PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
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Why the Target Boycott is Central to Defeating MAGA

By African American Equality Commission, CPUSA

Consumer-and community-led boycotts have long been a tradition in the fight against racism in the United States. The "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaigns of the 1930s, which took hold across the country, were led by African American organizations fighting workplace discrimination and segregation. Organizations like the New Negro Alliance in Washington, D.C., picketed retail and drug stores that refused to hire Black clerks or shops that barred Black people from sitting at lunch counters. These boycotts against retail giants led to Supreme Court victories affirming the right to boycott and picket businesses with discriminatory practices.

In the 1940s, organizations like the National Negro Congress took up the fight against transportation companies that refused to hire Black workers. In 1941, alongside Rev. Adam Clayton Powell and the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, New York, a boycott was launched against two private bus companies for their refusal to hire Black workers and for relegating those who were hired to the worst jobs. The boycott led to one of the first affirmative action policies at a private bus company, calling for 17 percent of the workforce to be African American. This effort also contributed to Rev. Powell's election to the New York City Council and, shortly thereafter, to Congress.

In the 1950s, the more widely known Montgomery Bus Boycott took place after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat. A year-long campaign led by Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. ensued, lasting 381 days. Community organizations, along with the Black church, coordinated the effort, including organizing carpools and convincing Black taxi drivers to charge fares equivalent to bus fares. Eventually, a Supreme Court ruling declared bus segregation unconstitutional, delivering a major blow to Jim Crow. [4]

On the international level, the Free South Africa movement organized a global boycott of the fascist apartheid government's products. This also included cultural boycotts led by figures like Harry Belafonte, along with Ruby Dee, and Ossie Davis. Students urged their universities to divest from businesses investing in the apartheid regime. Over 200 U.S. businesses cut ties with South Africa, and the U.S. government eventually imposed sanctions. The movement in the United States was largely African American–led, reflecting the parallels between apartheid and Jim Crow. The apartheid government was ultimately defeated in the early 1990s.

Rev. Jesse Jackson's Operation PUSH in the 1970s and 1980s also played a significant role in securing affirmative action programs in private industry.



Jackson led boycotts against corporations such as CBS, demanding the hiring of more Black writers and producers, and against Coca-Cola for discriminatory hiring practices. These efforts helped establish hiring quotas in industries that had historically excluded Black workers.

Regarding labor-led boycotts, the Filipino- and Latino-led United Farm Workers (UFW) launched a boycott of California grapes in 1965 alongside their strike against grape vineyards in Delano, California. Picket lines were organized in front of grocery stores in major cities, urging shoppers not to buy grapes. Over 14 million people boycotted grapes, and grape sales dropped 30–40 percent by 1969. This strike and boycott eventually forced growers to the bargaining table in 1970 to meet farm workers' demands for better wages and working conditions.

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

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This was followed by the lettuce strike and boycott led by the UFW during the "Salad Bowl" strike, a labor dispute between the UFW and the Teamsters, the latter of whom were accused of signing sweetheart deals with growers. This dispute, along with a renewed grape boycott, contributed to the passage of the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act in 1975, a major victory for migrant workers. Most recently, the UFW launched its first vegetable boycott in over two decades, targeting mushrooms grown by Windmill Farms in Washington State.

Today, in 2025, sections of the billionaire class and corporate America are attempting to assert full control over social and political life by backing the presidency of Donald Trump. Major corporations like Target donated $1 million to the Trump inauguration fund, hoping to curry favor with the new administration. Many of these corporations also began rolling back their diversity initiatives. African Americans, who felt betrayed by the election result, initiated a historic boycott of Target, a company headquartered in Minneapolis, where George Floyd was murdered in 2020. This represented a strategic effort by the Black community to resist the administration's racist agenda.

The boycott, led by local Black women–led grassroots coalitions in Minneapolis and national leaders such as former Sen. Nina Turner, Tamika Mallory, and Rev. Jamal Bryant, has significantly damaged the retail giant's bottom line. A most effective component was the Black church, which organized a 40-day "Target fast" from Ash Wednesday through Easter Sunday. Since the boycott began, Target's stock value has dropped by 57 percent, and its market capitalization has plummeted by more than $2 billion. Foot traffic and online engagement continue to decline.

On the five-year anniversary of George Floyd's murder in May, hundreds of churches and organizations nationwide gathered in front of local Target stores for prayer vigils, calling on the company to meet the movement's demands: a $2 billion commitment to Black businesses, $250 million invested in Black banks, and partnerships with HBCU business programs to cultivate Black entrepreneurs. Boycott leaders also demanded that Target restore its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) commitments. Target CEO Brian Cornell resigned in August 2025.

In Washington, D.C., a coalition of Black clergy, community members, and organizations—including the CPUSA's local club—has picketed the busiest Target store in the Columbia Heights neighborhood for over eight months. The coalition engages the community directly, encouraging consumers not to spend money at Target. This pressure contributed to the closure of the Target store in Cleveland Park, a predominantly white neighborhood, over the summer. Target has also announced a nationwide layoff of 1,800 workers, likely tied to the boycott and management's failure to respond to the demands.

Corporate America's MAGA-initiated retreat from DEI has produced broader civil rights rollbacks, including renewed attacks on Washington, D.C.'s right to self-governance. Until recently, D.C., a federal enclave, lacked the ability to elect a local government.

"Home Rule"—a limited form of self-government without full congressional representation—has again come under assault by the Trump White House and Congress. After the murder of George Floyd, D.C.'s City Council, under intense community pressure, passed police accountability laws banning chokeholds and mandating body cameras. MAGA Republicans in Congress, joined by several moderate Democrats, repealed these measures. Cash bail, abolished in 1992, and the death penalty, have since been reinstated.

Trump's "Big Lie" alleging a crime crisis in D.C. has also justified a military-style occupation of the city and an intensified federal law enforcement presence that disproportionately targets Black and Brown youth. Earlier this year, D.C.'s mayor, in an attempt to appease Trump's anti-DEI crusade, bulldozed the nation's first Black Lives Matter Plaza and mural. Trump has also targeted Black mayors nationwide with ICE raids and military deployments.

Despite these repressive efforts, boycotts and other anti-MAGA initiatives have continued to grow. The labor movement has begun to respond. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT), representing 1.8 million members, passed a resolution endorsing the boycott, becoming the first major union to do so. The Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) passed a similar resolution at its national conference, and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) endorsed the "We Ain't Buying It" holiday shopping freeze, focused on Target. Taken together, these actions may signal the reemergence of the historic Black–labor alliance.

One could argue that the MAGA anti-DEI drive is aimed primarily at Black workers—not only to remove them from the workforce but also to dismantle civil rights protections, beginning with the federal government. Historically, the federal government has been the nation's largest employer of African Americans and a source of relative economic stability. This has contributed to the comparatively high Black per capita wealth in the D.C. suburbs, particularly in Prince George's County.

Under Trump, however, African Americans have been driven out of both government and private-sector jobs, largely due to Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE)–led attacks on DEI and federal employment. More than 300,000 Black women have been pushed out of the workforce, while over 300,000 white men have been added—a trend some have described as affirmative action for white men. Meanwhile, national unemployment has reached eight million, with Black women comprising over 800,000 of the unemployed. In the District of Columbia and surrounding metropolitan areas, the unemployment crisis is nearly ten times worse than the national average.

It should be noted that white men, too, face unemployment and declining job prospects under the Trump administration. Additionally, more than 1.3 million federal workers have had their collective bargaining agreements illegally canceled in a sweeping union-busting campaign. This dismantling of the federal workforce and purging of Black workers echoes the early 20th century under Woodrow Wilson, when federal agencies were resegregated, reinforcing elite support for Jim Crow.

Trump has also illegally fired—or attempted to fire—Black women in senior government positions, including Gwynne Wilcox of the National Labor Relations Board and Lisa Cook of the Federal Reserve Board. He has pursued Black women in elected office as well, including New York Attorney General Letitia James and New Jersey Congresswoman LaMonica McIver. Black history institutions have come under attack, with Vice President JD Vance tasked with purging so-called "illegal DEI" from Smithsonian museums. Budget cuts threaten closures, including the Smithsonian Anacostia Museum in Washington, D.C. Universities such as George Mason University face sanctions for maintaining DEI policies.

In response, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) has called for a national day of action led by the AFL-CIO, reminiscent of the Solidarity Day mobilizations of the 1980s following the Reagan administration's union-busting assault of PATCO.

Moreover, the ultimate goal of Trump and MAGA is to roll back the democratic gains of the Civil Rights Movement entirely. Assaults on the 14th Amendment and efforts to dismantle the Department of Education—a product of Reconstruction—seem to signal an attempt to resurrect the Confederacy politically. Civil rights offices across the federal government have been shuttered, leaving little recourse for cases involving environmental racism, medical neglect, fair housing, or LGBTQ rights. The attack on DEI functions as both wedge and smokescreen for the broader project of dismantling bourgeois democracy in favor of a fascist dictatorship. Black workers are the first targets, but all workers—women, immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, and others—are under assault.

