Indict Amazon for murder!

By Stephen Millies

The death of six workers at an Amazon warehouse in Edwardsville, Illinois, during a Dec. 10 tornado didn’t have to happen. Workers died because Jeff Bezos is too cheap to build safe buildings.

The Amazon founder has a $202 billion fortune. A day after the Edwardsville tragedy Bezos had one of his Blue Origin rockets lift off the launch pad. Bezos is spending a billion dollars a year on his space toys. Workers’ safety is another matter.

The Edwardsville facility, located 25 miles northeast of St. Louis, was built in a tornado-slap. Between 2011 and 2014 storms roared through the area with speeds of at least 136 mph. The Dec. 10 tornado was just as severe.

Like many warehouses — as well as Walmart, Home Depot and Target stores — the big box buildings are fabricated using “tilt-up wall construction” to save money. Concrete panels weighing dozens of tons are held together by the roof. But if the roof is blown away the panels will fall and crush anyone underneath. That’s what happened in 2014 to a Home Depot in Joplin, Missouri, where eight people were killed. The same thing occurred in Edwardsville.

The only emergency shelter available to workers in the Amazon warehouse were the bathrooms. Concrete blocks fell in one of them and crushed a worker to death. The warehouse employees received virtually no emergency training.

Larry Virden, one of the workers who died, testified his partner that “Amazon won’t let us leave.” He left behind four children.

Lack of concern for workers’ health and safety is a company tradition. Fifteen workers collapsed during a 2011 heat wave at an Amazon warehouse in Steinhenge, Pennsylvania, 11 miles from Allentown.

The company knew of the health dangers but refused to reduce the line speed. Amazon instead parked ambulances outside the door.

The Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Alabama — where Bezos spent millions to stop a union organizing drive — is another potential deathtrap. It too sits in a tornado alley.

On the same day that six workers died in Edwardsville, another tornado killed eight workers in Mayfield, Kentucky. They made candles at the Mayfield Consumer Products factory.

Some of the workers who were rescued were found buried alive. Survivors are furious that the company didn’t cancel the evening shift despite warnings that tornadoes were likely to strike the area.

Starting wage at this sweatshop located in Western Kentucky is $8 per hour. Continued on page 9

What right does the Supreme Court have to rule?

By Lallan Schoenstein

On Dec. 1, the U.S. Supreme Court heard the arguments from U.S. state attorneys supporting Mississippi’s 15-week abortion ban.

A state law was passed in Mississippi in 2018 that would make most abortions illegal after the first 15 weeks of pregnancy — including those caused by rape. The Mississippi law hasn’t yet been enforced due to a legal challenge by Mississippi’s only abortion provider, the Jackson Women’s Health Organization.

The Supreme Court is now considering the case.

The most conservative judges — including Donald Trump-appointed anti-abortion Brett Kavanaugh — pressed forward to raise the stakes to possibly overturning Roe v. Wade, the 1973 decision that established a constitutional right to abortion.

Another Trump appointee, Justice Amy Coney Barrett, stated her position during the hearing: Why was abortion necessary, when women who do not want to be mothers can simply give their babies up for adoption? Thereby, Barrett was arguing for cruel legislation that bans abortion for those who have been raped, whose health or the baby’s health is at risk or a myriad of other legitimate issues, the most primary being control over one’s own body.

As a member of the Indiana religious organization People of Praise, Barrett has served as a lay pastoral women’s leader known as a “handmaid.” Barrett is a millionaire among the richest of the Catholic Church’s Notre Dame Law School — and this removes her from the concerns plaguing most peoples’ lives.

One of three judges in the minority supporting women’s constitutional rights, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, asked whether the court would survive the branch of being considered a political institution, a point echoed by Justice Elena Kagan. Their attempt to defend a critical right to healthcare also implied support for the legitimacy of the Supreme Court.

What right does the Supreme Court have?

The U.S. Supreme Court was established 232 years ago by the U.S. Constitution with the passage of the Judiciary Act of 1789. At that time the U.S. Constitution did not extend equal rights to people kidnapped from Africa, the Indigenous population, oppressed Continued on page 9
Who gets to claim self-defense?

By Stephen Millies

How did Kyle Rittenhouse justify killing anti-racist activists Antho-
yny Huber and Joseph Rosenbaum, as well as a young Black man,
Gage Grosskreutz in Kenosha, Wisconsin? This black racist vigilante who
worships Ted Nugent牵引s claims that he was merely defending himself.

The right of self-defense was also claimed by Kenosha cop Rust-
en Shesky for shooting Jacob Blake seven times on Aug. 23, 2020, leaving
him paralyzed. The shooting of Blake, a Black father of seven
children, led to the anti-racist pro-
tests in Kenosha.

Kenosha County District Attorney
Michael Graveley refused to
press charges against Shesky. U.S.
Attorney General Merrick Garland
declined to prosecute.

Four New York City police of-
icers claimed self-defense when
they fired 42 bullets at Amadou
Diallo. The unarmed African immigrant was killed on Feb. 4, 1999.
New York Gov. George Pataki
moved the trial out of the Bronx to
assure his acquittal.

Sean Bell was killed by police on
what was supposed to be his wed-
day on Nov. 25, 2006, in the New
York borough of Queens. After firing
50 shots at the unarmed Black man,
the police claimed self-defense.

They were acquitted in a non-jury
trial by Judge Schroeder.

Judge Schroeder in Rittenhouse's
trial might as well have been his de-
fense attorney.

Self-defense was the excuse for
Cleveland cop Timothy Loehmann for
taking down a 12-year-old Tamir Rice.
The Black child was carrying a toy gun.

So was 13-year-old Nicholas
Naquan Heyward Jr., who was playing
cops and robbers in Brooklyn's
Officer George Gowanus
saw the toy gun.

Gowanus was in the habit of having
Newsom crawl into Celia's cabin
to make a split-second decision in
her cell.

