make profits at the expense of writers’

income and livelihoods.

As was pointed out in a June 2, 2023, WW article, “WGA-West and WGA-East are fighting for decent compensation in the midst of an entertainment industry restructuring. The growth of streaming over network programming, the replacement of long-term series with miniseries, and the use of “mini-rooms,” where writers create episodes for only a short number of weeks but are not involved in the full production of a show, have all cut into WGA members’ income and future work potential. Writers fear being turned into gig workers and/or being replaced altogether by artificial intelligence.” (workers.org/2023/06/71294/) □



Japanese solidarity

PHOTO: @UNILCJAPAN

# ‘Enough is Enough’ National Day of Action organized by nurses’ union

By Marie Kelly

Thousands of nurses in hospitals across the U.S., represented by National Nurses United, participated in the union’s National Day of Action on June 13 to address staffing concerns. Militant actions included press conferences, marches on hospital management and petitioning. NNU is the largest and fastest-growing union of registered nurses in the U.S., with nearly 225,000 members nationwide. The California Nurses Association and National Nurses Organizing Committee are among the affiliates of NNU, which belongs to the AFL-CIO.

NNU is a militant, left-wing union that combines class-struggle unionism with social-justice unionism and provides a political orientation to its members that many U.S. unions do not. NNU openly supports Black Lives Matter; it addresses issues such as climate change, and it is critical of capitalism. As a union of nurses, most of its members are women and people of color, and its elected leadership reflects that. Many of the recent strikes across the country have been by NNU. The New York State Nurses Association held a three-day strike in New York City in January. NYSNA members overwhelmingly voted to join NNU in November 2022, which brought in their 42,000 members.

“Chronic, intentional short staffing was the key issue over which we New York City nurses decided to go out on strike,” said Nancy Hagans, registered nurse, NYSNA President and a president of NNU. “It is unacceptable, and we were united in showing management we will not tolerate these practices that put our patients and ourselves at risk.” (nationalnursesunited.org)

A study by nursing scholars and researchers including Linda Aiken, Ph.D., RN, from University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing (ranked number one in the U.S.) was published in 2021 and examined how patient-to-nurse staffing ratios in New York hospitals influenced patient mortality. The study authors concluded: “Our findings demonstrate considerable variation in the patient-to-nurse staffing ratios on adult medical and surgical units in a large, representative sample of NY hospitals.



PHOTO: NATIONAL NURSES UNITED

National Nurses United action for safe staffing, June 13, 2023, Santa Clara, California.

“The majority of hospitals do not meet the minimum nurse staffing required by legislation currently under consideration in New York. We find associations between worse nurse staffing and poorer outcomes for NY patients, consistent with a large body of research which shows the clinical benefit to patients of being cared for by a nurse with fewer assigned patients. ... If NY state enacted the Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act, our evidence projects many lives would be saved, and shorter hospital stays would translate into cost savings for hospitals.” (tinyurl.com/y5hn7dnr)

### The nursing shortage myth

Hospital C-suite executives promote the falsehood that there is a nursing shortage. Instead of funding adequate nurse staffing, they throw money away on lobbyists, who misrepresent the causes of the sad state of health care to out-of-touch elitist legislators, who receive free quality care but deny it to the rest of us. NNU, on behalf of the nurses they represent and the patients in their care, is determined to expose the real story behind the lack of adequate nurse staffing. The Bureau of Labor Statistics revealed that more than a million registered nurses with active licenses were not employed as RNs. The number of candidates who passed the NCLEX-RN, the nursing licensure exam, is growing, not declining,

with 192,007 newly licensed RNs in 2021 compared to 166,247 in 2017. NNU points to these facts as proof that the nursing education-and-licensing pipeline is strong. The truth is that more nurses are refusing to work in environments that put their licenses on the line and their patients’ lives at risk. While the hospital bosses and their allies in the corporate media blame nurses for the “staffing crisis,” NNU blames the profit-driven hospital industry itself for the crisis.

### Hospital industry to blame

In a May 15 press release, NNU highlights that “the hospital industry created the current staffing crisis through its own bad practices of routinely short-staffing units and driving away nurses who refuse to tolerate the moral distress and moral injury suffered from working in untenable, unconscionable and unsafe work environments.” (nationalnursesunited.org) NNU clearly and factually explains what is driving the exodus of nurses: “Although the rampant mistreatment of nurses and health care professionals was on full display during the COVID-19 pandemic, nurses have long experienced dangerous working conditions, fueled by a chronic lack of employer support for their labor and their well-being. “Polling after polling of nurses show that workplace conditions are driving them away from the profession: intentional low RN staffing levels imposed by hospital managers, inadequate occupational health and safety protections, insufficient stock of critical medical supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) (and) increasing levels of violence in the workplace.” The facts presented by NNU dispel the nursing shortage myth and clearly lay the blame for inadequate nurse staffing at the feet of hospital capitalists, who will do anything to maximize profits—even if it means putting patients’ lives at risk. The June 13 actions represent militant resistance to the rotten system of health care for profit.

Marie Kelly has been a registered nurse for over 40 years in Philadelphia, and is an at-large member of National Nurses United.

# Anti-trans fascists threaten all workers

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emotional, given that many staffers are LGBTQ+. PGN noted that “several people spoke, sometimes tearfully, of how threatened they felt and how Moms for Liberty’s open agenda was the antithesis of Museum of the American Revolution’s own stated values, which includes among other things ‘integrity, empathy and inclusivity.’” Concerns by staffers of M4L’s widespread reputation as a hate group were dismissed by management. Unfortunately, workers at the museum are not unionized.

### Tarnishes history of Black Founders exhibit

M4L is scheduled to be at the museum at the same time the museum is featuring a special exhibit on the Forten Family — Black founders of Philadelphia. Trish Norman, an assistant curator of the exhibit, addressed a rally opposing M4L on June 16 saying, “Their rental tarnishes the work of this exhibit. This group is actively trying to whitewash Black history.”

### Unions can protect workers

Speaking at the June 9 rally, Liz Gardiner, eight years a children’s librarian and union member of AFSCME DC47 Local 2186, stated: “We need a union for workers at this museum. Not only is the Museum of the American Revolution allowing Moms for Liberty into their space, they are welcoming them, which puts museum workers at risk, the exhibits at risk, and everyone in and around this space at risk.” “We don’t want M4L in our libraries derailing our mission to let children become all they can be. There will be over 70 Pride events at all 54 library locations in Philly. They [M4L] have called the library administration and basically said ‘we’re going to f--- things up in your city.’” Prior to the rally, Workers World spoke with librarian Shelley Rosen who organizes programming and manages collections at Center City libraries, including the Barbara Gittings Gay and Lesbian collection. “LGBT stuff is very much my domain,” said Rosen, a member of Local 2187, AFSCME DC 47.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Trish Norman outside Museum of the American Revolution, Philadelphia, June 9, 2023.

M4L has already stated they will be staging actions at the libraries closest to their convention, including the Independence Library, the Philadelphia City Institute in Rittenhouse Square and Parkway Central on Vine Street. Rosen told WW how library workers dealt with the administration when their guidelines for workers’ safety were fuzzy. “Union members set up a safety planning working group. We wrote internal guidance and a solidarity statement. Then we went to the administration, having done all the work, and they were very receptive. In the end we are getting all we asked for to be safe.” Rosen encouraged all library supporters to support workers at the most targeted branches, and to attend as many of the library Pride events as possible and show up in bright, colorful Pride colors. She noted that all the [anti-Pride] threats received so far are from people living outside of Philadelphia. Bucks County Pennsylvania, north of Philadelphia, has been ground zero for M4L’s right-wing attacks. Keith Willard, a history and social studies teacher in the school district there for 23 years, addressed the June 9 rally. Willard is gay and has openly kept a picture of their husband on their desk. “For the last two years M4L people have made the lives

of teachers and students miserable,” Willard said. “What galvanizes M4L is their false narrative that schools are indoctrinating kids, a false narrative about pornography in schools. If there isn’t a ‘problem,’ they don’t have an agenda to organize around, and they become irrelevant. “First it was anti-masks,’ said Willard, “now they have found something ‘wrong with the schools.’ If they can’t find a problem, they will fabricate one. They are irresponsible and dangerous. When enough people spread these lies, people believe them.” It is clear that when M4L says they are trying to protect kids, they are not including trans kids, not LGBTQ+ kids, and not Black and Brown kids. Two transgender youth speakers addressed the June 9 rally. Noble Henderson, age 17, said: “I’ve been doing research on what the Nazis did — they burned books, wanted to ban them, wanted to erase different people out of history. M4L does these Nazi things. How does history make sense if the MAR hosts fascists.” Ethan Garrity, age 16, said: “When children are not taught critical thinking, it’s false obedience. We see bigots coming to Philly and trying to control what every child can read. They would keep [Hitler’s] Mein Kampf but ban [the graphic anti-Nazi novel] ‘Maus’ by Art Spiegelman. They claim concern over overt sex in books, yet they would keep ‘Fifty Shades of Grey’ but ban ‘This Book is Gay.’”

### Not enough to just oppose M4L

Unless workers have a union to protect them, as is the case for librarians and some teachers, they stand to be harmed by M4L’s presence in Philadelphia. “But it’s not enough to just oppose M4L,” Dom Shannon with the Young Communist League said. “We need to demand unions for queer people, raise that queer people are part of the working class. They need good, livable wages, housing and equality.” Moms for Liberty is not welcome in Philadelphia! Ron “don’t say gay” DeSantis is not welcome in Philadelphia! And Trump has never been welcome in Philadelphia. This is no exception! □



# Bronx Antiwar Coalition chases military recruiters out of college career fair

By Richie Merino

The Bronx Antiwar Coalition successfully chased U.S. Army recruiters out of a student career fair June 11. The fair was hosted by U.S. Rep. Adriano Espaillat at the City University of New York in The Heights (BMCC), in the predominantly Dominican neighborhood of Washington Heights. The Coalition organized the anti-recruitment demonstration because BMCC is a popular college choice for Bronx high school students, given its close proximity. (Bronx Antiwar Coalition)

As the military recruiters approached the fair's entrance, the demonstrators forcefully chanted, "Military recruiters out of CUNY!" and "Money for college, not for war!" They distributed pamphlets to all attendees that warned them about the physical and psychological dangers of joining the military, explicitly encouraging attendees not to talk to any military or police recruiter.