While large demonstrations such as the No Kings protests, led by the 50501 movement, Indivisible, MoveOn, and sections of organized labor, have taken place nationwide, these efforts have often remained disconnected from the broader Black freedom movement.

Is this due to a lack of concrete anti-racist demands? Or an unwillingness to address the attack on DEI within their own ranks in favor of a liberal "back to normal" politics? Rev. Al Sharpton's March on Wall Street focused on DEI drew thousands, but was it sufficient? Could the CBTU's call for a Solidarity Day provide the missing link to unite these movements and mobilize millions in Washington?

The March on Washington movement of the 1940s, led by A. Philip Randolph, demanded that the Roosevelt administration desegregate war industries and federal jobs. Randolph threatened to bring 200,000 Black workers to the capital. Roosevelt ultimately conceded, issuing an executive order banning discrimination in defense industries. Though the march was called off, it laid the groundwork for the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, organized by Randolph in coalition with Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., the United Auto Workers, and others. When 250,000 marched in 1963, concrete demands helped win historic gains such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The CBTU's initiative stands firmly within this tradition.

Any renewed march must advance clear demands: reinstating DEI across government and private industry; restoring and expanding union contracts for federal workers; ending ICE raids and attacks on immigrants; and removing military forces from U.S. cities. These demands can broaden the movement and center the struggle for equality as essential to defeating MAGA fascism.

The growing centrality of the fight against racism is evident, with Black organized labor and the Black church leading the charge through demands for DEI, workers' rights, and the Target boycott. As the midterm elections approach, more union locals must pass resolutions supporting the boycott, DEI, and a national Day of Solidarity. The path forward points toward a Third Reconstruction: a multiracial democracy with a working-class "stamp," that is, where worker's issues are placed at the top of the governing agenda.

Key U.S. Senate primary heats up Illinois politics

By Mark Gruenberg

CHICAGO—With the key Democratic primary in deep-blue Illinois only three months away, on St. Patrick's Day, politics heated up in what will be a whirlwind year in 2026 in the Prairie State.

The marquee race is for an open U.S. Senate seat, where long-term incumbent Democrat Dick Durbin is retiring. Democratic Gov J.B. Pritzker, who makes the short list of 2028 party White House hopefuls, is expected to coast to a third four-year term in Springfield.

Pritzker's lieutenant governor, Juliana Stratton, is one of three top-tier contenders for the party nod to succeed Durbin, along with Reps. Robin Kelly and Raja Krishnamoorthi. Pritzker will have to announce a new running mate.

In two candidate sessions—one a debate and the other a Zoom call where each spoke separately—Stratton stood out as the most progressive of the major U.S. Senate hopefuls.



She championed Medicare For All, says raising the federal minimum wage would be one of her top three legislative priorities, and promised to continue to be a tough fighter against tyrannical GOP President Donald Trump.

Stratton also told both debates she refuses to take corporate campaign cash–unlike Kelly and Krishnamoorthi–and touts her statewide campaigning for a labor-backed and successful constitutional amendment inserting the right to organize into the state's basic charter. The amendment also bans right-to-work (for less) laws, a first nationally.

Democrats Kelly, Krishnamoorthi, and Reps. Danny Davis, Jesus "Chuy" Garcia, and Jan Schakowsky are all leaving the U.S. House, setting off mad scrambles for five of Illinois' 17 congressional seats. All five are reliably Democratic. The delegation overall is 14-3 Democratic.

The Illinois AFL-CIO decided in December on no endorsement in the Senate contest and four of the House races. The exception was Schakowsky's district, covering Chicago's North Shore and northern and northwestern suburbs. The AFL-CIO endorsed Evanston Mayor Daniel Biss.

All of this, plus five lesser-known senatorial hopefuls who appeared at a second panel in the second of two recent candidate forums, makes for a lively joust in the Land of Lincoln.

The state and city AFL-CIO hosted the first forum, a live session in early December at the Electrical Workers (IBEW) hall on South State Street in Chicago. Stratton, Kelly, and Krishnamoorthi spoke and took questions.

The Northwest Suburban branch of Indivisible, the progressive organization, hosted an all-Zoom session on December 17. It drew 1,000 viewers, those three candidates, and five lesser-known senatorial hopefuls.

"I ran for state representative 10 years ago," starting her political career, "because my [Republican] state rep supported" a plan by then-Gov. Bruce Rauner, a right-wing Republican, "to eliminate health care for seniors," including her father, in a nursing home with Alzheimer's, Stratton said. She won.

At the second session, Stratton also stressed "affordability," like other Democrats who have run and won on that issue this year. But while others talk about higher prices and inflation under the GOP Donald Trump regime, Stratton's priorities were "I want to raise the [federal] minimum wage, and enact Medicare for All. Health care is getting too expensive.

"Too many people are deciding between going to the hospital and paying the rent," she said.

At the second session, she also promised to be a constant fighter against Trump and his vicious and violent ICE agents sweeping the city in "Operation Midway Blitz."

The agents round up even citizens, adults, and kids, and ship them off to a detention center in suburban Broadview, or to prisons in Florida and Louisiana, and to foreign deportation—all without hearings, due process, or even contact with families and lawyers.

Trump's overall threat to democracy and freedom got short shrift, again, except for Stratton. She raised it in her closing statement at the second forum.

After pledging to "fight the status quo," she added: "We see Donald Trump attacking all our freedoms while Gov. Pritzker and I have defended them for seven years. I'll bring that [attitude] to Washington."

Stratton not only swore off corporate campaign contributions, but noted Kelly and Krishnamoorthi don't. OpenSecrets.org, which tracks campaign and lobbying finance, reports 61% of Kelly's funding in her 2024 congressional race was from special interest campaign finance committees, or PACs, with drug company and health care PACs in the lead—and labor far behind.

When Stratton raised the issue at the first forum, Kelly shot back that "I'm not a cheap date."

The bulk of Krishnamoorthi's money–$16 million last time around–came from individual big givers, headed by $333,000 from partners and others at the white-shoe Loop law firm of Kirkland and Ellis,

He's transferred the funds to his Senate campaign account.

In both forums, Krishnamoorthi emphasized his immigrant roots and his up-from-poverty story as reflecting "the American Dream." He said he's thankful to wake up daily in a nation that accepts him and his family. At IBEW, he catered to what he thought would be a key interest to manufacturing workers: Cracking down on unfair Chinese trade. He also pledged "to make sure ICE is reined in."

He ignored Stratton's point about the corrupting influence of big corporate money coming into pols' campaign coffers.

But at the second forum, Krishnamoorthi stated he "would hold Trump accountable" for the ICE roundups and other abuses. He was not specific about how. "I've stood up to bullies before, and I plan to stand up to the biggest bully of them all," he said. "Donald Trump is a weak man, who tries to cozy up to our adversaries...We need change at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue."

And while Krishnamoorthi gave lip service support to Medicare For All, he said lawmakers must repeal Trump's so-called "Big Beautiful Bill" first. That law cut Medicare, Medicaid, and food stamps, all to help give a $4.5 trillion 10-year tax break to the 1%.

After the Medicare For All comment, he advocated a "crackdown on anti-competitive pharmacy benefit managers and insurance companies." Neither the repeal nor Medicare For All is possible with Trump in the White House.

Kelly took the same tack, but said "we have to extend the tax credits first" for the millions of people who get health care coverage via the Affordable Care Act, aka Obamacare. Just before that second forum, the GOP-run House, on a virtual party-line vote, rejected the extension.

At both forums, Kelly, 69, emphasized her long tenure in the U.S. House and that she could get things done in a bipartisan manner, the way Congress used to operate and doesn't anymore.

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She didn't mention her support for Medicare For All until, briefly, in the second session. She did, however, propose increasing taxes on billionaires "to pay for education, health care and housing."

Earlier in December, no Senate hopeful got the state AFL-CIO endorsement. A statewide candidate needed 2/3rds of the 120 delegates for it, state federation Communications Director Alyssa Goodstein told Press Associates Union News Service.

In that race and in others, Goodstein added, multiple candidates were qualified, but none reached the threshold. A state federation endorsement unleashes money and people to help unions, especially those with smaller political operations, she explained. The state federation has allotted $2 million for such aid.

At the second, zoomed, session, sponsored by the Indivisible branch, the lesser-known Senate contenders—Steve Botsford, Chicago criminal defense lawyer Shawn Brown, Christopher Swann, solar energy entrepreneur Jonathan Dean, Dr. Bryan Maxwell, and Marine-turned Chicago school teacher Kevin Ryan–joined the fray in a separate panel.

Since it was totally via video, those five didn't get a chance to debate Stratton, Kelly, and Krishnamoorthi, or each other.

All but Brown supported Medicare for All. "It's interesting, but will it pass?" he asked. "Eliminating private health insurance is a problem." He said he has his own plan, but did not go into detail about it.

Maxwell recited a platform of measures which, he admitted, are reruns of legislation the then-Democratic Congress enacted under President Joe Biden.