Newsom was in the habit of having the
murderer, because the death of
the Black community mobilized that
these lynches were conviced.

No right of self-defense for oppres-
sion.

Every legal system admits that people
have the right to defend themselves.
This right was never meant to apply to the oppressed.

Those who were enslaved didn't have the right to defend themselves
against their slave masters. Serfs
didn't have the right to self-defense
against serf owners.

Celia was a 19-year-old enslaved
African who was continually raped by the
Missouri slave master Rob-
ert Newsom since she was 14.
Her two daughters were born because of these rapes.

Newsom crawled into Celia's cabin
one last time on June 23, 1855. Celia
defended herself with a stick, kill-
ing Newsom. Celia was indicted for
murder for defending herself while
she was pregnant.

Circuit Court Judge William Hall
instructed the all-white jury that "if
Newsom was in the habit of having
intercourse with the defendant who
was his slave and went to her cabin
on the night he was killed to have in-
tercourse with her or for any other
purpose and while he was standing in
the floor talking to her she struck
him with a stick which was a dan-
gerous weapon and knocked him
down, and struck him again after he
fell, and killed him by either blow, it
merited in the first degree."

The jury found Celia guilty and
the judge sentenced her to be hanging. Celia escaped but was re-
captured. After her child was born
stillborn, she was hanged in Fulton,
Missouri, on Dec. 25, 1855.

Hundred of years later, Joan Little
was acquitted of killing the
white prison guard who at-
tempted to rape her in North Caro-
lina. The imprisoned Black woman
took Clarence Alligood's ice pick and
defended herself with it.

Even though Alligood's body
was found naked from the waist down,
Little, who had escaped, was de-
clared an "outlaw." This allowed po-
tor claimed Little had lured Alligood
to her cell.

Planning to make the mobilization to secure
Justice for Ahmad Arbery, it was only because people organized that
Joan Little was declared not guilty.

This was the first time that a wom-
an was found not guilty on grounds of self-defense for defending herself
against rape.

Never forget Sammie Osborne!

No Indigenous person was ever
given the right to defend themselves
against the U.S. government that
was committing genocide against them.
President Abraham Lincoln
was killed in the Bronx on Feb. 4,
was killed in the Bronx on Nov. 19, 1943. As the electrodes were
placed on his head, Osborne's last words were, "I'm ready to go because
I know that I am not guilty."

The next year, 14-year-old George
Sinney Jr. was burned to death in the
same electric chair.

The acquittal of Kyle Rittenhouse
gives a license to kill for every other
white racist vigilante. All those who
defend Rittenhouse, like Jimmy Dore
or The Militant "socialist news-
workers," put themselves on the side
of white supremacy.

Work should not be a death sentence

Multiple murders is what happened on Dec. 10 at the Mayfield
Consumer Products factory in May-
field, Kentucky, and the Amazon
warehouse in Edwardsville, Illinois.

This is murder, capitalist murder
as an agitator put it, and put it out in his "The Condition of the Working
Class in England":

"When one individual inflicts bodily injury upon another such that
death results, we call the deed
slaughter; when the assailant knew
that these thousands of victims must
die, then it is murder in the first
degree."

I know that I am not guilty."
Stop Kellogg's strikebreaking!
By Stephen Millies

The 1,400 workers on strike against Kellogg’s since Oct. 5 are fighting for all workers. Members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International (BCTGM) had been negotiating with the company for over a year, but a final agreement had not been reached. The workers walked off the job in the face of Kellogg’s threats to single out and fire strikers throughout the country.

Kellogg’s forced workers to accept two-tier in 2015 under threat of closing two of its cereal plants, including the one in Memphis, Tennessee. The year before, management illegally locked out workers in the city where Dr. King was assassinated and more than $100,000 was paid to temporary workers for full-time work. Lower paid transitional workers now account for 30 percent of the workforce; Kellogg’s wants to be able to increase their number while still denying them retirement benefits.

Unequal wages for the same work harms solidarity between workers while Kellogg’s ran to the bank with $7.6 billion in profit last year. It’s to the credit of workers with more seniority and higher pay that they voted down Kellogg’s contract proposal that would continue this rotten inequality.

A former worker was Marvin Rush, an electrician and member of BCTGM Local 2542 in Memphis who spoke to Jason Ferrone of the “Brotherhood” magazine. “We are out here fighting against the two-wage system,” said Rush, “and for the next generation of workers to have the same pay and benefits.”

Kellogg’s doesn’t believe in an 8-hour work day and a 40-hour work week either. Forced overtime is a rule, with many union members working 72-80+ hour work weeks. “That’s how long you work a 7-to-7 and they tell you to come back at 3 a.m. on a short turnaround,” said Omaha BCTGM Local 506 President Daniel Osborn in an interview with Stephen Rodrick at Rolling Stone. “You work 20, 30 days in a row and you don’t know when your work and your life ends and begins.”

In the runup to the strike Kellogg’s stressed hiring temporary workers and those that retired or quit. According to Osborn there were “times during COVID when we were 100 workers under what we should have.”

Many union members think Kellogg’s did this to reduce the number of workers picketing to prevent scabs and strikebreakers from entering the plant.

Thank you Venezuela!

The workers at Kellogg’s feed millions. The cornflake capitalists showed how much they appreciate these essential workers by announc- ing they’re hiring 1,400 strikebreakers to smash the union.

When Kellogg’s placed ads on social media for “replacement workers,” union supporters across the country flooded the company with phony resumes that gummed up recruitment.

Workers are on strike in Battle Creek, Michigan, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Memphis, Tennessee; and Omaha, Nebraska. They’re engaged in a David vs. Goliath struggle. The 1,400 union members at these four plants are pitted against a corporation with worldwide sales of $13.8 billion. Kellogg’s has 46 manufacturing facilities in 19 countries on six continents.

