Congress will do nothing for us without struggle

By Stephen Millies

Eighty-one million people voted last year against Trump and racism. For nearly 50 years, poor and working people have suffered from frozen wages and cutbacks. People want action now. Yet Congress is failing to pass the modest “Build Back Better” bill. Here’s some of what it includes:

- Two years of free community college.

All education should be free. Even in capitalist France and Germany students don’t pay college tuition. A trillion dollars that’s owed for student loans should be wiped off the books, too.

- Expand Medicare to include dental care, vision and hearing. Increase Medicaid coverage.

Healthcare is a human right! Who wants their grandparents to be unable to go to the dentist and get their teeth fixed? Or not able to get glasses or hearing aids?

Nobody has to pay to go to a hospital or clinic in socialist Cuba.

Rev. Martin Luther King declared that “of all the forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane.” Medicaid would cover more poor people in a dozen states where they have been excluded from the program by reactionary state legislatures.

- Cut prescription prices.

Congress is only considering Build Back Better legislation because 26 million people marched last year to declare Black Lives Matter.

The pharmaceutical outfits are thieves. Pfizer and Moderna made billions from their COVID-19 vaccines, which were subsidized by the U.S. government. No one should have to choose between paying their rent and buying food or purchasing medicines. Alec Smith died in Minnesota on June 27, 2017, because he couldn’t afford insulin anymore.

The price of insulin in the U.S. costs ten times more than what it sells for.

Thousands march to defend reproductive rights

By Struggle-La Lucha
Los Angeles bureau

On Oct. 2, women’s marches were held all across California. Los Angeles hosted the largest of those marches with thousands in attendance.

In an interview given at the march, Emiliana Guereca, president of Women’s March Foundation and founder of the Women’s March LA Foundation, which initiated the action here, said the movement has grown “into a really strong feminist movement for women, pro-choice … “This moment, Oct. 2 for us, represents standing in solidarity with our Texas sisters so that SB8 is struck down and does not happen in Mississippi, does not happen in Florida.

“The price of insulin in the U.S. costs ten times more than what it sells for.

“Unless all of us women rise up to this occasion, we are not going to be able to stop it. And, I think we’ve got the momentum and we’ve got to take to the streets and fight,” Guereca said.

At the rally, representatives from the Socialist Unity Party distributed a statement condemning the misogynistic, anti-working-class Texas abortion law. The SUP also made the point that the movement cannot depend on the Demo—
Shinnecock people fight for land in playground of 1%

By Zola Fish

Before Europeans arrived, the Shinnecock people occupied a 146-mile ancestral territory, which included oceanfront, bays, sounds, marshes, creeks, salt meadows, forests, and grasslands, in what is now called Long Island, N.Y.

The Shinnecock world began to change in 1620, when village elders permitted English colonists to share a portion of their lands in exchange for 60 cloth coats, 60 bushels of corn, and the promise of military protection.

The English considered the agreement a land sale, memorializing it in a “treaty” that transferred themselves a swath of Indigenous territory upon which they established Southampton.

The land appropriation continued in 1703, when the nation relinquished territory to Southampton in return for a 1,000-year lease of 3,700 acres. This included the Shinnecock Hills, now home of the ultra-exclusive Shinnecock Hills Golf Club.

As New York state legislature approved a shady deal that aggrandized the 1703 lease, returned the Shinnecock Hills to Southampton and allowed them to turn Southampton into a playground, as Shinnecock Neck to the tribe. The transaction, long considered fraudulently enrolled the Shinnecock, reduced the tribe’s land base to its present size — approximately 800 acres for 1,200 enrolled members.

Increasingly bereft of land, Shinnecock tribal members were forced to find employment in the colonial economy. Women became domestic servants in non-Native households, and as whalers who harvested their quarry close to shore. (Shinnecock means “people of the shore.”) Scallop and clam diving was foraging for the Native peoples.

The pollution cost so bad that in 2012, hundreds of dead crabs washed ashore on Shinnecock land. The Hampton’s has become a playground for the Yachts, the 70% of Shinnecock people live below the poverty level. Many celebrities live on Shinnecock land, including Christie Brinkley, Alec Baldwin, Neil Patrick Harris, Beyonce and Jay Z, to name a few.

Traditionally, the Shinnecock were a fishing community and caught scallops and clams. Haddie Creek was closed to them and they had to fight for fishing rights that were actually theirs by birthright. Now the fish that once swam the waters are oversize and the scallops and clams are hard to find as their numbers have dwindled.

Shinnecock’s most recent struggle is an issue concerning the ancestors. The 1% continue to build on Shinnecock land. As they dig up ground for their swimming pools, they are unearthing entire skeletons. The wealthy see it as a land issue, while the Shinnecock see digging up ancestors as the worst thing a person can do.

Lawsuits are ongoing. The bottom line is that the Shinnecock deserve their land back.

The Shinnecock made a wonderful documentary titled “Conscience Point,” a moving look at their lives on the peninsula, by Terya Wurmfeld (producer, writer, director and editor), Juliaanna Brannon (a Comanche producer and documentary filmmaker) and All Hunter Joseph (a Shinnecock journalist and producer). The project is about the people that want to know how to make movies.

The struggle of the Shinnecock continues, fighting for the return of their ancestral land.

Zola Fish is a member of the Choctaw Nation.
Abuse of Indigenous children demands reparations, sovereignty

By Mahtowin Munro

From a talk given at an Orange Shirt Day 2021 commemoration in Boston on Sept. 30.

Orange Shirt Day has been commemorated in Canada since 2013, to honor the survivors and remember the children who never made it home from the Indian residential schools. The Sept. 30 date was chosen because it is the time of year when children were forced to go into the residential schools. The orange shirt symbolizes the memory of the kids whose clothes were taken away from them. Even preschool aged children were in these schools and died there. Children died of malnutrition, tuberculosis, heartbreak, abuse, medical experimentation and more. Families were often not even told if their child had died, and their bodies were often not brought home. All of this resulted in profound intergenerational trauma.