Trump is trying to repeal them all.

"I'm terrified by economic inequality," Dean exclaimed. "I want to change the structure and priorities of members of Congress" to deal with it. "For 40 years, we've been prioritizing the billionaires and trickle-down economics. I've never seen anything trickling down."

Swann touted creating "a guaranteed federal jobs program" for young people, who face a job market closed to them, except for low-paying employment. "In the Great Depression, we had guaranteed federal jobs" under FDR's Works Progress Administration. "We need that."

Botsford, an economist, blasted Trump's seesawing on tariffs. "We need to repeal them," he said. And Ryan asked, "Why haven't we raised the minimum wage?" His answer: "Because our government is working for those who exploit labor."

And most blasted not just Trump but also the national Democratic Party leaders for being weak in their responses to the tyrannical president. The moderator did not ask any Senate hopeful if they would back Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., viewed by many progressives as weak, if he seeks re-election to the party's top Senate job after the national elections next November.

The most caustic comment on that came from Dean. The GOP is held in low regard, he said, but the Democrats are even lower. The party's establishment faces what he called "the Republican media machine, and they run laps around our elected Democrats. Everybody loves Democratic policy, but not the actual Democrats. They see Democrats folding, not fighting."

Victor Grossman, powerful voice for a better world, dead at 97

By John Wojcik

The world is, in many ways, a far better place than it would be had Victor Grossman, a U.S. Communist who defected to East Germany at the age of 24, not lived his incredible life. He died of pneumonia in Berlin on Dec. 17.

John Reed, the American Communist and journalist who first became known for covering the Mexican Revolution, achieved even more fame with his book, *Ten Days that Shook the World*. Without that book, millions around the world would never have learned what really happened in the Russian Revolution of 1917. The capitalist ruling classes on our planet were not about to let us know.

Without the information we received from Victor Grossman after his defection to the GDR in 1952, we might never have learned much of what we did about the struggles to create a better and socialist world in the eastern part of Germany and much of Europe after World War II.



While Americans were being taught to question and disbelieve the results of those efforts, Grossman was busy showing us why we shouldn't. Over a span of nearly 40 years, through his books, articles, and lectures, he told those of us back in his home country what was really happening in the GDR and other socialist countries.

With knowledge comes freedom, and it was Victor Grossman who, by sharing his knowledge about the building of socialism, along with its victories and setbacks, that contributed so heavily to our ability to maintain our freedom.

Why would a 24-year-old Harvard graduate leave his home country in 1952 and "escape" to a country his compatriots were told was "behind the Iron Curtain?"

It wasn't the first surprising thing Victor did. As soon as he graduated from Harvard and said farewell to his communist and leftist comrades there, he ended up in the working-class neighborhoods of Buffalo, N.Y., where he worked with Hattie Lumpkin and helped organize steel workers fighting for the right to a union.

When I met him for the first time in 1980 in Berlin, when I brought a group of U.S. actors to the GDR under the auspices of the U.S. Committee for Friendship with the GDR, he told me that his days as a communist union organizer in Buffalo were some of the proudest of his life.

In 1950, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, which was filling its ranks for the imperialist war in Korea. Instead of being dispatched to Korea, however, he was stationed at an Army base in West Germany, near the Austrian border, as part of the U.S. occupation of West Germany.

Soon after his arrival there, it became clear that McCarthyism was rearing its ugly head in the U.S. Army, with both former and then-present members of the Communist Party being rounded up and jailed. After receiving a letter ordering him to report to a military judge for having been a member of prohibited progressive organizations in the past, Victor made a choice that changed his life forever.

Rather than facing the same fate as other persecuted and imprisoned soldiers, he decided to defect. Under cover of darkness, without the aid of a GPS or anything like it, he made his way to the shores of the Danube River. Relying on only a crude compass, he carefully selected a point at which to take the plunge into the icy cold water.

Victor calculated that, if he swam in a straight line, it would land him inside the Soviet occupation zone of Austria on the other side. Luckily, his calculations were accurate. There were no Soviet soldiers waiting for him, but after wandering for a few hours, a local person found him and took him to the Soviet authorities in the area.

Naturally, it took a while for the Soviet authorities to verify the authenticity of his story. U.S. intelligence services, of course, were not beyond infiltrating areas in which they had a special interest, so the Soviets were initially suspicious.

Eventually convinced, the Soviet authorities sent him to the newborn German Democratic Republic, which had been formed in 1949 after the Western powers, in violation of the Potsdam Agreement which ended the war, illegally united their zones into the Federal Republic of (West) Germany.

The original deal after the war was to form a demilitarized, de-nazified, and unified Germany, with all major industries nationalized. It was the West that violated the deal, setting up a separate currency and turning over many companies to their former Nazi owners, thus beginning the division of Germany which, of course, they blamed on the Soviet Union.

Victor knew all of this, so although he may have been unsure about what would happen to him when he defected, he never regretted the decision. When he met his beloved Renate, whom he married and with whom he raised a family, he was sure he had done the right thing.

Victor was born Stephen Wechsler to Jewish parents in the United States on March 11, 1928. He grew up in the harsh years of the Great Depression, learning first-hand what the capitalist system had in store for the working class. Stephen Wechsler became Victor Grossman after his arrival in the GDR in order to shield his family in America from any retaliation and persecution from the U.S. government during the McCarthyite terror visited on communists, leftists, and trade unionists.

Among his many writings were his books, *Crossing the River* and *A Socialist Defector: From Harvard to Karl Marx Allee*.

Both are filled with details about not only Grossman's personal life but also the history of the building of socialism in the GDR. There is no course in political science in the universities of the United States that teaches, from his unique perspective, the socialist side of the class divide, about both the development of and the reasons for the demise of the system in the GDR.

They also leave the reader with hope and an understanding that socialism, in 40 years, cannot undo entirely what capitalism had centuries to carry out. They detail the incredible efforts by capitalist countries to sabotage the development of socialism every step of the way.

But Victor's later life, with capitalism restored, for now, in the former GDR, shows that the struggle goes on. His apartment on Karl Marx Allee in Berlin became a headquarters for the tenants' rights movement to meet on a regular basis. He helped lead the effort to bring about a five-year rent freeze in Berlin.

He was at every peace demonstration in Berlin fighting hard against the attempts by the political leadership in Germany to move in an imperialist and militarist direction.

He was an active member of the Communist Platform of Die Linke, Germany's Left Party, and contributed heavily to the victories that catapulted them into the government in Berlin and more recently to garner the support of 40% of the young voters in Germany.

For many years, his articles appeared monthly and sometimes even more frequently on the pages of *People's World*, providing our readers with his unique understanding of life during and after socialism in Germany and in Europe more broadly.

"Victor experienced life on both sides of the Cold War divide, growing up in the capitalist U.S., then spnding 38 years of his adult life in socialist East Germany," C.J. Atkins, managing editor of *People's World* said after Grossman's death.

"The 'socialist defector' knew both worlds and spoke honestly about their respective pluses and minuses, never holding back to please anyone's agenda."

Victor never forgot his roots in his U.S. homeland and remained a member of the CPUSA—which he joined 80 years ago, in 1945—until the day he died. He was a comrade and friend to many of us around the globe.

He was proud to return to the United States in 2019, when he attended the national convention of the Communist Party USA as a representative of the Communist Platform of Die Linke.

Joe Sims, co-chair of the Communist Party USA called him "a beacon, a giant in the fights for peace, democracy, and socialism whom we will never forget."

'60 Minutes' report on CECOT leaked online after CBS spiked it from broadcast

By Brandon Chew

A *60 Minutes* segment on human rights abuses at the Terrorism Confinement Center (CECOT) prison in El Salvador leaked online Monday, after it was removed from Sunday night's broadcast in a move a CBS News journalist described as "corporate censorship."

The Canadian outlet Global News aired the episode without the "Inside CECOT" segment, but the wrong episode was uploaded to its Global TV app, according to *Variety*. The 14-minute segment quickly spread on social media apps like Substack and X.

In the segment, journalist Sharyn Alfonsi interviews two men who were among the 252 Venezuelans deported to CECOT in El Salvador earlier this year. The Trump administration claimed the men were terrorists and invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 to justify deporting them immediately without due process.

"When we got there, the CECOT director was talking to us. The first thing he told us was that we would never see the light of day or night again. 'Welcome to hell. I'll make sure you never leave,'" said Luis Munoz Pinto, a college student in Venezuela who sought asylum in the U.S.

Pinto was detained by customs for six months before being sent to CECOT.

"There was blood everywhere, screams, people crying, people who couldn't take it and were urinating and vomiting on themselves," he said. "Four guards grabbed me, and they beat me until I bled, until the point of agony. They knocked our faces against the wall. That was when they broke one of my teeth."

Pinto and William Lazada Sanchez, another Venezuelan national interviewed by 60 Minutes, said detainees were often sent to "the island," a solitary confinement cell.