With inflation soaring by 6.8%, Kellogg’s offered only 3% annual wage increases. Kellogg’s CEO Steven Cahillane’s pay package is $11,663,832. That’s 279 times the typical salary of workers. President Biden said that he was “deeply troubled” by Kellogg’s attempt to recreate the union at Kellogg’s cereals and snack products.

Contrast President Biden’s words with the actions of President Nicolás Maduro Moros of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. President Maduro supports the workers who took over the Kellogg’s plant in Maracaay City in May after they were locked out over a weekend. Milton Torres, a longtime worker, is the new factory president.

As FightBack! News reported, the workers now call the plant “Socialist Kellogg’s” and are continuing to help feed people in Venezuela.” The basic principles of our socialist enterprise are to dignify the work of our working class, increase the levels of production, guarantee that the equipment is highly maintained, produce good quality products, in a fair price and to be a self-sustainable company to contribute to the economic development of the country,” said the plant’s union president, Orlando Contreras.

Just as these strikers are fighting for all poor and working people, so is the company’s strikebreaking being carried out for the billionaires and banksters.

Boycott Kellogg’s!

Wall Street wants the workers defeated and humiliated. That’s the answer of the one percent to millions of workers who want union protection, union wages, union health benefits and union pensions.

In 1887, the Haymarket Martyrs — labor leaders George Engel, Adolph Fischer, Albert Parsons and August Spies — were hanged in Chicago for demanding an eight hour work day. It’s outrageous that over 130 years later, workers are forced to work 72 and 84 hour weeks.

Compulsory overtime is not only dangerous and life-draining. It also prevents the hiring of young workers.

The few hundred strikers at each of the four cereal plants are not only up against Kellogg’s. They’re up against all the super-rich yacht and private jet owners.

Please give our support. Don’t buy scab cereals and other Kellogg’s products. Victory to the workers! 🍫

John Deere strike victory is a win for all workers
By Scott Scheffer

Ten thousand John Deere workers in five states, represented by the United Auto Workers, have won their strike against the giant equipment manufacturer. The victory is unequivocal.

Their strike began during what was popularly called “Striketober,” when tens of thousands of workers walked out in strikes across the country. Exhausted and angry after being overworked and underpaid—“you don’t know where work and your life ends and begins”—they voted down Kellogg’s contract proposal that would continue this rot-ten inequality.

Among them was Marvin Rush, an electrician and member of BCTGM Local 2542 in Memphis who spoke to Jason Ferrone of the “Brotherhood” magazine. “We are out here fighting against the two-wage system,” said Rush, “and for the next generation of workers to have the same pay and benefits.”

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Labor leader calls for action to free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Call to Action: For international workers’ action - Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all anti-racist and anti-imperialist freedom fighters!

Statement by Clarence Thomas

Dec. 9, 2021

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) has a long tradition of defending oppressed workers and political prisoners, such as Angela Davis in the 1970s. As a result of the filings of ILWU Local 10, I have been a part of the Local’s efforts to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners. For more than 30 years, the ILWU has been in the vanguard of the labor movement to free the award-winning journalist, “the voice of the voiceless” and former Black Panther Party member, Mumia Abu-Jamal.

In my recent anthology, “Mobilizing in Our Own Name: Million Worker March,” there are many articles by Mumia that are featured, documenting his support of all labor (organized and unorganized), including the ILWU. Local 10 and the Million Worker March. Mumia describes himself as “a proud card-carrying member of the National Writers Union which affiliated with the United Auto Workers.”

During his forty years of imprisonment, Mumia was one of the most active labor leaders in the country, and his work with his wife, Ramona, has been unwavering. During the 1960s, the Black Liberation Movement awakened my political and social consciousness along with countless other Afro-American youth. I joined the Black Panther Party which facilitated my anti-racist, anti-capitalist, and anti-imperialist activism, and the need for Afro-Americans to have “self-determination.”

Declaring the Black Panther Party “guilty of no crime one,” the U.S. government sanctioned the murder of its leaders, vilified the organization’s message, and arrested other Black Panther Party members. Mumia Abu-Jamal has always maintained his innocence of the murder of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner.

There are Black Panther Party members that were a part of the Black Liberation movement who have been languishing in prison for more than half a century. Native American political prisoner Leonard Peltier has been imprisoned and tortured. The horrific imprisonment and the abuse of these political prisoners represent the long legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, apartheid, and racial violence directed against African Americans.

The labor movement can and must play a vital role in the release of all political prisoners. The ILWU recognizes that the prosecution of radical labor leaders such as Tom Mooney and Harry Bridges is part of the history of repression, one breakout focusing on the fight against political repression, and struggles for community control of the police. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10, in addition to efforts by the U.S. government to use lies and frame-ups to put away these fighters for freedom and justice that was promised yet denied to African Americans and people of color in the U.S.

The ILWU is the only union that has shut down the entire West Coast in 1999 to demand: “Stop the Execution and Free Mumia!” On June 19 (Juneteenth), 2020, the ILWU shut down all 29 ports on the West Coast including Vancouver, Canada, to commemorate Juneteenth, to End Systemic Racism, and to Stop Police Terror. No maritime cargo was moved for 8 hours on the entire West Coast. This solidarity action on the part of West Coast dockworkers represents the power of labor at the point of production. It is this type of action that labor must find the courage to exercise on a global level to bring home Mumia Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners.

“An Injury to One is an Injury to All” Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Clarence Thomas

ILWU Local 10 retired

Co-founder Million Worker March

Author of “Mobilizing in Our Own Name: Million Worker March”

MillionWorkerMarch.com

Organizers against police crimes meet:

“We have nothing to lose but our chains”

By Kobi Guillory

Chicago — Two years after the refounding of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (NAARPR) in November 2019, over 125 NAARPR members and affiliates gathered in Chicago for the second NAARPR conference in Chicago starting on Saturday, December 4.