The number of school-related deaths in Canada remains unknown due to incomplete records. Estimates range from several thousand to over 30,000. Indigenous communities are urgently trying to raise funds to bring in specialists to examine the land and find graves at residential schools.

Many of the schools were run by the Catholic Church. One of the demands today is that the Catholic Church and its prelates not only apologize, but release all of its records, hand over the priests and nuns who did this to children, pay reparations out of its vast wealth, and take concrete actions to repair relationships with Indigenous peoples.

It’s only now, after this year’s revelation of thousands of unmarked graves of children, that more Canadians are finally listening to what has happened to Indigenous people in North America. Even now, there remain some genocide deniers who tell Indigenous people to get over it.

The Native children were removed from their homes, families and communities during this time were taken to schools sometimes thousands of miles away, where they were punished for speaking their native languages, stripped of traditional clothing and had their hair chopped off. They suffered physical, sexual, cultural and spiritual abuse, neglect and torture.

Many children never returned home and their fates have yet to be accounted for by the U.S. government, although U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland has recently promised that there will be a thorough investigation.

Both countries have a long history of removing Indigenous children from their homes and placing them with white families to be adopted and assimilated and lose their ties to their communities, a practice that went on for decades and resulted in children we call “lost birds” because they grew up not knowing where they belonged.

As a result, Indigenous people worked very hard to get laws such as the Indian Child Welfare Act passed so that this practice would end forever. Unfortunately, right-wing forces in recent years have been trying to overturn the Indian Child Welfare Act so that more of our children will be stolen and adopted by whites, and the future of ICWA will soon be determined by the Supreme Court.

In both Canada and the U.S., Indigenous children are disproportionately taken from their families and put into foster care, at least four times more often than white kids. This has led some people to say that foster care has in effect become the new residential school system.

The writer is a leader of United American Indians of New England (UAINE), which hosts the annual National Day of Mourning commemoration in Plymouth, Mass., on the last Thursday of November. For more info, visit UAINE.org.
Wages cut by inflation: Building Back Better or return to austerity?

By Gary Wilson

Wages are being cut by inflation — the worst round of inflation in 30 years.

The dollar store is officially dead. Dollar Tree, the last of the big dollar-store chains selling items for $1 or less, said on Sept. 28 that it was officially “leaving the buck.” Today dollar stores are selling at $10 or less, no longer devoted to $1 items.

Personal income should have grown as more workers got jobs, and wages increased for some jobs. Congress and the Biden administration are locked in what almost seems like a game being played out for the TV cameras. The “Build Back Better” plan of the Biden campaign had popular support. Already Democrats are talking about removing most of the plan’s popular provisions. That’d mean a return to the austerity budgets of previous years.

In April, Biden proposed another 2% increase in the Pentagon budget, taking it up to $753 billion for 2022; there was no opposition from the Democratic representatives.

Biden’s “Build Back Better” plan before Congress is reported as being $3.5 trillion, but if that’s broken down into a single fiscal year amount — as is done with the Pentagon budget — then it is only $350 billion, less than half of annual war spending.

Inflation rate now as high as 13.5%

The most well-known inflation measure is the Consumer Price Index (CPI), produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) is produced by the Bureau of Economic Analysis. In general, the CPI tends to level off at a lower rate of inflation, which may be why the Federal Reserve prefers the PCE.

According to the Fed’s preferred PCE measure, with food and energy included, inflation is at a rate of 4.8%. This is the highest PCE inflation measure since January 1991.

The CPI report of inflation for August was at 5.3%.

The CPI and PCE reports are controversial and not universally accepted. On Wall Street, other measures are frequently used.

The CPI was used to be determined by comparing a price of a fixed basket of goods and services spanning two different time periods. A few years ago that was changed to a cost-of-living index, a purposeful manipulation that allows the U.S. government to report a lower rate of inflation.

Business Insider reports that John Williams at Shadow Government Statistics says that the real inflation rate is now 13.5% and it is going to get higher. Williams uses the original CPI methodology based on a basket of goods and services.

In the spring, the Fed dismissed rising inflation as something that was “transitory.” This was caused by bottle-necks and supply chain problems, that would be gone by the end of the year. Now the Fed is saying that “transitory” inflation will continue into late 2022.

On Sept. 29, Fed Chair Jerome Powell told a European Central Bank forum, “Inflation is high and well above target and yet there appears to be slack in the labor market,” making an apparent reference to the 1970s “stagflation” that combined high unemployment (Powell calls that “slack”) and fast-rising prices.

Today, employment is still more than 5 million jobs short of where it was before the pandemic.

Actually, the cause of inflation is not “transitory” or chain disruption that’ll just go away, Powell seemed to admit.

“The current inflation spike is really a consequence of supply constraints meeting very strong demand, and that is all associated with the reopening of the economy, which is a process that will have a beginning, a middle and an end,” he said.

Fed handed out $4.5 trillion

What is “very strong demand”? The Federal Reserve Bank handed out $4.5 trillion over the last 18 months, along with short-term interest rates near 0% and long-term interest rates at record-low levels.

The Fed’s trillions are the source of the “demand,” meaning spending, that Powell refers to.

The other part of the “demand” comes from wages, and that’s about $5 trillion over the past 18 months in forgivable small business PPP loans (over $800 billion), funds sent to states to spend how they see fit, and bailouts for airlines and other big companies.

While some say that the inflation is “transitory” (over within the next year or so), other capitalist economists think it will be long term, such as Nouriel Roubini, professor of economics at New York University’s Stern School of Business. He says that what’s coming is 1970s-style “stagflation” and anti-inflationary policies.

Trump’s trade war against China

The supply chain disruption ignores the fact that the supply chain was already disrupted before the pandemic began, though the pandemic did add to the disruption in some areas.