"The island is a little room where there's no light, no ventilation, nothing," Sanchez said. "It's a cell for punishment where you can't see your hand in front of your face. After they locked us in, they came to beat us every half hour, and they pounded on the door with their sticks to traumatize us while we were in there."

"The torture was never-ending," Pinto said. "They would take you there and beat you for hours and leave you locked in there for days."

CECOT was built in 2022 as part of Salvadorian President Nayib Bukele's so-called "War Against the Gangs," in which tens of thousands of people alleged to be gang members have been arrested.



In November, Human Rights Watch released a report stating that CECOT detainees are subject to "constant beatings" and inhumane treatment such as inadequate food, a lack of hygiene and sanitation, a lack of health care and medicine, a lack of recreational or educational activities, and sexual abuse.

The report determined that 48.8% of the Venezuelans sent to El Salvador in March had no criminal record in the United States, and only 8 of them (3.1%) had been convicted of a violent or potentially violent offense.

"These people are migrants, and the sad reality is the U.S. government tried to make an example out of them," Juan Pappier, the Americas deputy director at Human Rights Watch, told *60 Minutes*.

"They sent them to a place where they were likely to be tortured," Pappier continued. "To send migrants across Latin America, the message: that they should not come to the United States."

In the segment, Alfonsi said the Department of Homeland Security denied requests for an interview and referred all questions about CECOT to the Salvadorian government, which did not respond to CBS News' requests for comment.

Less than three hours before the Sunday broadcast, CBS announced that the "Inside CECOT" segment would be pulled.

Bari Weiss, the newly appointed "editor-in-chief" of CBS News, held the story because no Trump administration officials were included. She said it would air at a later date and "needed additional reporting."

"I held that story because it wasn't ready," Weiss told staffers, according to a source who spoke to *The Washington Post* on the condition of anonymity.

"The story presented very powerful testimony of abuse at CECOT, but that testimony has already been reported on by places like the *[New York] Times*," Weiss said. "The public knows that Venezuelans have been subjected to horrific treatment in this prison. So to run a story on this subject, two months later, we simply need to do more."

Weiss first saw the segment on Thursday and asked for "a significant amount of new material to be added," according to a report from *The New York Times*.

Weiss suggested the segment include an interview with Stephen Miller, White House deputy chief of staff, according to two sources who spoke with the Times. Weiss also reportedly questioned the use of the word "migrants" to describe the Venezuelan men.

Alfonsi said her story was "factually correct" and had been screened multiple times and cleared by CBS's lawyers and its standards department. She criticized Weiss for making a "political" decision to pull the story and said the Trump administration's refusal to provide comment was "a tactical maneuver designed to kill the story."

"If the administration's refusal to participate becomes a valid reason to spike the story, we have effectively handed them a 'kill switch' for any reporting they find inconvenient," Alfonsi said in an email to colleagues.

"If the standard for airing a story becomes 'the government must agree to be interviewed,' then the government effectively gains control over the *60 Minutes* broadcast," Alfonsi continued. "We go from an investigative powerhouse to a stenographer for the state."

Alfonsi went on to say that without a credible explanation for pulling the story, "the public will correctly identify this as corporate censorship."

This controversy has helped to amplify questions regarding Weiss's role as editor, which critics say is to help CBS News appeal to President Donald Trump after he filed a lawsuit against the network last year.

Weiss was appointed to the newly-created position of "editor-in-chief" at CBS News in October after billionaire David Ellison—who owns CBS's parent company Paramount Skydance—acquired Weiss's news site *The Free Press* for $150 million.

Ellison's acquisition of Paramount was approved by the Trump administration after Paramount paid $16 million to settle a lawsuit he brought against *60 Minutes* over the show's editing of an interview with then-presidential candidate Kamala Harris.

Paramount is currently making a hostile takeover bid to acquire Warner Bros. Discovery, with David's father, Larry Ellison, guaranteeing $40.4 billion of equity financing for the company's offer. This comes after rival company Netflix struck a deal to buy Warner Bros. Discovery for $72 billion.

David Ellison has reportedly been trying to court President Trump to support Paramount's bid, although Trump complained on Truth Social last week about *60 Minutes* coverage of him.

"For those people that think I am close with the new owners of CBS, please understand that *60 Minutes* has treated me far worse since the so-called 'takeover,' than they have ever treated me before," Trump said.

Earlier this month, Weiss hosted a town hall event with Turning Point USA CEO Erika Kirk, highlighting the newsroom's right-wing shift in content. CBS News then announced its creatively titled "Things That Matter" town hall series sponsored by Bank of America, which is set to feature Vice President JD Vance, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, and Maryland Gov. Wes Moore.

The Erika Kirk interview appears to have been a ratings flop, however, with numbers showing an 11% decrease in viewership compared to the network's standard programming year-over-year, and a 41% decrease among the coveted advertising demographic of viewers aged 25 to 54; this may be a sign of viewers' reaction to Weiss's changes at CBS News.

People's World fund drive completed – PLUS 2025's Top Ten stories

By C. J. Atkins

You've done it again. Working together, the friends and supporters of People's World across the country contributed $200,000 to the annual fund drive that keeps the lights on at PeoplesWorld.org and sends reporters to picket lines and demonstrations.

The first milestone was May Day, when the amount in the door was $135,000—a big achievement after just three months of work, especially considering all the demands the new Trump administration put on the labor and people's movements.

Through the busy mobilizing months of summer, another $30,000 came in, putting the total at $165,000 by the time Labor Day came around.

Finally, with just a couple of weeks to spare before the end of the year, the generosity and commitment of the PW community put us over the top, hitting the $200,000 goal.

That's why the members of the Fund Drive Committee and the Editorial Board want to close out 2025 by saying: **THANK YOU!**

And thank you also to the Friends of People's World in Illinois and Connecticut who kept going even when the goal had been fulfilled. They put on major events in mid-December, bringing in cash that will give the 2026 fundraising effort a head start.

In Chicago, 135 tickets were sold for the yearly People's World Gala. Even though the thermometer read a mere 3°F, the Windy City was in a fighting mood. Labor activists and long-time PW supporters weren't deterred by the cold. They came out to hear Jon Schleuss, president of the NewsGuild, who spoke on the theme, "Freedom of the Press is a Worker Issue."

Out in New Haven on the same day, more than 300 showed up to celebrate the nominees for the 2025 Amistad Awards, now nicknamed "the Amis," which honor new heroes of the labor and people's movements every year. More than 60 organizations were represented.

Now, with the thank yous out of the way, let's take a look back at People's World's "greatest hits" of 2025—**the TOP TEN stories of the year**, ranked according to total number of reads.

With the return of Trump to the White House for a second time, you might guess that a lot of the most popular articles on PW would be stories exposing the pro-corporate MAGA offensive and the racist outrages of the administration...and you'd be exactly right.

But for every report on the creep toward fascism, there was another dispatch detailing the fightback by the labor, women's, civil rights, immigrant rights, peace, youth, LGBTQ, and other movements.

Action, action, action—that was the theme of the year, and we're optimistic that defensive resistance will evolve into a people's offensive as we head toward the 2026 midterms and as Trump's lame-duck status sets in.

So, without further ado, here's what you were all reading most in 2025. Keep reading, keep sharing, keep writing, and keep contributing in 2026.

People's World TOP TEN Stories of 2025

1. Trump plan to end free elections in 2026 and 2028 revealed

2. Trump lawyers tell Supreme Court that Constitution doesn't apply to the president

3. 'Hands Off!' mass rallies scheduled nationwide for April 5

4. ICE agents arrest Oregon doctor as he drops off kid at preschool

5. Thousands mass at Treasury Department to demand end to Musk coup

6. Trump uses Charlie Kirk's killing to declare war on the left and democracy

7. Trump's catalog of constitutional crimes long and getting longer

8. The numbers are in: Economic blackout dragged down retail traffic

9. Before minimum wage hike is revealed, Senate Republicans vote it down

10. Costco warehouse workers prepare to strike





INTERNATIONAL NEWS

France: Boulazac Isle Manoire celebrates 70 years of Communist governance

By Callum Wilson

Boulazac Isle Manoire, a commune in the Southwest of France, since 1953, has had one Communist mayor after another. The first Communist mayor was Lucien Dutard, a former school teacher and a resistance fighter during WW2. Dutard also served in the National Assembly.

Since 2024, the Communist Party mayor is Fanny Castaignede, continuing the long tradition of Communists in office.

The Communist municipal government boasts a massive cultural center, the National Circus Center, equipped with a range of facilities dedicated to circus arts, as well as a 12,000 square foot media library. The municipal government provides children aged 6 and up with a Culture Pass, allowing every child and teenager to have access to the municipal services, regardless of income. The government also has a similar program for athletics, where a municipal sports pass allows youths to access the gymnasiums, soccer and tennis courts, the fencing halls, and outdoor spaces free of charge.

Seniors are not left behind, either. Two municipal employees maintain daily contact with those senior citizens who are without families. And since early 2025, the government has created a municipal health insurance plan, allowing everyone, especially retirees, to access quality health coverage.