They shared updates about their work fighting police crimes and for community control of the police, among other areas of struggle, then voted on resolutions and new leadership for the next two years.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the conference was attended only by delegates from NAARPR chapters and affiliated organizations. The plenary sessions on the first day of the conference were livestreamed on the Chicago AARPR Facebook page so people who could not be there in person could participate virtually.

Saturday morning began with an opening plenary on the purpose of the conference and the work of NAARPR. The meeting was facilitated by NAARPR co-chair Michael Sampson. Delegates heard speeches from SEIU HCII President Greg Kelly and NAARPR executive director Frank Chapman, as well as a video statement from Angela Davis, a leader of the original NAARPR. Davis stressed that the fight to free political prisoners is an ongoing part of the struggle against systemic racism.

SEIU HCII played a key role in this fight by putting the strength of their 90,000 members behind the Em powering Communities for Public Safety legislation in Chicago, the most progressive police account ability ordinance in the country and a step towards community control of the police. Kelly cited the murders of Alex Saab and George Floyd and how they added as reasons why his union was motivated to get involved in the fight for police accountability.

Chapman spoke on the necessity of the alliance between community organizations like NAARPR and unions like SEIU, saying “the objective is to build the biggest, baddest mass movement this country has seen in a long time.”

The floor was then opened for delegates to report on the work their chapters have done over the past two years. Many spoke about the upris ing in the U.S., on the part of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, the most massive uprising in U.S. history. NAARPR affiliated orga nized protests of tens of thousands of people in various cities around the country, including cities like Jackson ville, Florida, which had never seen protests of that size before. Other initiatives described by deleg ees included fighting for justice with the families of people killed by the police, successful efforts to cut police budgets, actions in solidarity with anti-imperialist movements, campaigns to free survivors of police torture and wrongful conviction, defenses of protesters against political repression, and struggles for community control of the police.

Together with the ILWU, a large portion of a plenary on community control of the police, one breakout session discussing the fight against political repression, one breakout focusing on the importance of the families of those killed or harmed by the police in the struggle, and a final plenary session summing up the lessons learned during the opening day of the conference.

The wide variety of speakers demonstrated the progress NAARPR has made already towards building the mass movement.

One delegate’s speech focused on electing new leadership and voting on the actions NAARPR would re solve to take over the next two years. Delegates voted on seven resolutions: to defend and expand voting rights, to free political prisoners, to defend the right of immigrant families to stay together by fighting deportation, to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, to end the political repression of the U.S. empire, to continue to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian liberation struggle, to support the Filipino people’s fight against U.S.-backed terror, and to build class struggle unionism. Delegates then ratified the NAARPR bylaws and formally elected the officers and executive board of the National Alliance. The leadership represents the Black led, multigenera tional character of the organization.

Delegates left the conference expressing feelings of pride in the work done since NAARPR’s refounding two years ago, as well as optimism and excitement for the years ahead building the movement for community control of the police across the U.S. Monique Sampson, co-founder of the Jacksonville Community Action Committee and newly elected NAARPR national desk secretary, led the delegates in a chant written by freedom fighter and former political prisoner Assata Shabazz: “It’s our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love and protect one another. We have nothing to lose but our chains.”

Source: FightBack! News
By Greg Butterfield

Why is President Joe Biden’s administration laser-focused on threatening war on the other side of the world, when the people of the United States are already war-fatigued, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Mark Milley, said to his colleagues on Nov. 23, 2021, that a NATO takeover of Ukraine is a “red line” that threatens its sovereignty and security which must not be crossed.

Ukraine threatens Donetsk, Lugansk
Biden’s spokespersons don’t mention that up to half a million troops – half its total military! – are massed on the borders of the independent Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics, small countries sandwiched between Ukraine and Russia. Ukraine has been at war with them since 2014.

Ukraine claims these countries as its own territory, despite an overwhelming popular vote in a democratic referendum in favor of independence.

Ukraine is a party to the internationally-negotiated Minsk II agreement, which it apparently intends to ignore, using heavy weapons against the Donetsk and Lugansk republics or invading. Yet Ukraine brags that it has managed to hold onto the 120,000 inhabitants of frontline areas constantly, causing daily deaths, injuries and destruction. Washington and Kiev deliberately block any progress toward a negotiated settlement.

Ukraine’s war on the Donbass republics has gone on for 10 years and a half years, and has cost more than 14,000 lives.

The real danger of invasion is from Ukraine against Donetsk and Lugansk. Since 2014, Ukraine’s military has been trained, armed and reorganized by the U.S., Britain, Canada and other NATO countries. That includes the neo-Nazi “volunteer battalions” integrated into its official military structure.

The people of Donbass suffer under a complete economic blockade by Ukraine and its Western allies. Russia has provided humanitarian aid and trade to Donetsk and Lugansk at great cost, supplemented by support from antifascist organizations in the former Soviet countries and the rest of the world.

A Ukrainian invasion of Donetsk and Lugansk would cause enormous damage to infrastructure and civilian casualties – in hopes of provoking a war with Russia. Then NATO would claim a “Russian invasion” to justify its war moves.

Antifascist resistance
Why did people in eastern Ukraine’s Donetsk and Lugansk region choose independence? It happened after a U.S.-engineered coup brought a far-right-wing government to power in Kiev in 2014.

The coup was carried out by fascist gangs that were then set loose on the people of Donetsk and Lugansk and integrated into Ukraine’s military and security forces.

The U.S. wanted to bring NATO to Russia’s borders. This is why the U.S. and West encouraged the coup of all, Washington wanted to seize the strategic military base on the Crimean peninsula, which would integrate into NATO control of the Black Sea. The people of Crimea rejected that. So did the Russian government.

In Soviet times, Russia ceded Crimea to Ukraine, with a long-term Russian lease on the military base. In 2014, the Crimean people voted to return to Russia, and Russia agreed, ending the U.S. project of this strategic area.

Over 26 million Soviet people died fighting the Nazis in World War II. Forty years later, they were not willing to live under neo-Nazi rule.