Trump’s MAGA trade war against China, which has continued by the Biden administration, has already created chaos in the supply chain.

Tariffs raise prices and reduce availability of goods and services. As Forbes noted: “Donald Trump’s tariffs and the trade war his administration launched against China turned out to be far more damaging than many believed. ... The U.S. economy paid a heavy price for the Trump administration’s protectionist trade policies.”

Protectionist tariffs are inflationary; they increase prices as they keep out lower-priced foreign imports. Also, Trump’s trade policy and his protectionist, anti-globalization policies hurt shipping.

The shipping industry was already limping and supply chains were disrupted before the pandemic.

The Pentagon budget routinely eats up more than half of annual U.S. discretionary spending, the Department of Defense’s own account, military spending in the U.S. budget was $826 billion in 2000 through fiscal year 2019 in inflation-adjusted 2020 dollars. Add to that another $3.18 trillion for the Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq wars, the yearly average comes to a whopping $826 billion.

Every year for the last seven years — with both Democratic and Republican administrations — the U.S. military budget has set a new historic high. The U.S. is spending more on its military than at any point since World War II.

Do weapons have use value?

In “Generals Over the White House,” Marxist theorician Sam Mitrani notes that “military production in the epoch of imperialism is a special case of commodity production... The products of the military-industrial complex enter into the process of capitalist production not as commodities in any economic meaning, but as commodities of a peculiar type. While they use values in the narrow economic sense, their broad sociological significance is that of a cancer which tends to consume the entire body politic.

“The process of capitalist reproduction and exchange in the final analysis does mean that the capitalist, in order to realize his profit, must produce a useful product. If not, it undermines the very process of capitalist reproduction.”

“While capital as a whole is the product that emanates from the military-industrial complex is devoid of usefulness to society. This is not readily apparent, especially to the U.S. bourgeoisie. The U.S. is a world-class military-industrial complex and a formidable country in World War II. At the end of the war, after having spent trillions of dollars, the U.S. appropriated most of the profitable world markets and sources of scarce raw materials which had belonged to its allies and its adversaries, thereby vastly enriching monopoly capitalism at home.”

“However, since the Korean War, the U.S. imperialist establishment has consistently lost ground in its military adventures. It has flood ed the U.S. as well as the rest of the world with small pieces of paper whose decreasing value gives evidence of the indebtedness it has incurred in pursuit of imperialist adventures for which there has been no material return to compensate for the enormous cost of producing the planes, guns, tanks and other sophisticated equipment employed...”

“Crude oil flowing up the war machine in the very early 1930s was a stimulus to the capitalist economy. Cranking it up again in a period of hyperinflation and worldwide capitalist stagnation will operate as a depressant instead.”
How capitalism shackles the fight against climate change

By Scott Scheffer

Journalists from the U.S. and Europe have warned that the summer of 2021 should be a wake-up call on climate catastrophe. Rightfully so. A slew of recent studies and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had already issued dire assessments even before the wildfires, droughts, floods, Hurricane Ida and extreme heat waves shocked the world.

Everything points to the same reality — the efforts of climatologists to predict the timing and impact of global warming have been too conservative. The events of summer 2021 rendered the newest scientific pronouncements almost irrelevant. Deaths in the thousands and destruction in the billions of dollars, widespread and all in a matter of a few weeks, spelled it out clearly.

You don’t have to be a scientist to understand that climate change’s terrible effects are worsening sooner than expected. The situation is urgent.

What the mainstream journalists and scientific studies omit is the weakness of capitalist government responses, the conspiracy of sabotage by big corporations and banks, and the meticulously concealed contribution of the imperialist U.S. military to pollution and climate change. The fight against global warming is shackled by capitalists chasing down profits at all costs. That plan is the reason for both the markets and money isn’t a policy that can be changed by electoral politics. It’s an inherent trait of the capitalist system. The fight against climate change must be a revolutionary struggle against capitalism and imperialism.

Damning admission, toothless response

Just before the 2021 disasters began raining death and destruction in June and July, a Greenpeace investigation — a climate activists’ sting operation — tricked a top ExxonMobil lobbyist into revealing company efforts to promote climate change denial. It’s egregious and normally kept under wraps, yet all perfectly legal under capitalism.

ExxonMobil’s senior director for federal relations talked about working with “shadow groups,” supporting a carbon tax that had no chance of passing through Congress, and just for the sake of climate change PR, all the while influencing senators to weaken climate elements of Biden’s infrastructure bill.

“Joe Manchin, I talk to his office every week,” the Big Oil flack bragged. “We work for the moderates on these issues.”

“The shadow groups” are a huge network of think tanks and pressure groups like Heartland Institute, Competitive Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation. The oil giants have been using them to spread disinformation and downplay the dangers of global warming for decades. ExxonMobil alone spent more than $1 million on disinformation doing that between 1998 and 2012.

The sting resulted in a congressional investigation, which is still ongoing, but is predictably toothless. Letters to ExxonMobil, BP America, Chevron Corporation and Shell Oil ask them to testify about their disinformation campaign.

We have reasonable demands. We want $500 million in rental assistance, to support every family working the most, and support the city the most, is unconscionable.

“We have reasonable demands. We want $500 million in rental assistance to southeast Louisiana. We want eviction court to stay closed until all rental assistance is distributed to the people, not just writing the landlord a check.”

On the street, organizers building for the People’s Assembly — the Solidarity Unity Party. The march went from City Hall to the Civil District Court Building (where evictions happen) to the Federal Building.

At City Hall, Serena Sojic-Borne with FRSO said: “We need public run utilities. That means the government manages the power grid, not more importantly, we need a people’s board that oversees the government running the power grid.”

In front of the civil court building, Daiquiri Jones represented the Renters Rights Assembly, stating: “In that climate (of COVID-19 and other crises) it’s unconscionable that they’re opening eviction court and prioritizing the interests of a few people. We didn’t have the police assistance for the people who are actually paying the property taxes [renters], the people who are going to work every day — they’re the ones supporting the city. … The idea that the burden is on the people who work the most, and support the city the most, is unconscionable.