Boulazac Isle Manoire is a microcosm of socialist society and a shining example of Communist government in action.

“For 70 years, faced with liberalism which weakens social bonds and fuels fear and rejection, we have remained faithful to this demanding objective: to make the community a place of emancipation, social justice, and shared progress,” according to Fanny Castaignede, mayor of Boulazac-Isle-Manoire and regional Councillor for Nouvelle-Aquitaine.

¿El Distrito de Columbia de Trump? Podría suceder

By David Cavendish

Los videos de los operarios instalando el letrero circularon por internet y la televisión recientemente. Se veía a hombres subidos a escaleras atornillando las letras que formaban el nombre de Donald J. Trump en la fachada del Centro John F. Kennedy para las Artes Escénicas en Washington, D.C.

El consejo de administración del Centro había votado (supuestamente) por unanimidad para renombrar el emblemático edificio como «Centro Trump-Kennedy». Me pregunto qué relación tiene Donald Trump con las artes.

John F. Kennedy, aunque nunca se consideró un intelectual, organizaba cenas para destacadas figuras del mundo del arte y patrocinaba actuaciones de artistas notables en la Casa Blanca.

¿Pero Trump? Que lo resuma Steve Wynn, el magnate de los casinos cuya esposa forma parte del consejo:
“Lo que puedo ver es que el nombre es una especie de reflejo de los hombres que le han dado vitalidad, primero, John Kennedy. Ahora, Donald Trump. Esos dos hombres fueron quienes más contribuyeron a mantenerlo interesante y relevante.”

Recientemente, el presidente le puso su nombre al Instituto de Paz de los Estados Unidos, ahora conocido como el Instituto de Paz Trump. Un absurdo sin precedentes; basta con preguntarles a los inocentes pescadores venezolanos asesinados frente a las costas de Venezuela.

Estos cambios podrían ser solo el comienzo de una oleada de cambios de nombre que podrían transformar la capital de nuestra nación y el país en su conjunto.

¿Qué tal los Archivos Nacionales Trump? ¿O el Museo Nacional de Historia Estadounidense Trump? ¿La Galería Nacional de Arte Trump? ¿El Museo y Jardín de Esculturas Trump-Hirshhorn, todos ellos parte de la Institución Smithsonian Trump?

¿Qué tal la Biblioteca del Congreso de Trump? (¿Se imaginan qué libros aportaría a sus colecciones?)

Por si fuera poco, ¿qué me dicen de algunas de las principales atracciones? ¿El Monumento a Lincoln de Trump? ¿El Monumento a Washington de Trump?

¿O incluso la Casa Blanca de Donald J. Trump? (Ya ha hecho suficiente para arruinar el edificio). ¿Quizás la Cámara de Representantes y el Senado podrían reunirse bajo la cúpula del Capitolio de Trump?

Para colmo, ¿por qué no simplemente renombrar nuestra capital como el «Distrito de Columbia de Trump»?

Me estremezco al pensarlo, pero no es tan descabellado como podríamos creer. El ego descontrolado del actual inquilino de la Casa Blanca hace que todo sea posible.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
January 10, 2026

Debunked far-right claims in Minnesota lead to anti-Somali hate, childcare freeze

By Colton Baldus

EDITOR'S NOTE: *As this article was being prepared for publication, on the morning of Jan. 7, news broke of a shooting in Minneapolis involving ICE. Early details suggest a bystander was shot by a federal agent during a deportation operation. Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey issued a statement on X saying: "The presence of federal immigration enforcement agents is causing chaos in our city. We're demanding ICE to leave the city immediately. We stand rock solid with our immigrant and refugee communities."*

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn.—The Trump administration and MAGA are pulling out all the stops in their attacks on Minnesota—the Nick Shirley daycare fraud "investigation," a pause on federal child care funding, the "largest ever" ICE enforcement effort, and unprecedented racist attacks on Somali immigrants. They're all part of a continued effort by the right to push the deportation agenda in a Democratic-governed state, defund programs that working people rely on, and flip Minnesota to the Republican column in the 2026 midterm elections.

Amid ongoing probes of fraud related to abuse of public funds in the state, on the day after Christmas, right-wing influencer Nick Shirley posted a video on YouTube called "I Investigated Minnesota's Billion Dollar Fraud Scandal." In the vigilante-style video, he alleges that several Somali-run daycare centers are not providing a service but receiving funding anyway from the government. Shirley claims that the centers are empty, with no children present.

In the video, he can be seen going to several different childcare establishments with as many as eight people accompanying him, some of whom were masked, causing reasonable concerns that they may be ICE). The group proceeds to harass employees to the point where Shirley is kicked out of several buildings.

His "investigation" video was debunked four days later by local news organization WCCO, which conducted its own investigation and found that all but two childcare centers visited had active licenses and had been visited by state regulators within the last six months with no evidence of fraud being found. They also had videos of children entering one of the day cares debunking Shirley's claim head-on.

Facts didn't matter for the Trump administration, which swiftly froze all childcare funding to the state of Minnesota and nationwide on Dec. 30, with Health and Human Services Director Jim O'Neill citing Shirley's video in a post on X.



Since late November, Trump has stepped up his already hateful rhetoric against Somali-Americans in Minnesota, including attacking against Rep. Ilhan Omar and calling the entire Somali immigrant community "garbage," accusing them of "destroying America." During his first administration, the president called Somalia a "shithole" country and tried to block Somali people from traveling to the U.S.

However, the escalation in his rhetoric right before the holiday season coincided with a major escalation of ICE operations in Minnesota. The Shirley video simply became the fuel for the MAGA right's further demonization of Somali immigrants ahead of the arrival of deportation agents.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Debunked far-right claims in Minnesota lead to anti-Somali hate, childcare freeze

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Shortly after the video's release, the Trump administration announced it would be looking at denaturalizing Somali immigrants, using allegations of fraud as justification. As should be expected, the propaganda offensive is generating hate on the ground. There have been break-ins at Somali-owned daycares after Shirley's video, and recently Trump upped the number of federal agents being deployed to Minneapolis as part of his immigration crackdown to 2,000.

His offensive has gone far beyond attacks on immigrants, though, as the manufactured Minnesota scandal became the justification for a total nationwide childcare funding freeze, affecting working-class families from coast to coast. Parents rely on those funds to be able to send their children somewhere safe while they are at work; and tens of thousands of childcare workers' jobs also depend on that federal money.

Despite the administration's claim that the decision to freeze funds is a response to alleged fraud, cutting childcare programs and programs like Head Start are a component of the far-right's Project 2025 policy blueprint.

The document, which guided the 2024 Republican election campaign, prioritizes stay-at-home parents and in-home childcare—part of its ideological advocacy of traditional family structures and objection to public spending on social needs.

In addition to promoting a conservative social and political agenda, the fraud allegations and deportation onslaught are also an attempt by the MAGA right to strengthen Republican chances in Minnesota for the 2026 midterm elections. Several GOP candidates have put "fraud" claims front-and-center in their campaigns, including Minnesota House Speaker Lisa Demuth, who admitted to helping Nick Shirley with his video.

Republicans have already successfully used alleged fraud related to Medicare payments to pressure Gov. Tim Walz to end his re-election campaign, and they continue insisting on his resignation from office. More officials will likely end up in their crosshairs.

Legitimate enquiries are underway or have been carried out to investigate abuses of public funds, but the fixation on fraud by Trump and MAGA are not about protecting the people of Minnesota or tax dollars—they are about pushing reactionary politics, whipping up anti-immigrant sentiment, and locking in Republican odds for the midterms.

Trump imposes blockade, admits Venezuela war is about oil

By C. J. Atkins

Oil, oil, oil, oil, oil—the word appeared five times in President Donald Trump's Truth Social post on Tuesday announcing the U.S. military was imposing a "TOTAL AND COMPLETE BLOCKADE" of sanctioned oil tankers going into and out of Venezuela.

The White House occupant's inability to restrain himself from openly coveting the South American nation's natural resources exposed the emptiness of his administration's claims that U.S. preparations for war in the Caribbean have any real connection to drug trafficking.

After illegal boat strikes that have so far killed 95 people and the stealing of an oil tanker in an act of piracy a week ago, Trump signaled that the next act in U.S. imperialism's campaign to overthrow the government of Nicolás Maduro is about to open.

Venezuela holds 18% of the world's proven oil reserves, making it the most petroleum-rich nation on Earth. In his announcement, Trump demanded it "return to the United States of America all of the Oil, Land, and other Assets that they previously stole from us." He bragged of assembling the "largest Armada ever" and threatened the people of Venezuela with a "shock...like nothing they have ever seen before."

When it comes to "stolen oil fields," Trump is presumably referring to the major oil industry nationalizations that took place under late Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez nearly 20 years ago. It seems that energy giants like ExxonMobil, ConocoPhillips, BP, Total, Chevron, and others neither forgot nor forgave the Bolivarian Revolution's expropriations of the early 2000s.