Anti-war protesters presented resources on alternatives to military enlistments, such as obtaining scholarships to study abroad for free. Students exiting the fair reported that the military recruitment table was empty, with no one showing interest.

Within 15-20 minutes, the military recruiters left the fair and did not return.

The protest is yet another example of how grassroots organizations like BAWC are resisting the militarization of youth and schools. This is especially important in the current political climate, where almost all politicians are advocating for increased military spending, simultaneously cutting social programs and education funding that would help students further their careers — without being forced to kill other workers abroad in racist U.S. wars.

By protesting the inclusion of military and police recruiters at student career fairs, groups send a clear message: We do not want our youth sent abroad to kill and be killed for the purpose of enriching Wall Street and the military-industrial complex!

The demonstration highlighted the risk of sexual assault that military workers, especially women of color, face. A 2020 report by the Service Women's Action Network found that the rate of sexual harassment experienced by Latina women in the military was 42.9%, compared to 33.9% for non-Hispanic Black women and 26.9% for white women.

Protesters demanded justice for the families of Juan M. Alcantara, Riayan Tejada and Ramona M. Valdez — all Dominican-American youth from Washington Heights who were killed during the imperialist war in Iraq while "serving" the U.S. empire's pursuit of natural resources and profits.

### Positive reception from CUNY community

The protest was met with strong support from CUNY students and staff. One arts major exited the career fair dismayed, because the flyer distributed by CUNY and

Rep. Espaillat had stated there would be "arts and entertainment" employers at the fair, but she did not see any representation of her field. Because military and police recruiters were prioritized over any potential job opportunities in her chosen field, this young student expressed interest in joining the BAWC and fighting back against this injustice.

This writer, a teacher and organizer with the BAWC, said, "We must stand together with this young student in demanding better from our public schools. Shame on CUNY and Rep. Espaillat for bringing military and police recruiters to the career fair, while providing little to no opportunities for art students. This sends the message that CUNY views disadvantaged youth as nothing more than fodder for the U.S. war machine."



Bronx Antiwar Coalition protests military recruiters at college career fairs, June 11, 2023.

chief instruments of state power and are used to enforce the will of the ruling class. We can apply this analysis to today's military, police, prisons and corrections officers, all chief instruments of state violence. They are integral components of the broader system of state power and class domination. Their inclusion at high school and college career fairs is an example of the state using its resources to encourage young Black and Brown students to perpetuate oppression against their own communities.

In the context of U.S. domestic policy, the police have long used violence and coercion against Black communities to suppress dissent and protect the interests of the ruling class, which is predominantly composed of wealthy white men.

Internationally, given the history of U.S. imperialism in Latin America, Asia, Africa and elsewhere, for Hispanic/Latinx youth joining the U.S. military means being pulled into a global system of oppression used to maintain U.S. imperialist interests and suppress the self-determination of other nations. Participation in the U.S. military can be seen as supporting this exploitative system and perpetuating class oppression.

### A call to action

The antiwar movement's work is not done until police, military and prison guard recruiters are no longer welcome in oppressed communities. The working class must understand that joining the U.S. military means supporting a system of global domination and oppression, rather than accessing a means of personal empowerment or social mobility, as it is sold on school campuses.

This is a pivotal moment in history. The U.S./NATO alliance is preparing for war with China, as it continues to fuel its murderous proxy war in Ukraine against Russia. The people have the power to end all U.S. wars and it starts with taking action against military and police recruiters who target our schools and communities. It's time to fight back against these recruiters, who prey on vulnerable students by offering false promises of job security, educational opportunities or financial aid that never materializes. The government should provide for these basic needs without requiring military enrollment.

A clear message must be sent: This type of predatory behavior will not be tolerated anymore! The Bronx Antiwar Coalition is calling on all antiwar and anti-imperialist forces across the country to join us in protesting military recruitment at local schools and chasing recruiters out of our communities altogether. This is an issue we can no longer ignore — let's show these recruiters they are not welcome here any longer! □

# Issues behind Indian Child Welfare Act, retained by SCOTUS

*Bulletin: In a major victory for Native nations and Tribal Sovereignty, the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 was upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States in a June 15, 2023, decision. Had SCOTUS failed to uphold ICWA, the results would have been disastrous.*

*The article below was originally posted on Nov. 19, 2022.*

— Kisha James

By Will Hodgkinson

Passed by Congress in 1978, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) has given Native nations jurisdiction over the foster care placement and adoption proceedings of children with tribal citizenship living on their sovereign territories. This has offered Indigenous families a measure of protection from the U.S.' ongoing settler-colonial genocide, which has targeted them for centuries.

In the two centuries prior to ICWA's passage, U.S. authorities kidnapped

thousands of Indigenous children and either sent them to boarding "schools," where abuse was rampant, or trafficked them to white, predominantly Christian households through sham "adoption" proceedings, often to provide free farm or household labor.

Often, these children were "bought" and "sold" as commodities, through a network of state and religious organizations. A 1952 letter from one such human-trafficking agency, "The Tekakwitha Indian Mission," thanked a white couple who "adopted" a Native child for \$10.

During this period, racist social service agencies removed up to 35% of all Indigenous children from their families. Of those children, 85% ended up with non-Indigenous families, even in cases where relatives were ready and willing to adopt them.

Although ICWA contains crucial protections, Indigenous families remain at risk of family separation, which the United Nations unequivocally recognizes as

genocide. Article II of the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as including "forcibly transferring children of the (targeted) group to another group."

Today, 15% of Native children enter the U.S. foster system before they turn 18, compared with 5% of white children. Without ICWA's protections, Native children would have no recourse at all against the U.S.' continuing genocidal mass kidnapping regime. *Haaland v. Brackeen* serves as the stalking horse for the campaign to expand this regime and, by doing so, destroy tribal sovereignty. The plaintiffs in this case are a non-Native couple, the Brackeens, who are trying to "adopt" a Navajo child, against the wishes of the Navajo Nation.

### Behind the racist lawsuit

Representing the Brackeens pro bono is Gibson Dunn, a corporate law firm whose paying clients include MGM Resorts, Chevron and

Shell — as well as Enbridge and Energy Transfer Partners, the companies behind the Dakota Access Pipeline.

For decades, the gaming and fossil fuel industries have led the forces of capital in attacking Indigenous sovereignty. Tribal-owned casinos make tens of billions in revenue annually, while sovereign Indigenous lands contain up to one-third of all fossil fuel reserves claimed by the U.S. By striking

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PHOTO: NATIVE NEWS ONLINE

Protest outside U.S. Supreme Court, Washington, D.C., Nov. 9, 2022.

Houston

Abolitionists celebrate Juneteenth

By Gloria Rubac  
Houston

Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement activists participated in the 10th Annual Acres Homes Juneteenth Parade on June 17, with signs and banners on a truck and a shiny red jeep. Activists spoke on a sound system to the hundreds lining West Montgomery Road in Northwest Houston.

The crowds, with participants from youth to elders, cheered when speakers told them: “We are opposed to the death penalty, because just like the whole criminal justice system, it is based on racism. It only targets people of color and the poor.”

As they paraded along with Black cowboys on horses, marching bands, and various politicians, the abolitionists struck a chord with those lining the streets in almost 100 F weather. They explained, “We know that cops lie, that DAs lie, and

they hide evidence, and court appointed attorneys do not defend properly. The system is broken and cannot be fixed. We must abolish the death penalty now!” The shouted responses varied from “Right on!” to “You ain’t lying!” to “That’s the truth!”

When Yancy Balderas, whose spouse, Juan Balderas is on death row, chanted, “Texas says death row,” the crowds responded with “We say heck no!”

Lee Greenwood held a large photo of her son who was executed in 2007, even though he didn’t kill anyone. His face exemplified those sitting on death rows around the country, as 41% on death row are African American, but they comprise only 14% of the general population.

Juneteenth is celebrated as the day that U.S. troops finally arrived in Galveston, Texas, in 1865, two and a half years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, and



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC  
Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement in Houston Juneteenth Parade, June 17, 2023.

informed enslaved people in Texas that they were free. It has been celebrated by Black Texans for 150 years.

Texas was the first state to make June 19, or Juneteenth, an official holiday. This was due to the long years of

struggle by Black State Rep. Al Edwards. The U.S., however, didn’t declare Juneteenth a holiday until 2021.

Juneteenth is celebrated all over Texas with parades, festivals, film showings, barbecues and concerts, by groups as varied as the Houston Children’s Museum to the National Black United Front to the Emancipation Park Conservancy.

This park is the oldest in Texas and was founded by four formerly enslaved people, who pooled their money to buy 10 acres of land in 1872, so the Black community would have a place to celebrate their freedom — thus the name. Until the 1950s, it was the only public park and swimming pool in Houston open to African Americans.

*Gloria Rubac is one of the founding members of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement.*

Incarcerees organize unprecedented seminar against life sentences

Part 1

By Joe Piette  
Philadelphia

For some Pennsylvania state legislators, incarcerated people belong in prison, no questions asked. “Lock ‘em up and throw away the key,” as the reactionary saying goes. State policies that sustain the mass incarceration of Black and Brown people and members of impoverished communities hinge on people not knowing the hidden lives and particular circumstances of incarcerated individuals, especially those sentenced to life without parole.

According to DecarceratePA, “Pennsylvania prisons currently hold approximately 5,100 people serving life sentences. In Pennsylvania, life means your natural life, with no possibility of parole. You receive mandatory Life Without Parole (LWOP) if you are convicted of first- or second-degree murder, even if you were only present at the incident and were not accused of being the person who pulled the trigger. Since these sentencing guidelines are mandatory, judges have no discretion in sentencing and cannot take into consideration any mitigating circumstances.” Pennsylvania is one of only six states that denies parole to lifers.