“We have reasonable demands. We want $500 million in rental assistance to southeast Louisiana. We want eviction court to stay closed until all rental assistance is distributed to the people, not just writing the landlord a check.”

On the street, organizers building toward an Ida Survivor Town Hall event distributed a flyer calling for a movement where survivors can propose demands for consideration, to debate these proposals and to vote on whether a proposed demand is to be part of the collective voice, citing the historical lessons of Hurricane Katrina, and the folly of “throwing ourselves at the mercy of politicians, bureaucrats and disaster capitalists.”

The crowd chanted as they began to march, “All the money for the people!”
Women coast to coast demand: BANS OFF OUR BODIES!

By Sharon Black

Washington, D.C., Oct. 2 — Hundreds of thousands of people came out across the U.S. to protest not only the reactionary Texas “heartbeat law,” but also ongoing attacks on reproductive rights in many other states.

Women marched not only in large cities, but in towns and rural areas in every single state. The national Women’s March announced more than 650 marches and protests in all 50 states.

Here in Washington, where Women’s March tweeted that more than 20,000 people marched, the group targeted the U.S. Supreme Court, which allowed the Texas law to go forward. The court was scheduled to open its new session two days after.

The Texas law encourages a witch-hunt to enforce the ban, which prohibits abortions after six weeks — before most women even know they are pregnant. It promises to reward individuals with a $10,000 bounty if they successfully sue anyone who helps a woman get an abortion.

At the Supreme Court building, bigoted rightwing groups advocating to take away the rights of women and oppressed working-class people marshaled less than 100 counter-demonstrators. They were protected by a phalanx of riot police.

In Austin, Texas, women and supporters flooded the grounds of the State Capitol, demanding “Our bodies, our choice, our right!” Thousands more marched in cities throughout the state.

Los Angeles hosted the largest of California’s many marches for reproductive rights. In New York City, thousands marched across the Brooklyn Bridge and converged with thousands more in lower Manhattan, chanting “Bans off our bodies!”

Who will be most impacted?

Women In Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha and the Socialist Unity Party distributed thousands of flyers from the West to East coasts, pointing out that “it is Black, Brown and Indigenous people, the poor and youth who rely on reproductive rights centers for basic healthcare, including contraception, general checkups and cancer screenings. Texas law SB8 will shut down care for transgender people who will no longer be able to access needed hormone replacement therapy.”

“Many women will be forced to flee to other states just to obtain the basic right to control one’s own body. But even this will not be possible for many poor, working-class and very young women, who will be forced to risk their lives or health in back-alley abortions.

“The same reactionary forces responsible for this measure, and those who do nothing about it, care little about children and less about all women, regardless of who they love and their gender identity, including transgender women.

“A box full of diapers and a car seat is of little help when families are facing homelessness and homelessness. Where is the fight to stop unemployment benefits from being cut? Where is the moratorium and cancellation of rents, foreclosures and utility shutoffs?”

“Where is the fight to stop forced sterilization of poor and oppressed women from Puerto Rico to Mississippi; or the fight to make sure that every person and all children have free healthcare; or for paid maternity leave for working families? What about the lack of affordable, safe daycare that has forced women and all genders out of the workplace?”

Concern for most oppressed

In Orlando, Fla., these sentiments were echoed by protesters who expressed concerns that poor, Black and Brown women, along with trans women, would be disproportionately impacted.

Over a thousand people took over the streets, reflecting the urgency felt since a bill similar to SB8 was introduced this September in Florida, which would ban abortions and allow lawsuits against doctors who perform the procedure.

The power of protest had an immediate effect.

On Oct. 6, just three days after the historic mobilization, U.S. District Court Judge Robert Pitman temporarily blocked enforcement of SB8, declaring that “This Court will not sanction one more day of this offensive deprivation of such an important right.”

“We’re celebrating today, but our fight isn’t over,” Women’s March tweeted. “Texas will appeal. Which means the law could be put back into place soon. But we know this: hundreds of thousands of us showed up last weekend for abortion justice and we’re not done yet.”

End deportations and racist attacks on Haitian refugees!

By John Parker

On Sept. 23, Los Angeles activists and progressive organizations held a protest to join the week of actions held around the country in solidarity with Haitian refugees at the Texas border.

The protest was held at the LA County Courthouse, where U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla’s office is located, in order to send a message to the Biden administration demanding the immediate end of deportations and the inhuman, racist and genocidal treatment of Haitian refugees by the Border Patrol.

Endorsers and participants at the rally included the Harriet Tubman Center, L.A. Rising, Barrio Adelante, Comités de Resistencia, Black Alliance for Peace, BAYAN-SoCal, Occupy LA, American Indian Movement SoCal, Puerto Rican Alliance, National Young Lords Organization, Full Rights for Immigrants Co-alition and the Socialist Unity Party.

All of the organizations spoke at the rally, which was livestreamed. They made the following demands:

Temporary Protected Status should be extended and those facing deportation should be granted immediate asylum;

Title 42, the law that both Trump and Biden have used as an excuse to deny refugees the international right to asylum, should be revoked,

Haitians should be given grants in general, face the most racist treatment by the U.S. government — from both the Democratic and Republican parties.

The organizations are now discussing a follow-up action, including a car caravan to the San Diego border, to expand this fightback.
In service of a racist system: Police killings undercounted by more than 50%

By Gloria Verdieu

The New York Times recently published an article entitled “More Than Half of Police Killings Are Mislabeled.” It reported the results of a study conducted through researchers at the University of Washington and published in The Lancet, a world-renowned medical journal that publishes articles that address urgent topics to initiate debate, put science into context and influence decision makers around the world.