All of this happened during the Democratic Obama administration. Both Democrats and Republicans supported the far-right takeover of Ukraine and lied about a “Russian invasion” when the people of Donbass and Crimea asserted their right to separate.

And who was the Obama administration’s point person on Ukraine? Who was calling the shots and handing out profitable favors to family members and business associates?

It was no other than Vice President Joe Biden.

Biden-Putin call
Biden held a widely-publicized two-hour secure video call with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Dec. 7. Washington threatened harsh economic sanctions, including cutting off Russia from the global banking system, as it has done in the case of Iran. Putin reiterated the Russian government’s consistent position that NATO expansion into Ukraine is a “red line” for Russia’s security. He said he hoped for further negotiations.

Why is Washington taking such a provocative stance toward Russia and making these threats now?

Big U.S. energy companies and banks want to stop the International Nord Stream II project that is set to bring Russian natural gas to Western Europe. U.S. capitalists are desperate to control energy profits and suppress any energy-supplying countries that defy Wall Street control – like Iran, Venezuela and Russia. U.S. companies want Russian natural gas and skilled junior partners to buy energy from them and them alone.

That’s the immediate play. But the U.S. has its eye on the Russian Federation since the fall of the Soviet Union 30 years ago. A Pentagon document leaked in 1992 laid out a long-term plan to rip up Russia, destroy its sovereignty and make it a docile market and supplier of raw materials and skilled labor for U.S. global big business. That’s still the goal.

And then there’s the fact that Biden and the Democrats are deep in ideological conflict at home – unable to meet the basic needs and demands of the workers and oppressed people who they claim to represent, because they are beholden to the very capitalist system that thrives on racism, poverty and war. Provoking a war is a time-honored U.S. method of distracting the masses of people in a time of great crisis.

Belarus, then Ukraine, next?...

The U.S. “warnings” (really, war propaganda) about a imminent invasion of Ukraine followed immediately on the heels of the November border crisis between Belarus and Poland.

Thousands of refugees from Western and Central Asia and North Africa, fleeing the wreckage of U.S.-European wars in their homelands, went to Belarus, seeking to enter the European Union and Poland. The U.S.-dominated Polish government refused to let them through. The EU countries supported Poland in this gross violation of international human rights.

Polish troops mobilized at the border and arrested refugees. The right-wing regimes in Lithuania and Ukraine also sent troops to the border with Belarus. None of this could have happened without NATO’s (and therefore, Washington’s) express consent and encouragement.

Belarus is an ally of Russia. The countries recently strengthened their military ties after an attempted Ukrainian-style coup failed in Belarus.

The events on the Polish border had all the earmarks of NATO trying to provoke a war crisis.

The EU countries refused to even hold a conversation about the refugees. Finally, Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko put his foot down. He said that if Poland and its allies provoked a war, Belarus would stop the flow of fuel oil to Western Europe.

That got a quick response. Ange- la Merkel, the German chancellor whose term has just ended, got on the phone to Lukashenko and agreed to cool things down.

The U.S. is not happy with that outcome. And it immediately switched gears to the “Russian invasion of Ukraine” fairy tale even though Ukraine had just made threatening moves toward Belarus on NATO’s behalf!

Let’s stop new imperialist war
A day before the Biden-Putin call, an unnamed U.S. official told The Guardian that Washington could send troops to Eastern Europe. “It would certainly be the case that if...
Why Cuba does not have an anti-vaccine movement

By Marc Vanderpitte and Toon Danheux

Increasingly, large sectors of the European population, and in the U.S. to a lesser extent, reveal their distrust towards their government’s policies to combat COVID-19. The reaction of the majority is one of panic and is characterized by paternalism and repression: general obligation to vaccinate and restricting freedom of movement. This is not the way to build support among the population. This will require, at the very least, listening to the concerns of those who are unvaccinated.

But there are other elements at play as well. The comparison with Cuba is interesting.

Distrust in the government

Many unvaccinated people rightly don’t trust their government’s good faith of their governments that now want to vaccinate everyone as soon as possible. It is not so incomprehensible.

European countries have been imposing provisions since March 2020. There is no uniformity or logic in policies to attack the COVID-19 pandemic. With similar contagion rates the measures differ greatly from one country to another.

In Belgium, where we live, as in other countries in Europe, the imposing provisions were incomprehensible. The Belgian government waited until mid-March before taking action. That was a month and a half too late. If they had taken action earlier, the rate of spread would have been much lower and thousands of deaths from COVID-19 would have been avoided. And they don’t seem to learn from their mistakes. The response to each new wave of COVID-19 comes too late.

Although experts had been warning about it for years, the Belgian government was not prepared for a pandemic. At first it said that the measures were temporary, because they were not (yet) available due to mismanagement. Then, suddenly, they became permanent.

In September 2021 the measures were relaxed in Belgium with worse results. In Cuba, which did not have the same measures, the results were spectacular.

And in Cuba?

As early as January 2020, almost two months before the politicians in Europe got into action, the Cuban government launched a national plan to combat the coronavirus. Massive informal contact tracing teams were launched in working-class neighborhoods and on television. There were no contradictory government statements, no health宁bers who had to agree, and no discussions about mandatory masks.

The government acted decisively and did everything possible to nip the virus in the bud. No easy promises saying that we were going to regain the “Kingdom of freedom” thanks to vaccines, no letting go of the reins too quickly, due to electoral motives or lack of political courage, but firm measures. Here are some examples.

Tourism, the main source of income but also of contagion, was stopped immediately. Children from the age of six are obliged to wear masks. When it became clear that schools were also important foci of contagion, Cuba switched to home education, with very good support from school television, among other things.

“By properly informing the population about health risks, Cubans understand the importance of staying at home. They know how the disease spreads and how they can avoid getting infected,” says Aissa Naranjo, a physician in Havana.