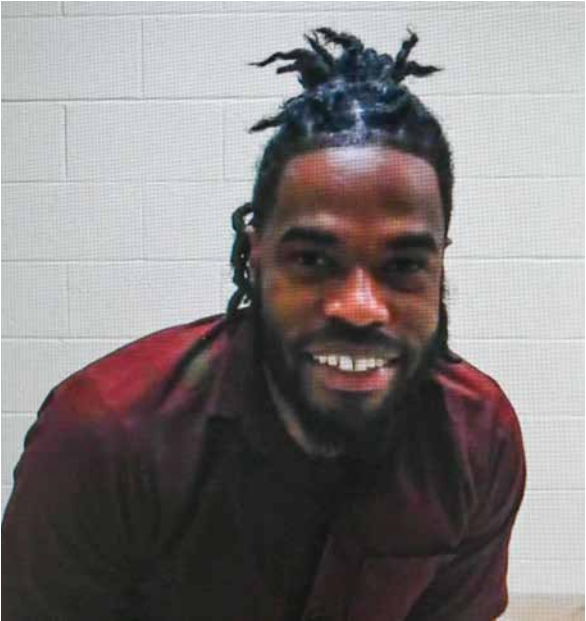
Because LWOP means sentencing people to die in prison, many people have come to call it “Death by Incarceration” (DBI) or “the other death penalty.” Life without parole sentencing is both immoral and expensive. It costs the state of Pennsylvania an average of \$42,000 a year to incarcerate someone, but it costs approximately \$66,000 a year to incarcerate elderly prisoners, due to higher medical costs. (tinyurl.com/3esxn97b)

LWOP disproportionately targets people of color. In Pennsylvania, people serving DBI sentences are 65% Black and 8.5% Latino. Pennsylvania also incarcerates the second-highest number of elderly prisoners of any state. Not everyone who

is elderly in prison is serving LWOP, but many are. In 1980 there were 370 elderly people in the state prisons; now there are over 8,000.

Lifers organize vs repressive laws

Incarcerated people at State Correctional Institute (SCI) in Coal Township say they are more than just



Nyako Pippen WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

numbers. A group of incarcerated leaders there united last year under the idea that if state legislators and officials could meet and talk to those sentenced to 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.

Thirty incarcerated people were allowed to meet for five hours with city and state officials, including State Sens. Shariff Street, Nikil Saval and Camera Bartolotta; Lt. Gov. Austin Davis, former Lt. Gov. Mark Singel, former state Speaker of the House Bill Deweese, SCI Coal Township Superintendent Tom McGinley and Montclair State University Professor Tarika Daftary Kapur. Guest speakers included Keir Bradford-Grey, former Chief Defender, Philadelphia Defender Association; Samuel Barlow,

commuted from Life Without Parole; and Jamar Sowell, released from Juvenile Life Without Parole.

The organizers’ main goals were centered on several state legislative bills: geriatric compassionate release (HB587), sentencing and parole issues (SB135), parole due to age, illness and other reasons (SB136), and reducing commutation board votes from unanimous to 4 to 1.

No press or media were allowed to attend. This article is the first extensive report on the May 23 event. In addition to frequent Workers World contributor Bryant Arroyo, this newspaper interviewed five other incarcerated participants in the Seminar: Nyako Pippen, Derrick Cramer, Derrick Stevens, Dominick Serratore and Robert Pezzeca.

‘We should be judged for the totality of our life’

Nyako Pippen is 35 years old. He’s from Philadelphia but was arrested in Pottstown, where he lived at the time. His father was from the Marcus Garvey school of thought and gave his son a Nigerian name. He’s been in prison for almost 17 years.

Even though the U.S. Supreme Court recognized in 2012 that brain development continues until a juvenile’s mid-20s or later to reach maturity, it limited its ruling against juvenile life sentences to 18 years of age or younger. Pippen was 19 when arrested, convicted and sentenced to life in prison without chance of parole.

Workers World asked: Why should you and others be given a second chance? Excerpts from Pippen’s interview follow:

**NP:** “First and foremost, it is not lost on us the harm that we caused and the life that was lost. We acknowledge that, and with that acknowledgment comes responsibility. A lot of us have embraced the obligation to give back and make amends for the harm that we caused. Secondly, we still have value.

“It’s one horrible decision we made that led to us serving life without possibility of parole. And now after decades of hard work, even for some of the good work we’ve done before the crimes that were committed, I think we should be

judged for the totality of our life, not just one or even multiple bad decisions.

“At the time of my arrest, I had only completed eighth grade. I grew up in impoverished conditions in a broken home, my mom and dad separated. We had addiction issues and homelessness in an unstable neighborhood — a harmful environment that influenced my thinking and formed the way I chose to survive. The combination of things contributed to my lack of focus at school, my lack of attention and my inability to discern appropriate life issues, which was survival at the time.

“My mom suffered from addiction, and my older brother was hospitalized, and my younger sister Anita suffered from cerebral palsy. We were evicted from our home, lived in a van for a while. At one point, we lived alongside a total of nine people in a one-bedroom apartment in Bristol, Pennsylvania. I adopted the idea early on to be a provider and take on responsibility — responsibility that, as a child, I was not prepared for and not equipped to handle. It was traumatic in a lot of ways.

“I think I’ve been able to reach the point where I can understand these issues. That’s one of my main motivators in trying to help people develop, to reach people here who grew up in similar impoverished situations, with the addictions that plague our communities.

“Since my conviction, I got my high school diploma and completed some secondary certificate programs in computer-aided design and drafting. I also did some correspondence courses in creative writing and entered multiple programs. A former professor from Bucknell University comes in, and we enhance our critical and analytical thinking. Obviously if you have better thinking skills, you will make better decisions, and it’s all tied together.

“I used to think praise and respect was earned through violence, that money was equivalent to success. Now I understand it’s about humanity. It’s about relationships. It’s about us working together and not harming each other. That’s where you

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# Letters from behind the walls

These letters were sent to *Workers World* from our incarcerated readers across the country. *Workers World* offers a free monthly print subscription to anyone who is currently incarcerated. To support our prisoner subscription program, go to [patreon.com/wwp](https://patreon.com/wwp).

**Dear Workers World,**  
I hope this letter finds you well. I recently relocated to another state prison. If you are still able to provide me with *Workers World* newspapers, please send to my new address.  
I appreciate you guys, and I support the movement. I admire how united and strong you guys are to fight for real life causes that are happening in our country. The struggles of these issues definitely

need to be shined upon for the people that are not aware. I know that I was not the only person unaware of what was taking place. Thank you.  
#LightSeeker

**David L.**  
**SCI Pine Grove, Pennsylvania**

**Workers World,**  
Heard about you from a friend, and I am hoping to get on your mailing list and a subscription to your paper. Any help is appreciated. Thank you!

**James N.**  
**South East Correctional Center, Missouri**

The following letter is a response to the repeated censorship of *Workers World* newspaper by officials in the Missouri Department of Corrections. ([wwp.pub/modoc](https://wwp.pub/modoc))

**As-salaamu alaikum,**  
The information that's prominent in your newspaper is highly retained among the aging population here in Missouri, in one of the last free state plantations. It's been a serious problem with the Directors, stopping Vol. 65, No. 8 of *Workers World*, along with other censorship. What happened to freedom of the press?  
Workers World, I would like for y'all to address this issue with the Department of Corrections Director Jason Lewis, 2729 Plaza Drive, P.O. Box 236, Jefferson City,

Missouri 65102.  
Again, *Workers World*, continue to keep us informed on injustices and ways we can make a stand!  
Inshallah, y'all can make this state of Missouri no longer a state of Misery.  
Sincerely,

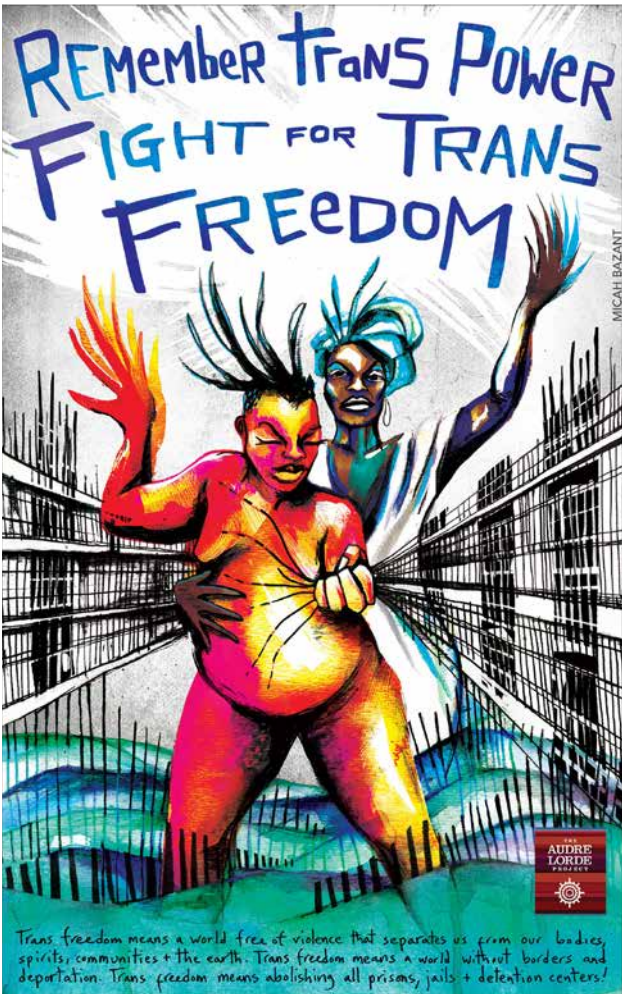
**Mutula**  
**Potosi Correctional Center, Missouri**



**Workers World,**  
I have complained about abuse being applied on the Special Needs Unit here at SCI Forest. These are the actions that occurred.  
When I used the phone to report abuse to the abuse hotline and the Bureau of Investigations and Intelligence, I was thrown into the Restricted Housing Unit and told that I was being transferred due to my complaints.  
The security office here at SCI Forest determined that I shouldn't be opening my mouth at anything I see around here — excessive force; contraband smuggling by guards, COs, sergeants, kitchen stewards, etc.  
It's not only that, it's also because these bigoted employees hate and discriminate against trans women. It is true that transgender inmates are placed in solitary confinement regularly in PA state institutions. Especially by the women employees. These women employees feel threatened by the presence of trans women: kitchen stewards Amanda Smith and Ms. Stic, Corrections Officers Ms. Shadhine, Ms. Hollis, Ms. Swanson, Ms. Cromley, just to name a few.