The study compared the U.S. National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) to three open-source, non-governmental databases, and scientifically analyzed tens of thousands of entries. It confirmed that police violence has been grossly underreported for at least four decades.

The findings present evidence that deaths at the hands of the police disproportionately impact people of color in general, and Black people in particular, due to systemic racism. This study is a follow-up to an earlier study by Boston University’s School of Health and the University of Pennsylvania in June 2018, also published in The Lancet. That study argued that policing should be treated as a public health issue, forcing the entire system of recruitment and training to change.

Now some three years later, this extensive research shows again that police killings — whether fatal, in transit or in custody — continue to be a national public health crisis. This has had devastating effects on Black communities, resulting in more violent clashes with police and other law enforcement agencies, as noted in a presentation made by this author at the "Ending Police Violence" shadow session at the 2018 American Public Health Association meeting in San Diego.

17,100 missing deaths

The University of Washington study dives deeper into the issue of recording the names, ages, gender, race and ethnicity, location, date, year, and time of death, various details leading up to death, and medical examiners’ and coroners’ reports on the causes of death. After retrieving data from the NVSS and three open-sourced, non-government data sources — the Guardian’s "The Counted," the Washington Post’s "Fatal Force" and the “Mapping Police Violence” project — researchers estimated 38,800 deaths from police violence between 1980 and 2018. This represents 17,100 deaths more than reported by the NVSS.

During this period, the mortality rate due to police violence was highest among Black, non-Hispanic people, followed by Hispanic people, and then the white race. Many of those deaths were either misclassified or not reported.

The New York Times gave examples of misclassified, improperly coded death certificates on NVSS reports, noting that pathologists have complained that law enforcement does not provide all relevant information and they are at times pressured to change their opinion.

The examples cited included Ronald Greene, who arrived dead at the hospital in 2019, bruised and bloodied, with two stun gun prongs in his back. His death was ruled accidental and attributed to cardiac arrest. Louisiana State Police initially said Greene died on impact after crashing his car three times. The Union Parish coroner attributed Greene’s death to a car crash and made no reference to police conflict.

Two years later, the 46-minute body cam video was released, showing that Greene was stunned, punched and placed in a chokehold by police. Greene’s grieving mother said, “How he died is evil.” The family filed a civil rights lawsuit. This is reflected in the Fatal Encounters open-source database.

Sickle cell trait excuse

"Sickle cell trait: an unsound cause of death," published in the Lancet in August 2021, states, "Physicians deny justice to communities by providing medical cover for death at the hands of law enforcement officers and by perpetuating medical falsehoods to justify this practice." The article cites the recent case of George Floyd.

On May 25, 2020, an initial autopsy report about Floyd read, "Man dies after medical incident during police interaction.” The report attributed his death to Floyd’s history of heart disease, substance use, and the sickle cell trait.

The sickle cell trait is a genetic disorder that disproportionately affects African Americans. While it can cause serious health issues, the trait is often passed from parent to child with no symptoms.

It was the bravery of Darnella Frazier, the teen who filmed the incident with her cell phone for 10 minutes and uploaded it to Facebook, that got a murder conviction against Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin and a small measure of justice for George Floyd’s family. The video showed that despite any underlying health issues, Floyd really died because Chauvin kneaded on his neck for nine minutes and 29 seconds.

In a May 2021 article, “How a Genetic Trait in Black People Can Give the Police Cover,” the New York Times cited 47 cases where the sickle cell trait was referenced in autopsy reports, court filings and other public records in police custody deaths.

It details several cases where Black people were forcefully restrained, pepper sprayed or shocked with stun guns, and yet the presence of sickle cell was used to justify their deaths.

Underreporting masks racism

Black people were killed at a higher rate than white people every year from 1980 to 2018. In 2019, Black people were killed at a rate 3.5 times higher than white people. Latinx and Indigenous people are killed disproportionately as well.

Of the three open-source data collection methods cited by the University of Washington study, The Guardian’s "The Counted" had the lowest percentage of cases missing race or ethnic information and counted people killed by other law enforcement agencies besides police.

The Bureau of Justice and Statistics, a division of the U.S. Justice Department, also works to develop open-source data collection methods preferable to government reporting systems due to underreporting by the NVSS.

Reporting fatal police violence is desperately needed and creating a database that is transparent and open to the public is one way to expose the system for what it is and a step forward in gaining accountability for the crimes committed on a daily basis. This is just a step because, as the study acknowledges, the real solution is to eliminate the burden of police violence on Black and Brown people.

Police are not held accountable and their actions lack transparency. "Mapping Police Violence" reported that in 1,147 deaths, only 13 officers were charged with a crime.

The Lancet report states, “Police forces should exist to enforce laws that protect public safety, but throughout the USA’s history, police have been used to enforce racist and exploitative social orders that endanger the safety of the most marginalized groups in society.”

Some of the earliest examples of police including the capture of runaway slaves, dismantling labor strikes and movements, and stopping riots, protests and other expressions of social outrage.

The police are highly militarized and escalate situations that could be resolved without violent interventions. They are trained to believe that any interaction can turn deadly, particularly in Black, Brown and other oppressed communities, and that any resistance is illegal.

Capitalism relies on police violence

But the fundamental issue goes much deeper than training. The role of police in capitalist society is to protect the property of the wealthy and enforce the rule of rich over the workers and oppressed. Ultimately, the only way to root out police violence is to do away with the racist, continued on page 10

Protest welcomes Haitian refugees, slams Border Patrol racism

By Steven Ceci

On Sept. 29, Baltimore activists joined the Emergency Week of Actions for Haitian Refugees by staging a protest at City Hall. Russell McNichol, an activist with Baltimore Workers Solidarity Committee facilitated the rally. Rev. Annie Chambers opened up with a powerful and rousing message in opposition to the administration’s racist deportations.