Health care in Cuba focuses mainly on prevention and is highly decentralized. Each neighborhood has its own polyclinic and there is a strong bond of trust between the local population and health personnel. Since March 2020 almost 30,000 “contact tracers” have gone door to door, to the farthest corners of the island, to check each family to see if one of its members was infected. University students were mobilized to assist in this screening. In Belgium, the detection was carried out by anonymous people in call centers, which does not exactly inspire confidence.

In the meantime, everything was focused on the development of vaccines against the coronavirus. In March 2021, three vaccines were already in the testing phase. Cuba currently has five vaccines and they are one of them for children as young as two years old. The differences in COVID policies between Cuba and Belgium are also reflected in the figures. In Cuba there were 578 deaths at the end of 2020. In Belgium, with the same number of inhabitants, the death rate was almost 20,000. That was before the Delta variant. In Cuba did not arrive in time. Its own vaccines were only finished three months after the Delta variant began to proliferate. Rapid vaccination in Belgium, starting in late 2020, has significantly reduced the number of deaths caused by the Delta variant, at least in the early stages.

In Cuba, the vaccine delivery was delayed too early; there were no vaccines at the time. The peak of infection occurred in July. This caused many deaths and overwhelmed the healthcare system. This precarious health situation added to the severe economic problems resulting from the U.S. blockade of the country, which caused rising food prices. As a result, there was much discontent among the people. These are social actions, works, an attempt was made from the United States to stir up this discontent and channel it into protests. The attempt ended in failing.

The vaccination campaign began in Cuba, the results were spectacular. On September 20, at the beginning of the campaign, there were still more than 7,000 new infections and 69 deaths daily. Today there are only 10 new infections and one death per day. In Cuba, children from the age of two are also vaccinated. On December 2, 90% of Cubans had received their first dose. Then came the second highest percentage in the world, after the United Arab Emirates, and the highest in Latin America, with 95% vaccinated.

Distrust of big pharma

Many unvaccinated people in Europe find it suspicious that the government provides vaccines free of charge. They have to pay more and more for other drugs. Health care costs patients more and more every year and now suddenly we all “have” to get vaccinated for free. Is there nothing behind it? Does it make you a conspiracy theorist if you ask this question?

People know that big pharma just wants to make money and that they don’t care about profits or usurious profits there. And in Cuba?

In Cuba people face advertising only being very sporadical. Science reaches people through education — of high quality — and through public health. The number of differences in vaccines and are heavily subsidized by pharmaceutical companies are charging too much there. The price of some vaccines is one of the main factors behind the very rapid increase in life expectation in Cuba in recent decades. Life expectancy in Cuba is 80 years, in the United States infant mortality is lower. In recent months it has been shown that Cuba can vaccinate a region to effective. So it is not surprising that any Cuban person not only trusts his or her national pharmaceutical companies, but is proud of them.

Distrust in science

Real science and pseudoscience are often used to advertise all sorts of things here in Europe: food supplements, perfect diapers, hair growth products, superonic cell phones... As a result science has lost much of its status for many people. Frequent research and large-scale frauds make people even more suspicious.

In addition, many people leave serious, yet higher education without being able to understand statistics or their representation in arti- cles. “There are as many vaccinated people in Cuba as in the hospital, aren’t there?” All this explains why large groups of people are attracted to obscure theories or pseudosciences because they think “they” are trying to make us believe something. That “they” want to force us to comply with a number of things: COVID passport, vaccinations, etc. “They” is, then, an amalgam of politicians, experts and the media.

And in Cuba?

In Cuba people face advertising publicly only sporadical.

Science reaches people through education — of high quality — and non-commercial media. Even before the first infection, it was explained to all Cubans on television what COVID is, how the pandemic can be stopped, how to do it and, consequently, what measures were to be taken.

Cuba is interesting because it shows that their scientists are working for the common good of their country. The population sees it almost every year, for example, in the preventions of evacuations of towns and cities in hurricane paths, drawn by the best
Protest U.S. sanctions Ethiopia and Eritrea

By Bill Dores

In more than 50 cities in the United States and hundreds around the world, marchers rallied on Nov. 21 to protest U.S. sanctions on Ethiopia and Eritrea, U.S. support for insurgents trying to overthrow Ethiopia’s elected government.

In New York City, hundreds marched from CNN headquarters at Columbus Circle to Fox News to protest biased corporate media coverage of the conflict.

Want to know how to beat COVID? Look at China

By Scott Scheffer

At the beginning of the outbreak in February and March of 2020, before COVID-19 became a pandemic, the CPC moved decisively and locked down the city of Wuhan, which has a population of 11 million people. The scale of the quarantine was unprecedented and set the tone for how the CPC and the Chinese people have carried their incredible “People’s War” since.

The Western press often describes it as “authoritarian” and “ruthless.” Human Rights Watch attacked it as a violation of freedom. The campaign was and is, in fact, extraordinarily humanitarian, incredibly efficient and a technological marvel.

Drones for health, not war

The world’s first major deployment of drones — other than their use by the imperialist U.S. military to murder thousands of people in Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan and elsewhere — was launched in Wuhan. Drones and robots were deployed that could detect people with fevers while hovering, remotely disinfect hospitals, and make announcements to ensure quarantine restrictions were followed.

Robots delivered food and supplies to people’s doorsteps. No one lost pay or lost their job. Two hospitals were literally constructed together, holding meetings and making decisions together in the workplace, etc., their way of life.

Solidarity is part of their DNA. For decades they have been sending doctors, nurses and teachers to the rest of the world. A small country of 1.4 billion, in 2020 sent doctors to fight COVID as far as Africa.

This attitude and way of life is an other reason why there are few or no anti-vaccine people in China. China’s determined campaign to beat COVID, as well as its success, were and are an inspiration. The CPC and the Chinese people have shown the world how to win the battle.

And in Cuba?