In some cases, the women do not like trans women, because they feel they're in competition for the male prisoners. Especially at SCI Forest. I've noticed this a lot in the four years I've been here.  
Then you have the security office which wants to lock up, lie about and transfer trans women out of SCI Forest, claiming we're "problematic inmates." The newest superintendent, Mr. Irwin, was a deputy superintendent at SCI Albion. In the past, *Workers World* newspaper published stories about the men on hunger strikes at SCI Albion, and this Mr. Irwin was employed there during this time. Now male prisoners here in the RHU are on hunger strikes, just like when Mr. Irwin was deputy at SCI Albion years ago. ([workers.org/2020/02/46111/](https://workers.org/2020/02/46111/))  
The security team here at Forest was naturally hand-picked by Mr. Irwin when he got here. This is why in the state institutions and across the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, it is asked: "Why is there so much violence among the inmates, staff, guards, sergeants, etc. at SCI Forest?" It is because these employees talk to inmates, calling them the N-word, "wannabe women" or spies. It is because of the common act of "Go ahead, hit me, I'll charge you up, I'll make sure you stay in the RHU forever." It's because of all the abusive language hurled at the inmates until they snap.  
Then the employees sit there and laugh about it. They get six months or a year [off] with pay for being assaulted. And the inmate who snaps ends up in the RHU for years and is given new criminal charges. The employees get to come back to work, where they're allowed to work in a "safe" environment, which happens to be H Block:

the Special Needs Unit (SNU), Therapeutic Community Program (TC) and recovery program. All on H Block.  
These guards and sergeants take their anger out by abusing their authority on the SNU, TC and recovery program inmates. SNU inmates are people with ADHD, autism, learning disabilities and have other mental challenges. It's easy for these abusive guards to scream, holler and hit the inmates here. When one of the inmates goes to retaliate, guards like Ms. Shadhine, she'll hit the inmate with a fist. She'll say the inmate is resisting, which is a lie. Any misconduct written [up] of course is a lie to keep the SNU inmate locked up. The unit managers and counselors laugh about it.  
Of course, then at the misconduct hearing, the inmates



**Remember Trans Power – Fight For Trans Freedom!**  
Trans freedom means a world free from violence that separates us from our bodies, spirits, communities + the earth. Trans freedom means a world without borders and deportation. Trans freedom means abolishing all prisons, jails, and detention centers!

are not believed. They'll be placed in the RHU on disciplinary custody. The administration will never move them officers to other blocks. On the other blocks the officers are moved around, even unit managers and counselors. But not on H Block.  
They're so comfortable abusing prisoners, they don't care about their "code of ethics." Because of the baggage and bigotry and trauma of whatever happened to them, they bring it into the facility with them, and they take it out on the vulnerable. The most vulnerable inmates. The ones who have mental health problems. Or the therapeutic community and drug recovery inmates who are just trying to go home.  
These are racist, transphobic bigots. And this is only a glimpse at the reason why so many at SCI Forest are noted as being so "violent" and "out of control."  
I have 9-10 months before my 32-year minimum sentence to see the parole board. Now, because I am exposing these employees, I am locked up in the RHU with limited time out of my cell. I have one program left to do before I am parole eligible. Now I am told I am being transferred, which may take seven or eight months. After I get there, they'll tell me they don't know me and that I am unable to get the institutional recommendation for parole.  
All of you workers reading this can stop this violence and hate at SCI Forest. All you have to do is call and email the PA DOC office of Population Management and the Office of Bureau of Investigations and Intelligence. Ask them to stop the retaliation tactics. To stop the transfer of Miley Fletcher (Eric Wolfgang BZ-2211). Tell them that SCI Forest staff are retaliating against me. Put it on social media, on podcasts, to expose the nature of this violence, retaliation and hatred going on at SCI Forest by these employees that work here. Stop transferring inmates who speak out about the violence, abuse and hatred at SCI Forest.  
What did they expect me to do with only 9-10 months to see the parole board? Allow this to sit back and happen? No! I never did, I never will. I am an advocate for transgender rights, human rights, worker rights and the right to speak out! I have done nothing wrong. I'm not the same person I was when I came to prison 31 years ago. I speak out for the ones who can't speak for themselves.  
I am that voice. Stop the abuse at SCI Forest! Stop the transfer against Miley S. Fletcher (Eric Wolfgang BZ-2211)!  
In solidarity,

**Miley S. Fletcher**  
**SCI Forest, Pennsylvania**

# Incarcerees organize unprecedented seminar

Continued from page 6

get success. Money is secondary. Money is just a means of exchange."  
**'Felony murder' rule = death by incarceration**  
Pippen was convicted of second-degree murder. Even though he didn't kill anyone, he was part of a group of six people who planned a crime that resulted in a murder. In Pennsylvania, the felony murder rule under those circumstances stipulates an automatic life

sentence without parole.  
**NP:** "Reforming the felony murder rule was discussed during the May 23 Seminar, but that's not what my speech was about. I spoke on our acknowledgment of the harm we caused from our crimes. Once we understand the obligations from that understanding, we have the responsibility to not only never repeat that harm but also to prevent other people from being victimized. I spoke genuinely with passion, from the heart. It was received well. Everybody appreciated it — some people were crying.

"Before me, Professor Kapur, three legislators and the lieutenant governor spoke. I was followed by Pezzeca, Cramer and Arroyo. Then we all broke off into small group discussions consisting of four topics: victim advocacy and empathy; life without the possibility of parole; compassionate relief; and commutation.  
"This was my first time doing any public speaking. I got choked up at the beginning, but I was able to collect my thoughts. Everybody said I did a good job. Now I'm obligated to do it again. It's for our freedom and the broader humanity." □



# Hunger strike threat by Palestinian prisoners forces concessions

By **Teddie Kelly**

Over 1,000 Palestinian prisoners, who had been held without charges by Israeli authorities, were poised to launch a mass hunger strike beginning on June 18. But in a statement by The Administrative Detainees’ Committee of the Palestinian prisoners’ movement, the strike has been postponed.

Why? Because the organized and coordinated efforts of the incarcerated Palestinian workers have already managed to win some concessions from the Israeli occupation forces.

A statement signed by the Administrative Detainees’ Committee in Occupation Prisons dated June 17, 2023, reads in part: “After the last dialogue session that took place last Wednesday, between the representatives of the captive movement and the prison authorities of the occupation, and after consulting the administrative prisoners, it was decided to give the opportunity to continue the dialogue after accepting some of the prisoners’ demands and not responding to the main demands, until the beginning of next month.

“Respectively; We affirm the following:  
“First: This opportunity is the last chance to respond to our just demands.”

“Second: Our constant disposition and prompt response is the guarantor of the preservation of our rights and the enemy’s response to all of our demands.”

This mass effort comes just weeks after the martyrdom of Sheikh Khader Adnan, a Palestinian man locked up by the Israelis without having been charged with a crime. A prominent leader in the Islamic Jihad movement, Adnan resisted his jailers by refusing food and medicine for 86 days before dying on May 2. At 45 years old, the father of nine had already participated in hunger strikes at least four previous times between 2012 and 2021.

As Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network reported at the time of his death: “The Israeli prison administration refused to transfer him to a civilian

hospital and refused his release on bail just last week, declaring that more information was needed about his medical condition. Just yesterday, yet another military court hearing in his case was postponed and delayed into the future, a clear policy of acting to ensure his death behind occupation bars.

“The martyrdom of Sheikh Khader Adnan, the symbol of dignity, freedom and steadfastness, is an Israeli assassination, carried out with forethought and premeditation. It has been clear for the months of this strike that the occupation is determined to eliminate this symbol of prisoners’ resistance and Palestinian sacrifice and commitment and love for his people and land.” (workers.org/2023/05/70887/)

### Repression breeds resistance

On June 18, Samidoun noted that “there are currently 1,083 Palestinians jailed under administrative detention — that is, without charge or trial on the basis of so-called ‘secret evidence.’ They constitute over 20% of the nearly 5,000 Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli occupation jails. Administrative detention orders are issued for up to six months at a time and are indefinitely renewable. Palestinian prisoners are demanding the end of administrative detention as a policy of terror and collective punishment against the Palestinian people.” (tinyurl.com/3x5nupjp)

The Zionists can no longer ignore the political power of conscious, disciplined political prisoners. The mere threat of organized nonviolent resistance in the form of



this planned hunger strike was enough to force the jailers back to the negotiating table after already granting some of the prisoners’ demands.

According to People’s Dispatch: “There are around 4,900 Palestinians inside different Israeli prisons, including 31 women and 160 children. Most of them face widespread atrocities from the Israeli prison authorities, including denial of family meet-

ings, restrictions on interactions with other prisoners and torture, among others.” (tinyurl.com/3mxjddbf)

We ask our brothers, sisters and siblings behind bars in the U.S.: Doesn’t this sound familiar? How many thousands of our family members in the U.S. are currently behind bars, held on bogus charges or with no charges at all? How many are locked up now after waiting months or years for a trial?

How many humiliations, insults and beatings have you sustained in the effort to hold yourself with dignity in the face of your incarceration?

Incarcerated workers in the U.S. can connect their struggle to the resistance underway among Palestinian prisoners as a means of developing their own tactics. We at Workers World newspaper are well aware that merely reporting on hunger strikes and other organized strikes in U.S. prisons has been used as a pretext to censor this newspaper and block its distribution to our readers inside prisons, jails and detention centers.

We likewise must take every opportunity to force U.S. jailers to free our people and grant their demands. No struggle is too small to use as a lever to further wrench open the doors of the global prison system. □

## Growing condemnation of Israel

WW COMMENTARY

By **Monica Moorehead**

There used to be a time when to publicly raise the name Palestine and the Palestinians’ right to their homeland was considered almost taboo. It was all but forbidden in imperialist centers like the United States.

But after the various heroic Intifadas (mass uprisings) that the Palestinians began in the late 1980s up until the current resistance to the heinous brutality of the Zionist settler state of Israel, the world view of the Palestinian struggle has radically and dramatically shifted. Not even the banning of the Palestinian flag by the Israeli government has stopped this growing solidarity.