Dr. "Doc" Cheatham, who represents the Henson Neighborhood Association in police victim Freddie Gray’s community, presented the group’s demands. Next, Bill Goodin from BlackMen Unifying BlackMen and Leon Purcell, director of the Eastside Men and Families Center, pointed out the disparity in the treatment of Black immigrants. Ricardo Balseck, a Black man who traveled to Haiti, explained why the movement demands reparations for the Haitian people. Then Charles DeChocs from Baltimore Peace Action, who spoke against U.S. military intervention.

Socialist Unity Party representatives Andre Powell and Joyce Butler of People’s Power Assembly and Prisoners Solidarity Conference concluded the rally with rousing chants. What became a "people’s assembly," representing both West and East Baltimore, called for the mayor and City Council to pass a resolution welcoming Haitian refugees, condemning the racist violence by the Border Patrol, defending Biden’s deportations and plans to imprison refugees at Guantanamo.

Everyone exclaimed, "We the people of Baltimore welcome Haitian people to our city."
In 2007, the George W. Bush administration proposed to the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) to further the influence of the U.S. and extend its military reach directly into Africa. Although this plan wasn’t officially established in Africa, with its expanded troop presence and unprecedented use of drones on the continent, AFRICOM has been able to expand its influence. In 2018, then President Barack Obama was elected president in 2008.

This Oct. 1, the Black Alliance for Peace (BAP) hosted a webinar titled “AFRICOM at 13: Building the Popular Movement for Demilitarization and Anti-Imperialism in Africa.” The event featured voices rarely heard in the U.S., from countries most affected by AFRICOM, including internationally-known activists for liberation and self-determination, in addition to the cost of inflaming humanitarian crises.

This webinar was part of a month-long “AFRICOM 20/20” campaign by Peace to educate and advocate for these demands: the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Africa; the closure of U.S. bases throughout the continent; the closure of U.S. bases throughout the world; and that the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) oppose AFRICOM and support hearings on AFRICOM’s impact on the African continent.

To dominate and exploit us

Imani Na Umoja is a member of the Central Committee of the African Party of Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde, the largest political party in Guinea-Bissau, which participated in the struggle for independence from Portugal. Umoja spoke about AFRICOM’s major role in the recent coup on the continent to maintain its presence for U.S. imperialism and deny its peoples’ right to self-determination.

U.S. forces of protecting democracy are the exact opposite in its deeds.

“The agreements are so horrendous,” said Na Umoja, “that the U.S. has no right to keep pushing forward. The real source of wealth in so-called ‘light footprint’ operations is the trade and oil exploration. ‘We must fight terrorism — which actually means our task first and foremost is to make the added benefit of removing the military-industrial complex for the military-industrial complex — a huge bonanza is also a self-perpetuating money machine that U.S. presence promotes terrorism.”

Turse continues: “Violent extremism and insecurity on the continent has increased exponentially during the very years that the U.S. has been building up its networks of bases.”

This build up includes “persistent counterterrorism operations that include commando raids, combat by U.S. Special Operations forces in at least 13 African countries between 2013 and 2017, and a record number of U.S. airstrikes in Somalia (just over one attack per week in 2019),” he wrote.

The result: “There are now roughly 25 active militant Islamist groups operating in Africa, up from just five in 2010 — a jump of 400%— according to analysts at the National Consortium for Missions in Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Militant Islamist activity also hit record levels in 2019. There were 3,471 militant Islamist attacks in Uganda for almost six years,” said Na Umoja, a member of BAP and Horn of Africa Pan-Africans for Liberation and Solidarity.

Ayaan also explained that one-third of permanent and semi-permanent AFRICOM bases reside in the Horn of Africa, reflecting the strategic importance of its waterways for trade and oil exploration. “We must look at AFRICOM through a materialist lens to see the long history of its continued presence in Africa and the colonizers’ roles that were created,” he said.

Military or mutual assistance?

Kamhale Musavuli, a native of the Democratic Republic of Congo and national spokesperson for Friends of the Congo, stated: “The U.S. has been engaged in the DRC since 1885. It was the first country to recognize the Congo as the personal property of King Leopold [Belgian monarch who committed the most horrendous atrocities against the native population, killing more than 10 million Congolese in the exploitation of its resources for the labor for rubber production and export]. The U.S. used the relationship built with Leopold to get the uranium and cobalt out of the DRC to fuel both Hiroshima in 1945.”

And in a further example of war crimes and genocide, Musavuli explained the role of the U.S. and its AFRICOM partners in the 1996 and 1998 invasions of the Congo by Rwanda and Uganda — causing the deaths of over 6 million Congolese. This was followed by a huge ex-
Twenty years have passed since the George W. Bush regime launched its无效的“war on terror.” U.S. troops have left Afghanistan, but President Richard Nixon’s resurrection by the Watergate scandal followed by the Vietnam War. The U.S. ruling class may not see an event on the scale of these earth-shaking social revolutions. Yet the same pressures of the world energy price bubble that brought Wall Street’s favor. It has not opened new monopolies capital, its very existence, can’t be restored the U.S. ruling class to the dominant position it occupied after World War II. It has only slowed its decline. It cannot stop the global contraction of the capitalist system. Israel was driven from Lebanon and cannot crush the Palestinian resistance. The Saudis and UAE are losing their war in Yemen. Syria has taken back most of its territory. Iran and Venezuela remain strong and independent of U.S. rule. The U.S. has abandoned Afghanistan and U.S. troops are under siege in Iraq.

Gas and oil from former Soviet Central Asia now goes directly by pipeline to China. The Nord Stream pipeline is bringing Russian gas to Europe. Nord Stream 2 is under construction.

Will the Biden administration abandon Wall Street’s war against the world? No, it can’t.

The power and wealth of U.S. monopoly capital, in every existence, can only be maintained by destruction. That’s all it has to offer the world. U.S. troops have left Afghanistan. But not a dime has been spent from the military budget. In fact, it’s slated to go up by $50 billion next year. The White House and Pentagon say they need that money to confront China. Meanwhile, Congress cannot even pass the Build Back Better Act.