Cubans are not in a situation of competition or “every man for himself.” The Cuban population knows from experience that only together can they face the country’s great challenges. Overcoming problems together is what they are used to, unfortunately today more than ever. Helping neighbors, cleaning their neighborhood together, holding meetings and making decisions together in the workplace, etc., is their way of life.

Solidarity is part of their DNA.

China’s success was due in part to two hospitals in Wuhan. As big as 46 soccer fields and is the largest in the world, it was and is an absolute marvel.

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Two hospitals were literally constructed in a matter of days and other pre-existing buildings were modified and put to use for treatment of COVID patients. Here again, drones hovered over the construction sites to provide light so that construction crews could work 24-hours-a-day.

Thousands of medical volunteers traveled from faraway areas of China to help in Wuhan and other places as the disease spread. Videos were produced and spread on social media to update the population about safety measures and how to get help. A Norwegian team mapped the genome of the virus and shared it with the world within 11 days.

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After more than two months of sharply increased cases and more than 3,000 deaths, the casualty numbers diminished. But no one in China dropped their guard in the interest of reopening the economy as happened with successive waves of the outbreak in the U.S. Soporadic outbreaks saw more lockdowns — none at the same scale as that in Wuhan, but always announced quickly when there was an uptick in cases.

The lockdowns were a great economic sacrifice. But there were no demonstrations demanding the lockdowns end as there were in major capitalist countries. The Chinese leadership made sure everyone would receive income, there were absolutely no evictions, and there were no job losses.

The 5,000-room Guangzhou International Health Station

The CPC still maintains a goal of zero COVID infections as the Omicron variant is surging in many parts of the world. A 5,000-room quarantine facility in Guangzhou, equipped with 5G communication technology and a robot delivery system for food and other essentials, was finished last month.

The housing is spread over an area as big as 46 soccer fields and is the first in the plans for a chain of similar facilities to house people traveling from abroad. The entire complex was built in less than three months, a feat that would be astonishing anywhere else. Considering the construction of the hospitals in just days at the beginning of the pandemic, it is not surprising.

China’s determined campaign to beat the pandemic is international news. In spite of the astonishing success of this People’s War, Chinese leaders, researchers, virologists and epidemiologists know that defeating a pandemic requires complete global cooperation.
Destruction of the Soviet Union: a crime without statute of limitations

Statement of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the United Communist Party of Russia (OKP) in connection with the 30th anniversary of the unconstitutional liquidation of the USSR in December 1991.

By United Communist Party of Russia

In December 1991, the largest state on the planet, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the first ever socialist state of workers and peasants, disappeared from the political map of the world.

In the context of the general crisis of Gorbachev's "perestroika" policy, few people paid attention to the blatant violation of all conceivable and unprecedented constitutional procedures during the "dissolution" of the "united socialist" homeland. In its swirling, catastrophic conclusion there was the shameful flight from the sinking ship of the completely bankrupt political elite of the "perestroika-reformers" headed by President Gorbachev, or the finale of a carefully planned action designed to put an end to the history of Soviet socialism, which was played out like clockwork before the eyes of the disoriented and disorganized Soviet people.

The death of the Soviet Union at the time of the proclamation of "perestroika," Soviet society needed changes, but at every turn the rational renewal of the country on the basis of socialism was opposed by voluntarist innovations in the spirit of the convergence of the socialist and capitalist systems. Thus, instead of scientifically grounded improvement of the Soviet command–distribution planning system, measures were imposed on society to introduce capitalist market mechanisms into the socialist economy with the orientation of the entire national economic complex of the country towards the priority of profit, and, consequently, the formation of a system of commodity relations.

This, in turn, created fertile ground for manifestations of individual and collective forms of anarchy, the social differentiation of Soviet society — shameful social phenomena that discredited Soviet socialism in the eyes of the working people. Obvious failures in the ideological sphere and the transformation of the last bastion of international socialism in the eyes of the working people. Obvious failures in the ideological sphere and the transformation of the last bastion of international socialism.

Taken together, the above circumstances and phenomena contributed to the formation of conditions for interventionism, undermined its social base, thereby facilitating the subversive activities of the forces of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism and anti-Bolshevik organizations. This was the only way to destroy the federal union by the simple and clear contrary to common sense was the very justification by the president of the Soviet Union of his own decree to resign from the high powers. "Due to the current situation with the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States." This wording of the decree of President Gorbachev, in which the president of the USSR resigned from his high powers: "Due to the current situation with the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States," was the clearest proof that one material force can be overturned not only by a force similar to it, but law or constiution is nothing more than a reflection of the will of this or that ruling class in society. Exactly thirty years ago, in December 1991, when a coup d'etat was played out like clockwork before the eyes of the disoriented and disorganized Soviet people.