No longer is it the prevailing view that to protest Israel’s existence is to be anti-Semitic. Being anti-Israel is proudly

being anti-Zionist and anti-racist.

Speaking out against Israel, however, still arouses controversy and retaliation. Consider what happened when 24-year-old Yemeni-American graduate student, Fatima Mousa Mohammed gave a powerful, moving talk opposing Israel during the City University of New York (CUNY) Law School commencement May 12.

Mohammed unapologetically spoke out against “Israeli settler colonialism” and how it continues “raining down bullets and bombs on worshippers, murdering the old, the young ... encouraging lynch mobs” and “expelling Palestinians from their homes.” (tiktok.com/@muslimgirl/video) Many in the audience interrupted her remarks with cheers.

While praising CUNY’s support for the movement to boycott, divest and impose sanctions (BDS) on Israel, she also denounced CUNY’s collaboration with the New York Police Department — which she characterized as “fascist” — and stated “that daily, Brown and Black men are being murdered by the state at Rikers [Island prison].”

Days later, Mohammed’s speech was virulently criticized as “hate speech” and “divisive” by Fox News, the New York Post and even New York Mayor Eric Adams, an advocate of big real estate interests that are gentrifying so much of the city.

Hitting back on June 1,

anti-Zionist Jewish students defended Mohammed against racist anti-Arab and misogynistic attacks by disrupting a CUNY Board of Trustees meeting. They stated that Israel has nothing to do with their Jewish identity and that Judaism is being used to justify crimes against the Palestinian people.

The group said that the CUNY Board does not speak in their name, and they want the Board abolished so that CUNY can be run by its workers and students. They promoted #WeStandwithFatima. (mintpressnews.com)

### Legendary singer refuses to be silent

Another example of standing up to Israel’s policies occurred when world famous musician, Roger Waters, founder and former member of Pink Floyd, faced repression. The German government recently tried to ban Waters from performing in Frankfurt, due to his outspoken solidarity with the Palestinian people. Fortunately, that ban failed.

The Berlin regime had recently banned demonstrations in Berlin in late April/early May commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Nakba, which is what Palestinians call the 1947-48 forced displacement and massacres that led to the establishment of Israel.

After Waters visited the Israeli-occupied territories in 2006 and saw the conditions for Palestinians, he refused to perform in Tel Aviv. Since then, he has denounced Israel as a settler state and a racist apartheid regime. Members of the British Parliament are now attempting to ban Waters from performing in England, falsely labeling him anti-Semitic.

Waters also denounced the murder of prominent Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, killed by an Israeli army sniper in 2022, and also that of Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old woman from Washington state crushed to death by an Israeli bulldozer when she tried to stop the uprooting of a Palestinian home in 2003.

In the U.S., Waters has also been an avid supporter of Black Lives Matter, protesting with his music the police killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Philando Castile.

These two examples of Fatima Mohammed and Roger Waters are just the tip of the iceberg, when it comes to the growing numbers of activists and just ordinary people who are speaking out in the streets globally against the horrific treatment of the Palestinian people, who have been fighting to regain their homeland.

The fact that these two outspoken individuals have gained national and international attention will no doubt deepen the condemnation and isolation of the Zionist state and its supporters like U.S. imperialism. This deepening is richly deserved and will eventually help return Palestine to its rightful owners. □



Roger Waters

PHOTO: AL JAZEERA



GRAPHIC: PALESTINE LEGAL



# Eyewitness Xinjiang

## The reality vs. U.S. propaganda

By Sara Flounders

*The author is a co-director of the International Action Center and a contributing editor to Workers World newspaper. A slightly abridged version of this article was published in Global Times.*

U.S. imperialism’s hostility to China is increasing — with military threats, new rounds of sanctions and increasingly wild fabrications. The media have been saturated with allegations of human rights abuses, forced labor, religious persecution and “genocide” — especially of Uyghur and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang.

Voice of Asia News, based in Houston, Texas, recently denounced as “Chinese propaganda” a favorable report issued by the Arab League — a confederation founded in 1945 and now composed of 22 Arab nations — about their delegation’s visit to Xinjiang. While the narrative that China is destroying mosques and Islamic centers is continually pushed in the imperialist media, no Arab or Muslim countries have joined in these targeted attacks.

I recently had an opportunity to visit Xinjiang and see the reality.

Just before COVID-19 caused a shutdown of world travel in 2019, the Council of Foreign Ministers under the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) made a fact-finding trip to the region and then endorsed and commended China’s treatment of its Muslim citizens. (hongkongfp.com, March 3, 2019) With 57 member states, the OIC is one of the largest intergovernmental bodies in the world. Voice of America News also attacked these OIC findings.

In June 2021, more than 90 countries made joint or separate statements at the United Nations Human Rights Council in support of China’s policy in Xinjiang.

For VOA News to arrogantly lecture the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on human rights reeks of racist hypocrisy. The U.S. claims to be a protector of the Muslim population of China’s Xinjiang province. But it omits any mention of U.S. wars, sanctions, drone attacks and coups against the Arab and Muslim countries of Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Syria.

Perhaps VOA News hopes to divert attention from the dramatic decline of 6.6 years in the life expectancy of Indigenous people in the U.S., from 71.8 years in 2019 to only 65.2 years by the end of 2021. For those living on Indigenous reservations, life expectancy is a shocking 52 years for women and 48 years for men.

Useful for these U.S. media attacks are the Campaign for Uyghurs, World Uyghur Congress and the Uyghur Human Rights Project. These organizations are all

U.S.-funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Of course, VOA News is an agency of the U.S. government and a recipient of NED funding, established to disseminate U.S. propaganda.

### My visit to Xinjiang

I had an opportunity to visit the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) days before the Arab League delegation. The China/U.S. Solidarity Network organized the visit to provide a more realistic picture of this vast and quickly modernizing, multiethnic region.

Xinjiang was the center of the ancient Silk Road, the historic trade route that connected Eastern Asia to Central and South Asia, the Middle East and Europe. Today it is a major hub in China’s ambitious Belt and Road trade program.

Xinjiang has significant oil and mineral reserves and is currently China’s largest natural gas producing region. The province — although the largest in geographic area — is sparsely populated, with less than 2% of China’s 1.4 billion people. Some 60% of Xinjiang’s 25 million people belong to 13 ethnic minorities.

The two major cities we visited — Urumqi and Kashgar — are over 870 miles apart. We visited fully mechanized farms surrounding these cities.

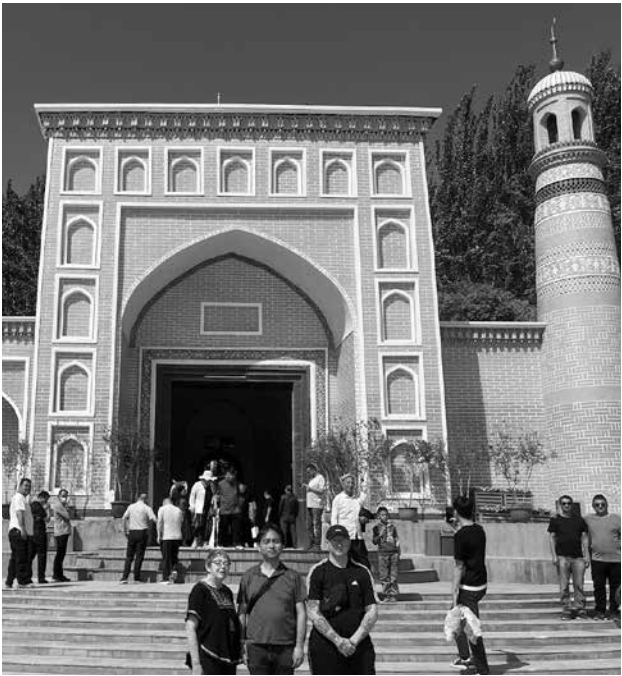
Torrents of U.S. media reports had told us to expect cities under martial law, with military forces of occupation and heavily armed police on every corner. The Indigenous population, especially the Uyghur people, were described as an impoverished and isolated population, either forced into slave labor and backbreaking work in the fields or locked inside concentration camps.

Coming from the New York City area, I expected a police force of at least equal size. The NYC police force is the world’s eighth-largest armed body. The U.S. has the world’s largest prison population, at 2.2 million. On our return, reports of “Stop and Frisk” programs centered on Black and Brown youth dominated the media. “Too many people in New York City are stopped, searched and frisked illegally, federal monitor says.” (abc7ny.com, June 5)

### Vibrant communities, zero ‘slave labor’

What we saw in Xinjiang were vibrant cities — Kashgar and Urumqi — full of tens of thousands of tourists and a local population of many nationalities. Huge and colorful marketplaces and bazaars, almost all run by Uyghur families, stretched for blocks. Busy subway lines crossed the cities. Everywhere we saw food markets brimming with inexpensive produce. Restaurants, numerous cafes and street food stalls were packed with local people. In the evenings, the streets were lively and full.

Numerous international studies, ignored in the



WW PHOTO

**Sara Flounders, Lee Siu Hin and Arjae Red in front of Id Kah Mosque, built in 1442 in Kashgar, with a capacity to hold 20,000 for prayer. Despite fraudulent U.S. reports of destruction of Islamic culture in Xinjiang they saw numerous mosques and Islamic centers.**

Western media, back up our observations.

The illiteracy rate in Xinjiang has fallen to 2.66%, lower than China’s impressive 2.85% national average. Before the 1949 Chinese Revolution, illiteracy was 80% throughout China and more than 90% in Tibet and Xinjiang. Today, 97.51% of small children are in preschool programs. Some 98.82% of the youth are enrolled in senior high schools in Xinjiang. (tinyurl.com/bdfyxn29)

Over the past 60 years, the Uyghur population has increased from 2.2 million to about 12 million, and average life expectancy has grown from 30 to 75 years.

Drives through the countryside revealed fully mechanized agriculture with tractors, planters, drone sprayers, irrigation canals and acres of plastic-topped greenhouses. We saw no fields with workers doing hand labor — hoeing, picking or trimming. This is confirmed in numerous reports and many photos. The mechanization of cotton production is at 90%. (tinyurl.com/37s3e7e9)

In Kashgar, the 15th-century Id Kah Mosque houses up to 20,000 worshipers. It is only one of the many Islamic centers and mosques that we saw while walking the city streets and in several villages. Tall, slender minarets and dome-shaped roofs seemed to be a part of every block.