We need healthcare and education and good-paying jobs for all. We need to get the Pentagon war machine and its corporate masters off our backs.
Happy birthday socialist China!

By Stephen Millies

Seventy-two years ago, on Oct. 1, 1949, Mao Zedong declared “China has stood up!” The socialist People’s Republic of China was born after decades of struggle. Chinese women stepped forward with unbound feet. No longer could U.S. and British warships prowl the Yangtze River. Peasants, workers and progressive intellectuals knew their liberation had come. China started its industrialization and its revolution inspired oppressed people everywhere. In his autobiography, Malcolm X wrote how the Chinese Revolution had inspired his spirits while he was in prison.

China gave refuge to Mabel Williams and Robert E. Williams, who organized self-defense against the Ku Klux Klan in Monroe, North Carolina. While 80% of China’s population couldn’t read or write before the revolution, illiteracy was practically wiped out by 1955.

In 1969 there were just 17,000 college students in China. By 2015, there were 37 million.

People in China had an average lifespan of just 36 years in 1949. By 2019, that had more than doubled, to nearly 77 years. In 2021, Black men in the United States had an expectancy at birth of just over 68 years.

All of the peoples and nationalities in socialist China have shared in these gains. The greatest triumph of human rights was the abolition of serfdom in Tibet.

The coronavirus pandemic shows the failure of U.S. capitalism. While nearly 700,000 people have died of COVID-19 in the U.S., less than 5,000 people died in socialist China. That’s despite China having a billion more people than the U.S.

China’s President Xi Jinping announced plans to provide COVID-19 vaccines to other countries with two billion doses this year. Despite President Joe Biden’s claim the United States has so far distributed only 160 million doses.

The world’s workshop

None of these gains would have been possible without a socialist revolution and the leadership of the Communist Party of China. While the banksters tell the politicians what to do, the communists control China’s banks.

The result has been fantastic economic growth. China today manufactures more goods than the United States. It has built more miles of high-speed rail than the rest of the world combined.

Back in 1969, the urban working class accounted for just 1% of China’s population. By 2019, there were 44.2 million people employed in manufacturing. China started its industrialization with the help of the then-existing Soviet Union and other socialist countries in Eastern Europe. Today China is helping countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America with its Belt and Road Initiative.

Building bridges, housing, hospitals, railroads and schools takes a lot of steel. In 1952, China made less than a million tons of steel in 1949, it currently produces more than a billion tons.

That’s over 50% of world production. In the capitalist U.S., steel production has shrunk to 72 million tons, less than what was made in 1945.

The deliberate deindustrialization in the United States has thrown millions of workers out of a job and helped to keep wages down for everybody. But it wasn’t China that closed nine of the 10 auto plants in Flint, Michigan. General Motors did.

While Flint’s children were lead poisoned by their drinking water, China has been going full speed ahead with its own Great Green Deal. China spent $50 billion to reforest 123,000 square miles. That’s an area larger than New Mexico.

China won’t go backwards

U.S. billionaires have never forgiven the Chinese people for making a revolution. Their fortunes started with enslaving Africans, killing Indigenous people, stealing half of Mexico and smuggling opium into China.

One of the biggest drug dealers was Warren Delano, a grandfather of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. A few months after the People’s Republic of China was founded, Washington started the Korean War. Four million people were killed in this dirty war.

Among them was Mao Anying, a son of Mao Zedong. He was one of many Chinese volunteers who gave their lives to defend Korea.


The capitalist media is now trying to blame China for the coronavirus pandemic. Scientists reject the lie that COVID-19 was started in a Wuhan laboratory. We shouldn’t be fooled by it either.

Three decades ago, the Soviet Union and the socialist countries in Eastern Europe were overthrown. This tragedy was a greater defeat than the crushing of the German working class by Hitler.

Poor and working people still have the socialist countries of China, Cuba, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Laos and Vietnam on their side. Bolivia, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela and Palestinian people are fighting U.S. economic sanctions. Palestine will be free.

History is on our side. Happy birthday to the socialist People’s Republic of China!

Persecuted by the U.S. government, Black liberation fighters Mabel Williams and Robert F. Williams were welcomed in China. Here they march on May Day, 1967 at the National Working People’s Cultural Palace.
Puerto Rico: Resistance against Luma

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

A people responds when its tolerance is exceeded, and we are in the face of injustice and abuse. That is precisely what is happening here in Puerto Rico.

The current struggle in Puerto Rico is a resistance to the construction of a power plant in Luma, which is considered environmentally harmful. The plant is backed by foreign companies and has faced opposition from the local community. This struggle is not only about the environment but also about the rights of the people to self-determination.

The U.S. Cold War drive and the Australia nuclear deal

By Scott Scheffer

On Sept. 15, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, U.S. President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced their new trilateral security agreement, AUKUS, and its first initiative — the delivery of a nuclear-powered submarine fleet for Australia. The deal is a dangerous escalation in the U.S.’s new Cold War against China.

Australia already had an agreement to buy a fleet of diesel submarines from France. For France, the deal was worth somewhere near $90 billion and was part of a plan to strengthen its economic and military standing in the Indo-Pacific region without damaging trade relations with China.

The U.S. kept the nuclear submarine deal secret from the French government until the ink on the contract was already dry. France — taken completely by surprise — called the deal a “stab in the back.” It was in an unprecedented move, withdrew its ambassador to both the U.S. and Australia.

It isn’t only the money that dealt a blow to France. Australia’s most imperialist powers lean on arms sales to remedy the inevitable economic downturn. Again, this happens at the bottom of their capitalist boom and bust cycle. Only rarely are secrets of advanced military technology shared, even with allies. The fact that Britain and the U.S. are providing nuclear-powered submarines to Australia means that Australia will be dependent on them for maintenance, training and support.