Instead of bolstering their profits, Venezuelan oil money has instead funded health, education, literacy, housing, and other social missions for the past few decades. Trump is out to help them recover some of those lost revenues. He asked energy executives for $1 billion in campaign cash during the 2024 election, promising he'd deliver their policy wish list in return. That meant environmental deregulation at home and, as is now apparent, war abroad.

The overthrow of the Venezuelan government, which has charted a path independent of U.S. control since 1999, would serve several other imperial goals beyond the seizure of oil riches. Since returning to office, Trump has been engaged in an effort to re-build a U.S.-dominated bloc, or sphere of influence, encompassing all of the Western Hemisphere.

His tariff wars, sanctions policies, and new National Security Strategy are all aimed at locking out competition for U.S. monopoly capital in North and South America—guaranteeing control of both markets and the natural resources needed to fuel the high-tech economy.

Venezuela—which maintains close economic ties with China, in particular, along with Russia, India, and other potential challengers to U.S. capitalist dominance—stands as a hurdle in the campaign to construct this U.S.-dominated hemispheric bloc.

Replacing its government with a puppet state friendly to U.S. corporate control would install another pliant partner akin to those in Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and—as of this past weekend—Chile.

An armed embargo of oil exports from Venezuela also serves to tighten the noose around the neck of another victim of U.S. blockades—socialist Cuba. The country is highly dependent on its Venezuelan ally for energy, especially with its economy already reeling from the worsening effects of Washington's six-decade economic siege.

Furthermore, a war at this moment would conveniently distract from Trump's failing economic policies at home and the impending health care crisis that will come with the termination of Affordable Care Act insurance subsidies for millions of Americans.

In response to Trump's menacing social media post, Maduro said it was a "warmongering threat" aimed at "stealing the riches that belong to our homeland." The Venezuelan president told attendees at an event in Caracas, "Imperialism and the fascist right want to colonize Venezuela to take over its wealth of oil, gas, and gold, among other minerals."

In Washington, there are moves underway to block Trump's plans. Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, called the blockade "unquestionably an act of war." He posted on social media that it would be "a war that the Congress never authorized and the American people do not want."

Demand Progress is leading a campaign urging Americans to pressure Congress to support a Venezuela war powers resolution, which would restrict the White House from taking direct military action without congressional authorization.

The group's senior policy advisor, Cavan Kharrazian, in a statement provided to People's World, said that Trump "effectively declared a war with Venezuela through a Truth Social post." He said Congress has the responsibility to "reclaim its constitutional war powers authority and stop us from being dragged into another foreign, regime-change war."

The House of Representatives is due to vote on two resolutions that would rein in Trump's aggression. One, sponsored by Rep. Gregory Meeks, D-N.Y, would suspend the deadly air strikes on boats in Venezuelan waters.

A second resolution would ban land strikes in Venezuela or an all-out invasion of the country. It is sponsored by a bipartisan group of legislators, including Reps. Jim McGovern, D-Mass., Thomas Massie, R-Ky., Don Bacon, R-Neb., and Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga.

The Communist Party USA is rallying its members to join in the effort to pass the resolutions. The CPUSA said it supports "the 70% who oppose another endless war for oil, which would endanger the region and world, all to enrich corporate profits."

It demanded "immediate withdrawal of all funds from the lawless and unconstitutional military attacks on Venezuela" and that "Hegseth and the administration be held accountable for war crimes."

The parallels between what's happening now and the lead-up to the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq—right down to the language used by administration officials to justify aggression—have been noted by many. The gigantic anti-war protests of that earlier era, however, do not yet have a contemporary equivalent.

Lobbying Congress to pass a war powers resolution is a valuable step forward, but, as one famed opponent of imperialism said 120 years ago, "we must not stop halfway."

Stopping a war in Venezuela requires the widest possible mobilization—in the streets, on the phones, on social media, in workplace conversations—to pressure lawmakers and block Trump from launching another war on behalf of corporate monopoly and imperial domination.

The message must be spread far and wide: No blood for oil.

RAPID RESPONSE: Hands off Venezuela! No Blood for Oil!

By People's World

Hands off Venezuela! No Blood for Oil!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to tell Congress this is an emergency! Exert Congressional authority to end the illegal war against Venezuela, free the Maduros, and take public action to mobilize the popular opposition against this regime change operation.

Pass a War Powers Resolutions in the House and Senate to "direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities within or against Venezuela that have not been authorized by Congress."

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your Senators and Representative!



Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Trump blames woman murdered by ICE for her own death

By John Wojcik

According to President Donald Trump, the 37-year-old Minneapolis woman who was murdered by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent Wednesday—Renee Nicole Good—is to blame for her own death.

Most witnesses and almost everyone who reviewed numerous videos taken at the scene, however, concluded she was killed by an ICE agent who fired at her through the driver's window of her vehicle as she was trying to drive away from him.

Despite that preliminary evidence and before any investigation had even begun, Trump told reporters yesterday that the woman was to blame because "she attempted to run over" the agent. Later, he said she actually had run him over. "She behaved horribly," Trump said. "And then she ran him over. She didn't try to run him over. She ran him over."

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, also with no evidence, said that the woman was "stalking" officers and that the killer "used his training to save his own life and that of his colleagues." Administration officials branded Good a "terrorist."



A makeshift memorial honoring Renee Nicole Good, who was killed by an ICE agent on Jan. 7, is taped to a post near the site of the shooting, in Minneapolis, Minn. | Mike Householde / AP

According to Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar, who represents the district in which the shooting occurred, the victim was simply observing what ICE was doing.

According to Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar, who represents the district in which the shooting occurred, the victim was simply observing what ICE was doing. U.S. citizens like the victim, along with hundreds from coast to coast, act as legal observers when ICE raids happen. They do not participate in the actual demonstrations.

State and local officials expressed outrage at the Trump and Noem defense of a violent killing by an ICE agent.

The videos available to everyone now across the country clearly show a Honda sticking out onto a snow-covered residential street. The driver, apparently trying to move her vehicle so she would not block oncoming traffic, moves her vehicle forward but stops so she can still leave enough room for vehicles coming along and wanting to pass. She hand-signals approaching cars to let them know to pass her by.

A truck then approaches but does not pass her. It stops, and ICE agents come out of it. Two agents come over to the driver-side window, and one tries to open the door of her vehicle as he tells her to get out. The agent reaches into the driver-side window and as she moves a bit in reverse to get away from him, another agent moves in front of her vehicle.

As she begins to slowly move ahead again, the agent at the front of the vehicle, near the driver-side headlight, pulls out a gun, and aims at her. She turns the wheel to the right to get away from him. He begins firing at her as she passes him on the right. He continues to shoot at her after she passes him.

The car accelerates and crashes into two parked vehicles and a lamp post. The ICE agent who fired his gun walks up to the crashed vehicle and then walks away, telling other agents to call 911.

Good was pronounced dead at the hospital but was apparently already deceased when the ambulance arrived several minutes after the shooting and crash. A witness who lives on the block told MS-NOW Wednesday night that they carried her to the ambulance, holding her by the limbs, not by putting her on a stretcher. "It was like she was nothing more than a sack of potatoes," the witness said.

The witness noted that a man offered to administer CPR right after the shooting, but the agents did not allow him to do so. Photos taken after the shooting showed the inflated air bag on the driver-side of the Honda covered with blood.

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey called Noem's claims about what happened "bullshit" and described the murder as "an agent recklessly using power that resulted in somebody dying, getting killed.

"I have one thing to say about ICE," he said. "Get the fuck out of Minneapolis."

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz said of the federal government's statements on the killing: "Don't believe the propaganda."

The Trump-controlled FBI announced Thursday that it is taking over the entire investigation, forbidding local police, county, city, and state bodies from conducting any probes into the killing. Confidence levels in any agency findings are expected to be low, since the FBI is answerable to Trump Attorney General Pam Bondi.

The killing happened after the recent announcement that 2,000 ICE agents are beginning a massive sweep in Minneapolis.

The largely Democratic city, led by Trump opponents, is a major target of the administration.

The massive ICE raids follow racist attacks on the Somali community in the city, including accusations that they are responsible for fraud when it comes to the handling of federal funds for daycare. The Trump administration has frozen already appropriated funds for provision of daycare services in the city and nationwide.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR
It is seen as laying the groundwork for similar attacks on Democratic-run entities across the nation. Democratic New York Gov. Kathy Hochul went on national television Thursday morning, saying that funds her state was slated to receive have also been frozen in a clear attempt to prevent establishment of universal daycare supported by both her and New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani.

Thousands turned out in vigils Wednesday night in Minneapolis to protest the killing and to remember the victim. There is a growing mound of flowers surrounding the spot where the murder took place, which was only a half-mile from where George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis police in 2020, triggering a massive nationwide movement for ending racist police violence and calling for expansion of civil rights laws nationally.

The attack by ICE Wednesday came as whistles were being blown up and down the street. Whistles are the go-to tool people use when they want to warn about approaching ICE agents.