We met with Uyghur people working in food stalls, small groceries and farms. People of many nationalities are construction workers, truck drivers, animal herders, veterinarians, teachers and retirees. Many of them described how government subsidies and training programs had dramatically improved their living conditions and life opportunities. □

# U.S. and Taiwanese delegates meet on seeking a united China

By Arjae Red  
Beijing, China

Workers World Party and International Action Center delegates traveled to the People’s Republic of China in May as part of an educational and political exchange organized by the China-U.S. Solidarity Network. The purpose of the delegation was multifold: to conduct research that brings truth to expose the lies of the U.S. empire, as well as to strengthen international friendships and forge a more resilient global anti-imperialist movement. Among the many stops on this tour was a meeting in Beijing with representatives of the Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League (Taimeng).

One of eight parties in the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, a united front under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, Taimeng works alongside the CPC to formulate the government’s policy in regard to relations between the mainland and Taiwan.

Taimeng holds 13 seats in the National

People’s Congress and three seats in the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress. The League consists of members of Taiwanese descent and with connections to Taiwan residents. It supports the reunification of Taiwan with the People’s Republic of China mainland.

The meeting between the Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League and Workers World Party May 14 took place at a time when U.S.-China tensions are at an all-time high. Both parties exchanged friendly messages expressing a common interest in de-escalating the U.S.-led war drive against China, in which Taiwan is used as a pawn by U.S. imperialism.

The U.S. empire promotes Taiwan separatism, despite its stated agreement to the “One China” policy that supposedly forms the bedrock of U.S.-China relations. It simultaneously uses sanctions and other methods of economic warfare, in tandem with military encirclement and weapons imports, to turn the region into a powder keg.

Members of Taimeng brought the

delegates from Workers World Party through a tour of their three-story exhibit, showcasing the history of their organization from its inception in 1947, with roots in the Taiwanese Communist Party, to the present day.

Beginning on Feb. 28, 1947, the Kuomintang-led government of Taiwan began massacring people who had become fed up with the brutal administration of the island. Taiwanese communists organized resistance to this KMT violence. Xie Xuehong, a key leader in the Taiwanese women’s movement and founding member of the Taiwanese Communist Party, created a force in Taichung dubbed the 27 Brigade, a communist-led guerilla unit comprising some thousands of fighters.

The violence of the KMT resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of people. In the end, many left forces were violently suppressed and forced off the island. Surviving members of the Taiwanese Communist Party relocated to Hong Kong and formed the Taiwan Democratic



**Meeting between Taiwanese and U.S. delegates, May 14, 2023.**

Self-Government League. Two years later in 1949, Taimeng witnessed the victory of the communist forces on the mainland and participated in the birth of the People’s Republic of China.

As an ally in the United Front with the CPC, Taimeng works resolutely toward a united China and promotes policies that mutually benefit people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Su Hui, chairperson of the Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League’s Central Committee, said at a press conference in March: “With the word ‘Taiwan’ in our party’s name, one of our missions is to carry on Taiwan compatriots’ noble tradition of loving our nation and homeland, and try our best to realize the motherland’s reunification.” □



# Behind the death ship

What’s happening, the Afghan migrant asks himself, what is the Greek patrol boat doing? In the middle of his question, some of the 180 other migrants standing on the deck of the Adrianna move to look, the Adrianna flips, and he is thrown into the sea.

He paddles to stay afloat, dragged by his clothes and shoes, watching the Adrianna founder, aware as the fishing boat sinks that his three children and their mother are locked in its hold. He can do nothing to save them, can barely swim to save what’s left of his life.

Those standing on the Adrianna’s deck and those below had paid \$6,000 to smugglers to take them from eastern Libya to Sicily, a common passage in the last decade. Their ship strayed toward Greece and lost its way.

Some say the Greek ship tried to tug the boat with the migrants and caused it to sink. The Greek Navy denies this.

The officials and the media blame it all on “traffickers,” those who smuggle in migrants on overloaded ships, charging prices bloated by the impossibility for

migrants from Egypt, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, countries where the Adrianna’s passengers came from, to travel by normal, legal channels.

Whoever is to blame for the capsizing of the boat, the Greek Navy reported it had pulled 104 migrants from the water alive and 78 bodies of people who had drowned, with unknown hundreds of people below the decks, including children.

Behind the immediate crime are EU bureaucrats and the EU member politicians, who first created the crisis that forced people to leave their home countries and then built a wall to keep them out of Europe.

Behind the politicians and bureaucrats is the capitalist-imperialist system, whose profit drive pushes hundreds of millions of human beings from poverty level down to starvation level and whose wars turn livable societies into a living hell, as in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Since 2014, it is estimated that 21,000 migrants have died trying to travel from Africa and Asia to Europe.

Washington is also responsible, with

its Pentagon, CIA and State Department sowing chaos in Libya, Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. Before 2011, Libya was a relatively wealthy and stable North African country that drew millions of African migrants and found work for them. There were roughly 2.5 million migrants in Libya in 2011. (migrationpolicy.org)

That year the U.S. led NATO’s bombing raids that tore Libya apart, turned it into an impoverished and chaotic failed state, where traffickers ship desperate people to Italy.

U.S. sanctions on Afghanistan — after 20 years of occupation — have left a large part of the population with little choice but to migrate or die. And let’s not even discuss the crimes of the U.S. war and intervention against Syria.

On the U.S. border with Mexico, some 8,000 people from 1998 to 2020 were listed as having died crossing — and that omits those who disappeared in the border rivers and the vast Sonoran Desert or drowned in



Protest in Athens after hundreds of migrants die in shipwreck, June 15, 2023.

the Atlantic Ocean. U.S. interventions in Central America and imperialist domination of the local economies, plus blockades against Cuba and Venezuela, have forced millions of people to migrate to survive.

Imperialist propaganda describes the U.S. and the EU powers as “democracies,” supposedly part of the “Free World,” but their border policies expose them for what they really are: countries whose tiny billionaire ruling class uses force throughout the world to exploit lands and people. When the aggrieved people flee to survive, this class sows death along these countries’ borders and in nearby seas. □

## Issues behind Indian Child Welfare Act

Continued from page 5

down ICWA, casino and Big Oil interests intend to seize access to the resources and revenues they have long coveted.

The Brackeens’ lawyers allege that ICWA violates the U.S. Constitution’s Equal Protection Clause because it discriminates on the basis of race, and the bourgeois media has repeated this reactionary “reverse racism” lie in their coverage of the case.

In reality, under ICWA, tribal citizenship — a political rather than a racial classification — determines adoption and child custody. In 1977, SCOTUS ruled in *United States v. Antelope* that “federal legislation with respect to Indian tribes is not based on impermissible racial classifications.”

As Ian Gershengorn, an attorney defending the ICWA, emphasized during Wednesday’s oral arguments, even the

U.S. Constitution admits that Indigenous nations are sovereign entities, with inherent power to self-govern and establish their own political categories, such as citizenship.

“From the very first moments of our constitutional history, Congress has legislated for Indians,” Gershengorn said. “The idea that somehow doing so violates the Equal Protection Clause or is an impermissible racial classification just seems to me impossible to square with [the Constitution’s] text.”

A few justices showed signs of agreement with Gershengorn’s arguments. Elena Kagan acknowledged that “Congress said things like, there’s no resource that is more vital to the continued existence and integrity of Indian tribes than their children.”

However, if a majority of the reactionary-dominated Supreme Court accepts the Brackeens’ “reverse racism” claims, its ruling could annul tribal sovereignty

altogether. As an article by The Lakota People’s Law Project explains, such a decision “would position ICWA as the first domino to fall, potentially leading to the erosion — or total erasure — of Native rights in the only homeland Indigenous North Americans have ever known.” (lakotalaw.org/news/2021-09-17/icwa-sovereignty)

**Defend tribal sovereignty!**

This unprecedented threat to tribal sovereignty has prompted massive Indigenous-led resistance across the continent, with 486 Native nations and 59 Indigenous organizations submitting amicus briefs in defense of ICWA.

The day SCOTUS heard arguments in *Haaland v. Brackeen*, hundreds of Indigenous activists and allies rallied on the steps of the Supreme Court. Many expressed frustration at the profound ignorance of Indigenous sovereignty,

shown by most of the justices who will decide ICWA’s fate.

“Three hours of agonizing arguments and they do not understand the basic concept that we have inherent sovereignty and rights to the future of every single Native child born into this generation,” said Fawn Sharp, President of the National Congress of American Indians.

Inside the Court, guards tried to remove Samantha Maltais, a citizen of the Aquinnah Wampanoag, claiming her traditional regalia was “a political statement.” Maltais refused to leave, and the guards backed down, letting her stay.

The high court will likely not hand down a ruling on ICWA until June 2023. That its fate remains uncertain underscores the need for full solidarity with Native nations in their battle against the genocidal U.S. settler-colonial project and in their ongoing struggle for tribal sovereignty and self-determination. □

## Workers World hails LGBTQ2S+ Pride

For over half a century, Workers World newspaper has covered the global struggle to end all forms of discrimination, persecution and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and gender-nonconforming communities.

WW has consistently backed up our activist coverage with analysis. WW published “The Gay Question: A Marxist Appraisal,” in 1976, reissued in 1993 as “The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View,” with a new preface and afterword.

WW managing editor and globally recognized transgender leader Leslie Feinberg’s “Lavender & Red” series ran from 2004-2008 in WW; 25 of those articles were published later in “Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba.” Read these books at workers.org/books.

The newspaper has extensively covered resistance to the current storm of right-wing “Don’t Say Gay” and anti-trans, anti-youth laws sweeping the U.S. WW articles have upheld the struggle for reproductive justice and covered opposition to racist laws limiting the right to vote and the right to teach a people’s history of resistance to oppression.

WW reporters on the ground — from Buffalo and Staten Island, New York, to Portland, Oregon — celebrated the tremendous groundswell of worker organizing that won historic union victories against Amazon

and Starbucks and sparked further organizing elsewhere. This historic upsurge was fueled by the leadership and solidarity of young, multinational, queer, gender-nonconforming workers.