Australia has unambiguously signed on to the Cold War against China. The new alliance locks Australia into deeper participation in the U.S.’s new Cold War against China, the U.S. sent 1,200 additional troops to Darwin, the settler outpost on the northwestern corner of the continent.

The unprecedented presence of U.S. Marines in Australia has ebbed and flowed ever since. Recently, when Australia became a mouthpiece for the apartheid which threatens our very lives. The apartheid which threatens our very lives.

U.S. Cold War drive and the Australia nuclear deal

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U.S. Cold War drive and the Australia nuclear deal

USA, stop lying about Cuba!

Continued from page 12
cynically still being used, as demonstrated by U.S. involvement in the anti-Cuban government protests of July 11, 2021.

Even in a global medical crisis, the Trump administration announced the anti-Cuba “maximum pressure” campaign in an attempt to dismantle Cuba’s public healthcare system. This move is a desperate attempt to address the urgent needs of the Cuban people, which is biologically warfare, using the coronavirus as a weapon. On June 23 at the United Nations, the world voted for the 29th time for the U.S. to end its economic, financial and commercial blockade on Cuba. As the U.S. applied to use “humanitarian aid” as a knife against Cuba, other countries — including Mexico, Argentina and China — sent personal protective equipment, food and medicine. Supporters around the world united to send solidarity support to Cuba.

Cuba’s vaccination program is moving forward, now including its strategy for young children as a priority. Its vaccination program is moving forward, now including its strategy for young children as a priority.

Hope for Global South

Cuba’s vaccines hold hope for the Global South, not just Latin America. According to Our World in Data, only 2% of people in low-income countries have been vaccinated.

In March, Cuba and Zimbabwe announced construction of a state-of-the-art pharmaceutical production plant in that blocked southern African nation. Cuba is not just unfair, it’s not just immoral, it’s prolonging the pandemic, said Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO’s technical lead on COVID. And it is resulting in people dying.

Kerkhove’s words echo the summary of the June 18–21 Summit for Vaccine Internationalism. Summit coordinator Varsha Gandikota-Nelutla said: “A new international health order is forming. It is desperately needed to overcome the vaccine apartheid which threatens our very survival, calls the sovereignty question and risks furtherultiplying mutations of this virus.”

At that summit, “Cuba committed to not only open collaboration but affordable prices, with Dr. Aparicio Pardo, Cuba’s vice minister for health, telling the summit: ‘Cuban vaccines will be affordable and will benefit those most in need.'”

This raises an interesting ques-
Cada haitiano tiene en Cuba un hermano

By Cheryl LaBash

Oct. 8 — Today a People’s Peace Prize was awarded to Cuba’s Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade — not the Nobel Peace Prize, although more than 100 organizations and 40,000 individuals from the U.S. alone supported the Henry Reeve Brigade’s nomination.

As the global community stumbled under the coronavirus assault, Cuba’s army of whitecoats rushed to hot spots when called, not shirking the danger. It’s nothing new for them. In 2014, 10,000 Cuban medical professionals volunteered to go to Liberia and Sierra Leone to fight terrifyingly deadly ebola in West Africa.

In 2017, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) recognized the Henry Reeve Brigade with its prestigious Dr. Lee Jong-wook Memorial Prize for Public Health at a World Health Assembly (WHA) ceremony.

The PAHO press release says it all: “The Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade has ‘spread a message of hope throughout the world,’ said the award presenter, John Linton, president of the Korean Foundation for Interna- tional Health Care (KOFIH). Linton explained that the brigade’s 7,400 voluntary healthcare workers have treated more than 3.5 million people in 21 countries ravaged by many of the world’s worst natural disasters and epidemics throughout the past decade.”

“He added that an estimated 80,000 lives have been saved as a direct result of the Brigade’s front-line emergency medical treatments to patients in these countries.”

Cuba’s Henry Reeve Brigade was formed in 2005 from more than 1,500 fully-equipped doctors assembled to aid the people of New Orleans, who were displaced, suffering and dying in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Named after a young U.S. Civil War veteran who joined Cuba’s war of liberation and died fighting there, the brigade was rebuffed by President George W. Bush. But many of those same doctors then traveled to the Himalayas to treat earthquake survivors in Pakistan.

Cuba’s global struggle against COVID

Fast forward to 2021 and the coronavirus pandemic. Suddenly these same internationalist heroes are widely slandered by the U.S. State Department. Intentionally coded terms like “human traffickers” were used to create a negative initial reaction. But according to the standard applied to Cuba by the U.S. State Department, the biggest human trafficker is capitalism itself.

Countries that need more doctors and can afford to do so pay Cuba for medical or other professional services. The Cuban workers are paid for their international work, and they also receive their regular pay at home. Countries that can’t afford to pay still get help.

Yes, the total contract price may be more than is paid to the doctors, but it doesn’t go into the pocket of a billionaire. Instead, the additional money goes for the public good, to provide free healthcare for all the Cuban people.

U.S. slander of the Henry Reeve Brigade and other economic interference is part of a regime-change plan to create unbearable hardship for the Cuban people, in the vain hope they will turn against their government. It has been an acknowledged plan since April 6, 1960, in the Mailory-Rubottom State Department memo. And it is
cuencias nefastas en la salud, economía e incluso en la salud mental del pueblo.

Pero la resistencia va en aumento con convocatorias en contra del gobierno y de Luma. También en contra de la impuesta Junta de Control Fiscal que ha impulsado las privatizaciones desde que comenzó el gobierno.

Han habido manifestaciones espontáneas convocadas por las redes, cacerolazos a las 8 de la noche, múltiples protestas alrededor del país, y ahora hay convocatorias a varias organizaciones y partidos de izquierda que seguramente desem- bocarán en actos multitudinarios que por fin darán forma a la dictadura en manos de los privados.

Seguiremos informando del desarrollo de esta lucha.

For the sake of global health: USA, stop lying about Cuba!

By Cheryl LaBash

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