Opposition to the killing is spreading far and wide across the country. Included in that movement are labor unions, with the Minnesota AFL-CIO coming out strong right after the shooting.

Bernie Burnham, the Minnesota federation's president, declared, "Minnesota's labor movement is shocked, heartbroken, and angry over the murder of an innocent observer by an ICE agent today. The reckless actions we're seeing are striking fear into the hearts of Minnesotans—both immigrants and anyone who dares to dissent—and making communities less safe for workers and families.

"We stand in solidarity with committed residents who find the courage every day to protect their immigrant neighbors and coworkers from ICE agents violently trampling on our constitutional rights. Our hearts are especially with the victim's family and loved ones."

Judge blocks Trump's attempt to defund Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

By Chauncey K. Robinson

NEW YORK—Shortly before the new year, Judge Amy Berman Jackson ruled that the Trump administration could not stop funding the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). The agency, established in 2011, was formed to oversee consumer protection in the financial sector, with a priority on mortgages, credit cards, and student loans. Since the beginning of his second term, President Donald Trump has made several moves to eliminate the agency and fire the people who work there, who are all federal employees.

In response to the 2008 financial crisis, Congress enacted the Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act in 2010, establishing the CFPB. According to the United States Treasury Department, the bureau's top priority is to "promote fairness and transparency for mortgages, credit cards, and other consumer financial products and services." It is an independent bureau within the Federal Reserve.

The agency has touted several accomplishments in protecting consumers, as detailed on its website's blog. Those include an estimated $17.5 billion being put back in Americans' pockets through monetary compensation, principal reductions, and canceled debts; taking action against Bank of America for "double-dipping" on non-sufficient fund fees and misleading statements regarding credit card rewards; and ordering Wells Fargo to return $2 billion to consumers and pay $1.7 billion in fines for violating laws regarding auto loans and mortgages.

The CFPB has also made numerous proposals to protect the wallets of many Americans—such as curbing excessive credit card late fees, overdraft fees, and a proposal to ban the use of medical debt in credit reports or loan decisions.

While some may argue that financial protection for consumers against large corporate and banking entities is beneficial, the agency has not been without its detractors.



These complaints have usually come from Republicans and conservatives, such as GOP Congressman Dan Meuser, who called the agency "an ideological weapon."

He claims it was used under former Director Rohit Chopra, who was appointed by President Joe Biden, "not to protect the public, but to pressure businesses into aligning with the CFPB's goals through aggressive rules, enforcement, and supervision." North Carolina Republican Congressman Tim Moore called it "a progressive agenda prioritizing aggressive enforcement over clear guidance and balanced oversight."

After retaking office in 2024, Trump fired Chopra and replaced him with Russell Vought as the agency's acting director. Vought, who is head of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), is a co-author of Project 2025, the 900-page policy blueprint that shaped the Trump campaign's 2024 platform. Destroying the CFPB and other regulatory agencies was one of the document's key goals.

In October 2025, while appearing on "The Charlie Kirk Show," Vought revealed his plans for the CFPB, saying: "We don't have anyone working there [CFPB] except our Republican appointees and a few career [employees] that are doing statutory responsibilities while we close down the agency.... We want to put it out, and we will be successful probably within the next two, three months."

Vought's admission prompted backlash from several government officials, who called the attempt to shut down the agency illegal. Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., an early supporter and architect of the CFPB, wrote a letter and issued a public statement condemning the comments.

"Your continued attempts to shutter the CFPB are illegal, and American families stand to pay the price," Warren remarked at the time. "You are making it easier for big banks and giant corporations to cheat and scam families across the country, declaring open season on American consumers."

Vought and the Trump administration have recently argued that, because the agency receives its funding from the Federal Reserve and the Fed is operating at a loss, there are no "valid funds (combined earnings)" for the CFPB. Judge Jackson rejected the claim, ruling that the CFPB should continue to receive its funding from the Federal Reserve despite the Trump administration's assertion that no funds are available.

Before citing a lack of funds, Vought sent layoff notices to an estimated 1,400 of the bureau's workers in April of last year. It was the same Judge Jackson who ordered an injunction halting these firings, seeing the dismantling of the agency through layoffs and data deletion as a "violation of law." The firings currently remain blocked.

The National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) continues its legal challenge to Trump's layoffs of federal workers at the agency. The union's president, Doreen Greenwald, wrote last year that "It is this lack of respect for the separation of powers that is the heart of our lawsuit to save the CFPB from the White House's slash-and-burn approach to government."

In reference to the recent lack of funding claim, Judge Jackson stated that this lapse is manufactured by the Trump administration and that, "It appears that defendants' new understanding of 'combined earnings' is an unsupported and transparent attempt to starve the CPFB of funding and yet another attempt to achieve the very end the Court's injunction was put in place to prevent."

The judge's ruling came days after a coalition of 22 attorneys general, co-led by California AG Rob Bonta, sued the Trump administration and Vought, asserting that the White House's argument to withhold funds from the consumer protection agency is unconstitutional. The lawsuit—filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon—challenges the decision by Vought to "refuse to request the necessary funding for the agency from the Federal Reserve, in violation of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (Dodd-Frank Act)."

"For 14 years, the CFPB has served as an invaluable partner to state attorneys general and state banking regulators, as an enforcer, regulator, and resource for consumers. Shortly after taking office, the Trump Administration launched a campaign of destruction and systemic shuttering of the CFPB, threatening catastrophic harm to hardworking families and consumer financial markets nationwide," co-leader of the coalition, California AG Rob Bonta said in a statement on Dec. 22.

"By refusing to fund the CFPB, even when legal and appropriate funding mechanisms are available," he went on, "the Trump administration has sharpened its message that it does not care about affordability, that it does not care to be on the side of families and working Americans."

In a written opinion on her ruling, Judge Jackson emphasized the Trump administration's attempts to dismantle the agency by any means, noting that, "neither the statute [Dodd-Frank], the injunction, nor the Fed's willingness to pay has changed; the only new circumstance is the administration's determination to eliminate an agency created by Congress with the stroke of pen."

White House rewrites history of Jan. 6 insurrection

By Mark Gruenberg and John Wojcik

WASHINGTON—Taking more than just a page from George Orwell's "Nineteen Eighty Four," the White House and Republicans observed the fifth anniversary of the attack on the Capitol by Trump supporters by declaring it was an action, not by criminals but by "mere trespassers," with some Republicans saying that many of them were nothing more than tourists.

In true Orwellian "War is Peace" and "Ignorance is Strength" style, the White House put out a page on its website that re-wrote what millions across the nation watched unfold that day – police being beaten and murdered and a gallow set up to hang the Vice President for not going along with Trump's order to stop certification of election results the president did not like.

Trump's full-page rewrite on the insurrection, now posted on the White House website, describes the insurrectionists and rioters as "protesters and mere trespassers." The attempt to rewrite history was totally disproven by testimony from former Justice Department Special Counsel Jack Smith just days before the anniversary of the insurrection.



As Smith pointed out behind closed doors to the current highly partisan House Judiciary Committee—whose Republicans also tried to cover up the crime by releasing the transcript on New Year's Eve—Trump was the lead conspirator in ordering, aiding, and mounting that insurrection.

Smith presented and reminded the lawmakers about overwhelming evidence that Trump was "guilty beyond a reasonable doubt" of violating the U.S. Constitution and of voters' rights to have their ballots counted fairly and objectively.

"The decision to bring charges against President Trump was mine, but the basis for those charges rests entirely with President Trump and his actions, as alleged in the indictments returned by grand juries in two different districts," Smith said.

"Our investigation developed proof beyond a reasonable doubt that President Trump engaged in a criminal scheme to overturn the results of the 2020 election and to prevent the lawful transfer of power."

While they were putting out those lies, a contingent of the rioters, convicted and jailed for their crimes but pardoned by President Trump, rallied to commemorate their lawless activity that dark day five years ago.

In some ways, Jan. 6, 2026, was more than just a simple anniversary. The things that came to a head on that date in 2021, both the attacks on democracy and the fight to preserve it, continue today. Trump's illegal attempts to prevent the certification by Congress of the election of Joe Biden to the presidency and the many other lawless moves in his first administration continue now and are often worse than anything he attempted in his first administration.

The invasion of Venezuela, the kidnapping of its president, and his ongoing threats against many other nations this month are only a few of the latest examples.

This year, as in 2021, House Democrats are among the defenders of democracy under attack by Trump. They sponsored an informal hearing to re-emphasize the threat to democracy. In New York, two state lawmakers reemphasized their bill, introduced the week before, to make truthful teaching about January 6 part of the civics curriculum in public schools.

And Teachers/AFT President Randi Weingarten, a New York City civics teacher who also holds a law degree, praised the Democratic hearing while condemning the Republican attempt to whitewash what happened that horrible day.

"We cannot let anyone rewrite this history," Weingarten said. "Jan. 6th was violent. Police were murdered by domestic terrorists trying to overthrow the results of a free and fair election. And it's shameful that the insurrectionists have been pardoned.