**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 to help us publish anti-racist, working-class truth and build campaigns needed to fight against capitalist exploitation and for revolutionary change.

Since the early 1990s, the fund has sponsored

workers.org, where articles containing news and analysis of global and domestic issues and struggles are posted continually. The website is a resource for political activists. It contains firsthand accounts by writer-activists in many countries, translated by our staff.

Timely articles by worker-organizers keep the newspaper current on unionization drives, along with reports on anti-racist and other progressive movements.

While WW’s staff is voluntary, the 12 printed issues 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, \$200 a year or more? Donating \$50 or more will entitle you to receive 12 print issues a year, an email link to every article posted online and, upon request, a copy of the book “What road to socialism?”

By donating to this fund, you can help get class truth to more readers. Write monthly or annual checks to Workers World; include your name, address and email, and write “Supporter Program” on the memo line. **Send to Workers World at our new address: 121 W. 27th St., Suite 404, New York, NY 10001.**

We are thankful for your support in building Workers World.





# Leslie Feinberg’s impact in communist and queer spaces

By Stephanie M. Frias

*“There’s this African proverb ... Until the lions come to power, the history of the hunt will glorify the hunter.”*  
— Leslie Feinberg

As a transgender, butch, lesbian communist, Leslie Feinberg’s work shone a light on the queer identities, specifically the identities of queer people of color, who saw their personhood undergo a violent brutality in front of their very eyes. While content from Marxist theorists sometimes tends to be insular, Feinberg remained sensitive to the struggles of queer people of color worldwide.

In a talk given at California State University-Sonoma on April 26, 2008, zie discusses that before the Pride flag, the Gay Liberation Front carried the North Vietnamese flag in solidarity: “If we didn’t defend the Vietnamese people, we were gonna weaken, first of all, the people who deserved our support, because we were the aircraft carrier in which the war was being launched in all our names. We would lose the solidarity with the

Vietnamese people, and we would lose our own political souls and movement as well if we didn’t take a position in support.”

Feinberg believed in the power of connection and unity across all oppressed peoples. Zie understood that liberation was not a one-person job. Under a regime that sought to expel those who experimented with the fluidity of their sexuality and gender and those who rejected the regimented forces of an intolerant capitalistic machine, Feinberg always assured these individuals that what was considered “unnatural” was indeed natural.

In hir own words: “Transgender women and men have always been here. They are oppressed. But they are not merely products of oppression. It is passing that’s historically new. Passing means hiding. Passing means invisibility. Transgender people should be able to live and express their gender ... That is not the case today.” (workers.org/book/transgender-liberation)

Despite what the media would like to tell you, being trans is not a new concept. It was not born from the womb of TikTok or social media or from “Gen Z.” It has

existed for ages, spanning across cultures from the Pharaohs to the Kalapuya people of the Willamette Valley to the Bugis people of Indonesia. It is activists like Feinberg who have paved the way for the growing visibility of queer individuals, from all cultures, who care about celebrating their gender and sexual expression.

**Capitalism is poison**

My generation is living in an epoch of social metamorphosis. We are seeing the way capitalism has eroded and destroyed everything in its path.

Everything from the ground we stand on, to race, to gender, to sexuality, to the places we work, and the things we choose, is inhibited by a stagnant regime that is dependent on our captivity, to our being miserable and subjugated. It is a poison that steals and blames and abandons.

Therefore every activist who seeks to dismantle these structures and introduce expression and passion should be celebrated. Feinberg carved a groove of fluidity to enable us to flourish! Each time a trans person feels comfortable enough to speak out about their experience, each time a nonbinary individual talks about using gender-neutral pronouns, each time a butch calls themselves butch, each time someone feels comfortable enough to don clothes that traditionally aren’t a part of their assigned gender, each time someone speaks out about their struggle and explores their gender fluidity, it is a blow to the capitalist Western machine.

Capitalism fights for homogeneity; it fights for complacency and for domination. In hir article, “Many histories converged at Stonewall,” Feinberg expands on this when talking about the destruction of culturally diverse gender and sexual structures in both African and Indigenous communities. In a world that still seeks to hide queer people from society, Feinberg fought for visibility at a time when just existing was a revolutionary act. (workers.org/book/lavender-red/)

As a lesbian, I believed for a long time that my sexuality was an arbitrary and unsettling part of my identity. The last thing I wanted was the world to see me for who I was. It wasn’t until I read “Stone Butch Blues” and Feinberg’s subsequent works that I learned about the historical and material roots of queerness in the class struggle.

“Stone Butch Blues” discusses the lesbian



WW PHOTO: MINNIE BRUCE PRATT  
**Leslie Feinberg at Syracuse, New York, Pride, June 15, 2013. Sign calls for freedom for CeCe McDonald and Chelsea Manning (then B. Manning).**

bar culture of the 1960s and the way butches and femmes would ally themselves together out of community and out of love. Even out of the incessant brutalization butches (who often worked blue-collar jobs) faced as people who were viewed as being “wrong,” they bore a stunning amount of unity from this pain. Cross-dressers, butches, femmes and trans people all worked together to protect each other. Individualism was not an option.

This of course overlapped with the working-class themes of the book. Unionization and the power in numbers present in working-class rebellions were foundational communist themes in “Stone Butch Blues.” Personally, Feinberg’s work has done wonders for me in understanding my place in the world as a socialist, as a lesbian and as a woman of color.

### Consciousness and liberation

At the heart of true liberation from oppression is consciousness. Feinberg as an activist made me conscious of the fruit that my sexual and political identities bear. Being a socialist and being a lesbian are identities that I hold dear to my heart, that entangle deeply with one another. Each of these identities are about community, unity, love, camaraderie and a passion for pushing back against things that are deemed “natural” and “unchanging.”

Capitalism likes to tell a story that structures such as racial domination, gender domination (patriarchy and heteropatriarchy) and class domination are predetermined and instinctual parts of existence. That when the state passes fascist legislation and uses military and police authority to coerce and force a certain status quo, it is simply the maintenance of “law and order.”

This is a story that Feinberg sought to unravel. Through increased visibility of queer people, people of color and the working class in hir work, zie effectively revealed the cataclysmic impact of queer communities against capitalist structures.

During this month of Pride, as the state continues to try to police the bodies of others, it is important to remember Leslie Feinberg’s name and impact. Feinberg’s work brings to the forefront that another world is possible for communists, for people of color and for members of the LGBTQ2S+ community. □

# Mali tells the U.N. to leave

By G. Dunkel

Mali’s Foreign Minister Abdoulaye Diop, on June 16, asked that the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission to Mali, amounting to just over 15,000 people, leave without delay.

This demand by the Malian government on the U.N. continues the Malian people’s resistance to French neocolonialism. It is likely to have a major impact on the political situation in West Africa and is a setback for world imperialism.



Mali is a poor, landlocked country in West Africa. A former French colony, most of it is in the Sahel region, the transition zone between the Sahara Desert to the north and the Sudan savanna to the south. The Sahel stretches across Africa from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea.

Mali has large deposits of gold and other minerals, and more than 2 million Malians depend on artisanal gold mines for their income. The country has a very rich cultural tradition, with cities like Timbuktu having been artistic and publishing centers for centuries.

For much of the past decade, French troops, backed up by a U.N. Peacekeeping Mission (MINUSMA), waged an unsuccessful campaign in Mali against al-Qaida and the Islamic State. They paid little atten-

tion to the needs of the Malian authorities, acting as if Mali was still a French colony.

After a military coup in May 2021 that had a great deal of popular support, France was forced to withdraw all its troops from Mali by August 2022. Mali has hired the Wagner Group, a Russian company, to provide the technical and specialized military support its army needs.

“Unfortunately, MINUSMA seems to have become a part of the problem in fueling intercommunity tensions,” Diop told the 15-member U.N. Security Council.

“This situation is begetting mistrust among the Malian population and also causing a crisis of confidence between Malian authorities and MINUSMA. The Malian government asks for the withdrawal, without delay, of MINUSMA.” □

# Los incendios devastan las tierras y el aire indígenas

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a calidad del aire. (cnbc.com, 7 de junio)

A pesar de los graves riesgos que plantea el humo, la administración del alcalde de Nueva York, Eric Adams, ha mantenido abiertas escuelas y comercios y ha retrasado un día la distribución de mascarillas o cualquier otra forma de protección. Estas políticas están poniendo en peligro la vida de cientos de miles de trabajadores, niños y miembros de otras comunidades en situación de riesgo.

La inadecuada respuesta de Adams revela una vez más la incapacidad del Estado capitalista para responder a las

crisis de salud pública, como la actual pandemia de COVID-19, que sigue infectando, incapacitando y matando a miles de personas. (Curbed, New York Magazine, 8 de junio)

Teniendo esto en cuenta, no es de extrañar que la clase dirigente no haya tomado ninguna medida significativa para hacer frente a la catástrofe climática que está provocando incendios forestales en todo el planeta.

En cambio, en gran parte del mundo dominado por el imperialismo, los proyectos corporativos de fracturación hidráulica, perforación petrolífera y oleoductos siguen devastando las tierras de los pue-

blos indígenas, que protegen más del 80% de la biodiversidad de la Tierra. Canadá, centro mundial de las industrias minera y de combustibles fósiles, es uno de los mayores emisores de CO2 del planeta, liberando más de 675 millones de toneladas métricas de dióxido de carbono cada año. (worldometer.com, cifras de 2016)

En lugar de reconocer las causas sistémicas del desastre climático, los medios de comunicación burgueses intentan “lavar de verde” (greenwash) al capitalismo pregonando las “soluciones de mercado” neoliberales, como los parques eólicos privatizados, las centrales nucleares y la producción masiva de vehículos eléctricos

(VE). Sin embargo, todas estas tecnologías “milagrosas”, supuestamente para “salvar” el planeta, se basan en la explotación de las tierras y los recursos indígenas que están destruyendo el planeta.

Como deja claro el actual brote de incendios forestales en Canadá, el sistema del colonialismo capitalista de colonos, que está causando la crisis climática, no puede resolverla. Para combatir realmente esta crisis, los millones de trabajadores afectados por el cambio climático deben solidarizarse revolucionariamente con las naciones indígenas de todo el mundo, en su lucha por desmantelar el colonialismo de colonos y recuperar sus tierras robadas. □





MO FOTO

‘Bronx Antiwar Coalition’ protesta contra reclutadores militares en ferias de carreras universitarias, 11 de junio de 2023.