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The waters of what is now known as the Moanalua-Waimalu aquifer have long sustained the life of the place’s peoples and animals of the region. Straddling the traditional boundary between the moku of Kona and 'Ewa, these waters have fed area streams and springs that supported ecosystems that our ancestors cared for and were fed by. The aquifer sits mauka of Ke Awa'awalo'o Pū'Iolua (Pearl Harbor), an area once renowned for its bountiful seafood, like oysters (pipi) and awa (milkfish), as well as the sweet kālō and āwā — all made possible by abundant fresh water. The sacred waters were broken forth to ensure the safety of Kanaloa in nearby Waimalu and Wai'awa, their first stop in Hawai'i. In 1940, just before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Navy began constructing a massive fuel facility for its warships. The Red Hill facility was designed to hold 250 million gallons of petroleum fuel, and three massive, 250-foot tall tanks to hold 250 million gallons each. Despite the high costs, the Navy got what it wanted: an underground, protected facility that could use gravity to deliver fuel to its warships in Pearl Harbor. In 1946, an earthquake hit Oahu, spilling 70,000 barrels of fuel. Despite the Navy’s continuous efforts, chronic leaks would plague the facility for the next seven decades, resulting in at least 180,000 gallons of fuel spillage from the tanks over time. As decades passed, concern grew as more people realized that these aging, leaky tanks were located just 100 feet above what had now become the principal water source for half a million residents of urban Honolulu, from Hālawa to Maunala. In 2014, the Navy reported a massive release of 27,000 gallons of fuel from one of the Red Hill tanks, which had just been inspected. The Navy struck a deal with regulators to, among other things, assess the risk of future releases — a deal which seven years later it has yet to fulfill. In 2019, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i, which had previously sued to require the Navy to obtain a state underground storage tank permit for the Red Hill facility, filed a legal challenge to the Navy's permit application. The board of Water Supply, having expressed its own concerns for years, also joined in this “contentious case hearing.”"I can’t emphasize enough how heightened the case contest hearing revealed that the Red Hill facility may be the biggest environmental disaster that the aquifer has been a foundation of life as we know it on O'ahu, from time immemorial to the present day. Aia i hea ka wai a Kane? Where is the water of Kane? It’s below, in the earth, in the water that rushes forth, in the water placed by Kane and Kanaloa. Spring water, water to drink Water that imubes mana, water that imubes life Life! There is the water of Kane! Shelly Muneoka is a board member of KAHEA. The Hawaiian Environmental Alliance. Kepo’o Keli’ipa’akua is a member of the Kaili’ukopa’ukai Collective; Waynace Chung Tanaka is a WIKIP Instructor with Hulua'apa'a 501(c)3. Wayne Chung Tanaka is the Director of the Sierra Club of Hawai’i. Source: Ka Wai Ola
Corrupción, privatización y colonialismo

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Buenos días audiencia,
El neoliberalismo ha impuesto las privatizaciones de servicios esenciales alrededor del mundo y Puerto Rico no es la excepción. Es más, al ser una colonia dependiente del líder neoliberal, Estados Unidos, Puerto Rico ha servido como un ejemplo de cómo esto puede ser practicado.

El pasado 20 de diciembre, la noticia prevaleciente ha sido la gran corrupción, esta vez de alcaldes y contratistas que están siendo investigados por el FBI. Porque nuestro estado como colonia nos priva de ejercer una verdadera justicia en este campo y esta agencia del gobierno federal estadounidense, a quien no le importa la transparencia de las transacciones en PR, se adjudica este poder solo cuando son los intereses de Estados Unidos los que están comprometidos.

Regalos de lujo, sobornos o coimas, y presiones de todo tipo acompañaron la contratación de una compañía de basura y otra de asfalto, por lo cual se señaló al alcalde de la próspera ciudad de Cataño, quien acaba de renunciar y colaborar con el FBI. También es sabido que el alcalde de la ciudad de Guaynabo, quien acaba de renunciar y colaborar con el FBI, también recibió favores en esta contratación.

Neoliberalismo ha impuesto privatizaciones de especial servicios arrojando al mundo y Puerto Rico sin excepción. Además, como un ejemplo de coloniales líderes, la Unión Soviética, Puerto Rico ha tenido una vez más de concurso de indias donde se practican las más cruces medidas neoliberales sin importar el daño que le hacen al pueblo y al mismo futuro del país.

Son muy pocas las agencias aquí que no se han impactado por esta política, ya sea porque se ha vendido a un ente, generalmente extranjero, o se les impone la subcontratación de empresas con anímico de lucro.

Pero con los contratos privados, llega la corrupción, y esta semana, la noticia prevaleciente ha sido la gran corrupción, esta vez de alcaldes y contratistas que están siendo investigados por el FBI. Porque nuestro estado como colonia nos priva de ejercer una verdadera justicia en este campo y esta agencia del gobierno federal estadounidense, a quien no le importa la transparencia de las transacciones en PR, se adjudica este poder solo cuando son los intereses de Estados Unidos los que están comprometidos.

Los maestros puertorriqueños protestan contra la privatización.

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Neoliberalism has imposed privatizations of essential services around the world and Puerto Rico is no exception. Moreover, as a dependent colony of neoliberal leaders, the United States, Puerto Rico has once again served as a guinea pig where the cruelest neoliberal measures are practiced regardless of the damage they do to the people and the very future of the country.

There are very few agencies here that have not been impacted by this policy, either because they have been sold to an entity, generally foreign, or because they have been imposed with the subcontracting of companies with profit motives.

But with private contracts comes corruption, and this week, the prevailing news has been great corruption, this time of mayors and contractors being investigated by the FBI. Because our state as a colony deprives us of exercising true justice in this field and this agency of the U.S. federal government, who do not care about the transparency of transactions in PR, claims this power only when it is the interests of the United States that are compromised.

Luxury gifts, bribes or kickbacks, and pressures of all kinds accompanied the contracting of a garbage company and an asphalt company, for which the mayor of the prosperous city of Cataño, who has just resigned and collaborated with the FBI, was fingered.

Even if this triggers a series of arrests and resignations, corruption will continue until the people take to the streets en masse to overthrow this colonial system. And we hope it will be sooner rather than later.

Viva Puerto Rico Libre!

From Puerto Rico, for Radio Clarín de Colombia, Berta Joubert-Ceci.

Translated by Walter Lippmann for CubaNews.

Corruption, privatization & colonialism

What right does the Supreme Court have to rule?

Continued from page 9

The court has increasingly relied on what’s been called an emergency “shadow docket” — these are short, frequently unsigned, opinions issued without full briefing and argument — used to take significant steps in a conservative direction with less opportunity for scrutiny.

Three recent examples of the “shadow docket” trend involve Supreme Court action on (1) the extremely restrictive Texas abortion law, (2) a Trump-era policy requiring asylum-seekers to stay in Mexico and (3) throwing out a presidentially appointed temporary moratorium on home evictions.

While the court’s traditional rulings take months of work — from legal briefs to oral arguments — to a decision and this term’s big cases probably won’t be announced until May or June of 2022 — the shadow docket can unfold quickly and move in unpredictable directions.

In an article titled, “Texas lawmak...