# ¡Alto a Cop City!

Por Dianne Mathiowetz  
Atlanta

4 de junio — En los días previos a la reunión del Ayuntamiento de Atlanta del 5 de junio -en la que se espera una votación final sobre la parte que corresponde a los contribuyentes del coste de la construcción del centro de entrenamiento policial militarizado, conocido como “Cop City” — ha salido a la luz una revelación impactante tras otra.

Cada nueva parodia de la justicia contribuye a la movilización de individuos, organizaciones y comunidades para la reunión del 5 de junio, que comenzará con ruedas de prensa y una concentración ante el Ayuntamiento, a la que seguirán cientos y cientos de atlantinos decididos a expresar su indignación y a inundar la reunión del Ayuntamiento. Este será un día histórico de ajuste de cuentas para el alcalde Andre Dickens, cada uno de los miembros del Consejo Municipal y la élite de la ciudad.

El Atlanta Press Collective presentó pruebas el 24 de mayo -el mismo día en que el Comité de Finanzas del Consejo iba a aprobar la asignación presupuestaria de 2024 necesaria para financiar la construcción- de que el coste real para la ciudad se duplicará, pasando de los 31 millones de dólares estimados a unos 67 millones. A pesar de la oposición del público en la reunión, los miembros del Comité aprobaron la financiación por cuatro votos a favor, uno en contra y una abstención.

Durante más de dos años, dos alcaldes diferentes, dirigentes corporativos de la fundación privada Atlanta Police Foundation y varios miembros del Ayuntamiento repitieron información financiera falsa y engañosa. Ha quedado claro que la imagen de la financiación que la APF ha promovido era, como mínimo,

inexacta, y las familias de la clase trabajadora de Atlanta soportarán el coste directa e indirectamente, ya que los fondos municipales destinados a otros servicios sociales se recortarán para pagar Cop City.

## Las detenciones de activistas avivan la ira

Para agravar esta indignante situación, a primera hora de la mañana del 31 de mayo, un equipo SWAT acompañado por agentes de la Oficina de Investigación de Georgia y otros policías, allanó la casa de Marlon Kautz y Adele MacLean (conocida como Earthworm) en el barrio históricamente negro de Kirkwood, en Atlanta, y los detuvo. Savannah Patterson también fue detenida en ese domicilio por los policías, que llevaban armas largas. Algunos



FOTO: GLORIA TATUM

A las 5:30 de la mañana del 6 de junio de 2023, a pesar de los apasionados y razonados comentarios de cientos de personas, el Consejo Municipal de Atlanta votó 11 a 4 a favor de apropiarse de los ahora 67 millones de dólares para construir Cop City. En un atrio abarrotado, la cola para inscribirse como orador rodeaba el espacio, subía por las escaleras y bajaba por la pared del balcón. En el exterior, la cola se extendía casi dos cuadras cuando ya no se permitió la entrada de más gente al edificio. Cuando se anunció la votación, la sala del Consejo Municipal estalló en cánticos, jurando que ‘Cop City nunca se construirá’.

podrían decir que fue un ejemplo perfecto de cómo es la policía militarizada.

Los tres fueron acusados de un cargo de blanqueo de dinero y otro de fraude benéfico.

Kautz y Earthworm, en particular, son conocidos activistas que han organizado equipos CopWatch en barrios con exceso de policía, en manifestaciones de protesta por las muertes a manos de la policía local y nacional, y en concentraciones contra el Ku Klux Klan y los nazis celebradas en Stone Mountain y otras ciudades de Georgia.

En respuesta al elevado número de detenciones durante la indignación en todo el país por los numerosos asesinatos policiales, crearon el Fondo de Solidaridad de Atlanta en 2016. Este fondo ayudó a muchos jóvenes con fianzas y apoyo legal, especialmente durante las protestas masivas que siguieron al asesinato de George Floyd en mayo de 2020.

Durante la crisis de COVID-19, Kautz y Earthworm ampliaron las entregas gratuitas de alimentos que habían formado parte de los servicios comunitarios que operaban desde su casa, conocidos como The TearDown. Los voluntarios siguen entregando semanalmente cajas de alimentos a ancianos y otras familias con bajos ingresos, mientras la inflación aumenta las dificultades de los pobres.

La organización sin ánimo de lucro Network for Strong Communities es el objetivo de los cargos presentados conjuntamente por el Fiscal General de Georgia, Chris Carr, y la oficina del Fiscal de Distrito del condado de DeKalb. Alegan que los fondos de la NFSC apoyaron a la organización sin ánimo de lucro Defend the Atlanta Forest, un amplio grupo que ha organizado la oposición a Cop City.

Estos son algunos de los conceptos descritos en los recibos que se utilizan como prueba: 37 dólares para materiales de construcción; 228 dólares para añadir

líneas telefónicas de “apoyo a la cárcel”; 436 dólares para gastos relacionados con una reunión del ayuntamiento y, a continuación, conceptos varios como “materiales de limpieza del bosque y pruebas rápidas de COVID-19”. El estado afirma que Defend the Atlanta Forest es “responsable de numerosos actos de violencia en los alrededores del centro de formación. ...”

En una declaración sobre las detenciones, Carr va más allá y declara: “... no descansaremos hasta que hayamos hecho responsables a todas las personas que han financiado, organizado o participado en esta violencia e intimidación”. (Atlanta Journal-Constitution, 1 de junio)

## Los detenidos cuentan con un amplio apoyo

La noche de las detenciones, cientos de personas se concentraron durante tres horas frente a la cárcel del condado de DeKalb, exigiendo la puesta en libertad de Kautz, Earthworm y Patterson y coreando “¡Alto a Cop City!” — a los bocinazos de aprobación de los coches que pasaban.

El 2 de junio se concedió a estos tres individuos una fianza de 15.000 dólares cada uno, 7.500 dólares por cada cargo.

La concienciación y el apoyo al movimiento Stop Cop City es ahora nacional e internacional. Este centro de entrenamiento policial militarizado será utilizado por varias fuerzas policiales estadounidenses y, al igual que la tristemente célebre Escuela de las Américas situada en Columbus, Georgia, atraerá a alumnos de gobiernos represivos de todo el mundo.

Los levantamientos de trabajadores, jóvenes y estudiantes, jubilados, agricultores, mujeres y personas LGBTQ2S+ tienen a los banqueros y patrones mundiales preocupados porque están perdiendo el control de su sistema de beneficios.

Tienen motivos para preocuparse. ¡Stop Cop City! □

# Los incendios devastan las tierras y el aire indígenas

Por Will Hodgkinson

En todo el norte de Norteamérica, los incendios forestales siguen causando estragos, amenazando vidas y naciones indígenas y envenenando el aire de decenas de millones de personas. Originalmente agrupados en las Primeras Naciones que ocupan el oeste de Canadá, los incendios se han extendido por todo el país, con llamas registradas tan al este como las 13 Primeras Naciones de la provincia conocida como



FOTO: WENDY RATT

Algonquinos de las tierras de la Primera Nación del Lago Barriere, Quebec, Canadá.

Nueva Escocia. Hasta el 7 de junio ardían al menos 423 incendios forestales, de los cuales 246 están fuera de control, según las autoridades.

En lo que va de año, al menos 2.200 incendios forestales han quemado más de 9,39 millones de acres de tierras indígenas. Se trata del peor año de incendios forestales en Canadá del que se tiene constancia. (foxweather.com, 5 de junio)

Los incendios forestales siguen devastando las comunidades de las Primeras Naciones y métis, cuyos ciudadanos siguen corriendo un riesgo desproporcionadamente alto de sufrirlos en comparación con otros residentes canadienses. En el último mes, miles de indígenas han sido evacuados; muchos de ellos siguen sin electricidad, agua potable y refugio adecuado. (The Narwhal, 10 de agosto de 2021)

Recientemente, los incendios se han extendido a los algonquinos del lago Barriere y a la Primera Nación Anishinaabe de Lac Simon, obligando a los residentes a evacuar. El 6 de junio, la nación anishinabeg de Kitigan Zibi también se preparaba para evacuar.

“En estos momentos es devastador”,

declaró Casey Ratt, jefe de los algonquinos de la nación del lago Barriere, en una entrevista concedida el 6 de junio a la Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. “No sabemos qué dirección tomarán los incendios debido a los vientos. Estamos rodeados de incendios en el norte, este y oeste. Es un momento aterrador para nuestra comunidad”.

Los residentes y voluntarios que aún no han evacuado informan de que carecen de acceso a mascarillas y otras protecciones básicas de seguridad. Las autoridades canadienses han cerrado la estación de enfermería de la Nación del Lago Barriere, dejando en situación de riesgo a quienes aún permanecen en la zona.

Ratt dijo: “No podemos conseguir más caras [de la estación] ni ningún tipo de servicios médicos en caso de que les ocurriera algo a los miembros de nuestra comunidad”.

El humo de los incendios ha asfixiado a Canadá y ha cubierto el noreste de Estados Unidos. Siguen en vigor alertas por la calidad del aire en ambas regiones, que afectan al menos a 90 millones de personas en Estados Unidos y Canadá.

Durante la semana que comenzó el 5 de junio, la zona de Nueva York y Nueva Jersey experimentó el humo más intenso del noreste de EE.UU.

## Nueva York: la peor calidad del aire del planeta

El 7 de junio, Nueva York registró la peor calidad del aire de todas las ciudades del planeta. Imágenes y vídeos tomados ese día muestran la ciudad envuelta en una niebla tóxica de color naranja que borraba la luz del día y hacía irreconocibles las calles y los edificios.

Según los expertos en salud, respirar el aire contaminado de Nueva York durante 24 horas equivale a fumar seis cigarrillos al día. Esta contaminación afecta de manera desproporcionada a los trabajadores con salarios bajos, los ancianos, las personas con discapacidad, las personas inmunodeprimidas y sin vivienda, y los niños pequeños.

El 8 de junio, el humo se desplazó hacia el sur, cubriendo Washington D.C., que también fue durante un tiempo una de las peores ciudades del mundo en cuanto

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