"I'm glad Democrats are standing firm for truth about Jan 6th today. They are live-streaming expert witnesses, including Republicans, police and people who participated in the insurrection."

The informal hearing witnesses included former Reps. Elaine Luria, D-Va., and Adam Kinzinger, R-Ill., who was one of the two Republicans on the House's Select Committee on January 6, plus Pamela Hemphill, an invader who served 60 days in jail, and who recanted and turned down Trump's pardon for all 1,600 of them who were indicted, tried, convicted, or jailed.

"I was wrong" to believe Trump's lies about a stolen election, Hemphill told the session. But she suffers a backlash from democracy foes. "They'd find out you (Democrats) support me," she explained.

"If we don't right these wrongs, there will be a January 7th, a January 8th, and the country we are barely holding onto now will slip forever through our fingers," Kinzinger warned.

House Speaker Emeritus Nancy Pelosi described a frustrating phone call five years ago from congressional leaders to Trump's Defense Department, seeking troops to help the outmanned U.S. Capitol Police. "Imagine if it was the Pentagon" being attacked, Pelosi said she told the military brass. "What would you do?"

The other side—the democracy destroyers—massed at the Ellipse on the anniversary date this week and began their march at 11:45 a.m. Eastern Time. At the foot of the Capitol, their speakers demanded to know why defenders against their attacks had not been indicted, tried, and jailed during Trump's current term.

Their current leader, Proud Boys head Enrique Torrio, urged them all in a tweet to keep it peaceful and in memory of the "martyred heroine" whom the invaders and Donald Trump canonized, former servicemember Ashli Babbitt of San Diego. She tried to invade the barricaded U.S. House chamber, was shot, and later died. Five defenders against the Trump-backing attackers died in the ensuing days, and 140 were injured.

Five years ago, the invaders obeyed Trump, who ordered them to march from the Ellipse to the Capitol and promised to lead them. "Fight like hell... Or you won't have a country anymore!" he yelled then. Many of them were armed.

Republicans have been accusing Smith of having made partisan decisions in his attempt to prosecute Trump. "I made my decisions in the investigation without regard to President Trump's political association, activities, beliefs, or candidacy in the 2024 election. We took our actions based on the facts and the law, the very lessons I learned early in my career as a prosecutor."

But, Smith said, he had to close the investigation after Trump was elected to a second term, starting this past January 20, because of a U.S. Supreme Court decision granting presidents past, present, and future immunity from criminal prosecution for official acts—and the court's six-Republican majority definition of "official acts" was very broad.

After the Judiciary hearing, panel chair Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, a vociferous and often histrionic Trump defender during impeachment, denied the evidence all over again.

In New York, State Sens. Charles Liu, D-Queens, and Judiciary Committee Chair David Lavine, D-Nassau, again publicized their legislation mandating teaching about January 6 as part of the civics curricula in schools statewide.

"In an age when conspiracy theories are able to inspire and incite such wanton political violence, it is more important than ever that our schools equip the next generation with the truth, free from bias, and without prejudice, in order to protect our democracy," Liu said.

Henry Kissinger would be proud

By Rob Warzyniak

Latin America holds a special place in the history of the United States. For centuries, the U.S. government has tried and, more often than not, successfully invaded, overthrown, sanctioned, murdered, and/or destroyed anything or anyone in the region that hinted at being detrimental to U.S. capitalist interests.

In the mid-19th century, the Mexican-American War ended with the U.S. stealing half of Mexico's territory. Mexican historian Enrique Krauze once said, "It would be hard to name a country where the United States didn't have an intervention." He is correct, as the U.S. has participated, either directly or indirectly, in Latin American regime changes over 50 times.

That number doesn't even include the number of failed attempts, like the Bay of Pigs assault in Cuba. Imperialism is one hell of a drug, and the U.S. ruling class is woefully addicted. What happened in Venezuela last weekend was just another fix for our current drug-addled administration.

When Salvador Allende ran for president of Chile in 1964 as candidate of the Socialist Party, he pledged to nationalize the mostly U.S.-owned copper companies. U.S. capitalists were outraged and spent massive sums on anti-communist propaganda. It worked, and Allende lost.

He ran again in 1970, with Nixon in the White House and Henry Kissinger roaming the halls like a monstrous cryptid. Allende was now seen not only as a threat to U.S. financial interests but also as a potential friend of the Soviet Union.

Kissinger was especially concerned about the influence a freely elected socialist would have on Western European countries. Because of this, the U.S. pulled out all the stops.

Hundreds of thousands were spent on propaganda aimed at preventing Allende from taking power. It didn't work. Allende won, and Nixon immediately instructed top U.S. officials to do whatever they could to prevent Allende from taking office.

The CIA met with Chilean military contacts in an effort to set up a coup, and a top Chilean general who opposed the coup ended up murdered. The CIA also funded the most important truckers' union, which then went on strike. Shortages of food and necessities grew, and a general sense of chaos ensued. The Chilean military got involved, and a successful coup replaced Allende with General Augusto Pinochet.

Pinochet, a brutal far-right dictator, launched a campaign to arrest, detain, torture, and murder socialists, communists, labor leaders, student activists, and others.

Joe Eldridge, an American living in Chile at the time, said, "People were disappearing right and left from my neighborhood. Friends of mine were disappearing, and I was afraid I was going to disappear. The morgue was filled. Bodies were floating down the Mapocho River." All of this happened because U.S. capitalists were at risk of losing money and control of the Western Hemisphere.

Last weekend, United States armed forces, under the direction of President Donald Trump, invaded Venezuela and kidnapped its leader, Nicolás Maduro, and his wife, Cilia Flores.

Multiple civilians were killed in the attack, though Venezuelan officials have yet to confirm how many. At least 32 Cuban security officers were also killed.

Donald Trump now holds the distinction of being the first U.S. president to bomb eight countries in one year. It's enough to doubt the credibility of the FIFA Peace Prize that Trump was recently awarded.

This operation in Venezuela strays fundamentally from previous acts of U.S. imperialism. The former neoconservative model that shaped Iraq and Afghanistan was "democratic" transformation, privatization of assets, and eventual withdrawal, or at least this is what was publicly shared.

Now, Trump is announcing direct U.S. involvement in running Venezuela and corporate control of its resources, though Secretary of State Marco Rubio keeps trying to walk back that declaration. The phrase "spheres of influence" is making a comeback, as is the justification of territorial control by national interest rather than universal values.

Maybe this is what Trump meant by "Make America Great Again," returning the U.S. to pre-World War II rules of competition. The UN Charter's 1945 prohibition on the seizure of territory by force is increasingly irrelevant. Case in point: Stephen Miller's wife, Katie Miller, posted on social media a picture of Greenland with the U.S. flag superimposed, captioned "SOON." Trump, too, is musing about seizing Greenland again, while also threatening Cuba, Mexico, Colombia, and other countries.

The kidnapping of Maduro fits neatly into the Trump administration's previous comments about "America First" encompassing the Western Hemisphere. At his 2025 Inaugural Address, Trump announced plans to "take back" the Panama Canal, claiming Panama charges excessive rates for its use. He refused to rule out military force, stating, "We need them for economic security."

Trump has also threatened Denmark with "very high" tariffs if it prevents Greenland from joining the U.S. and threatened to use "economic force" on Canada to pressure it to join the U.S. as the 51st state. I imagine Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico have some thoughts on this plan.

The current Trump administration is pushing the U.S. and the world toward an era in which so-called superpowers supposedly compete without constraint for any resources and territories they desire. The debate around what to do with Venezuela is boiled down into two either/or false premises: support for U.S.-backed regime change or defense of all the policies of the government of Maduro.

This framing erases the voices of the people who matter the most. We can, and should, support working-class Venezuelans who have long pushed for democracy, accountability, and social justice.

They should be able to do this without giving up anything to the right-wing opposition, as well as without foreign interference.

For centuries, the United States has created its own Frankenstein monster, piece by piece, put together from the bodies of thousands of dead working-class people who dared to go against the empire. It is up to us, the working people of the world, to stop the monster.

China specialist on Venezuela: 'U.S. neocolonialism cannot conquer justice'

By Jin Xiaowen



U.S. troops invaded Venezuela on Jan. 3, illegally capturing President Nicolás Maduro and his wife and taking them out of the country. The U.S. claimed it would prosecute them on U.S. soil for facilitating drug trafficking, an act that not only severely undermines international law and tramples on international norms but also has profound implications for regional stability.

At its core, the U.S. aims to plunder Venezuela's abundant oil and gas reserves and reassert comprehensive control over the Western Hemisphere, essentially re-enacting "neocolonialism" in the Americas.

Following the commencement of Trump's second term, the United States has significantly intensified its intervention and assertion of interests in the Western Hemisphere, introducing the "Trump Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine," which vividly showcases the essence of hegemonism.

The current Venezuelan government is seen as a cornerstone of the bloc opposing U.S. domination in Latin America, and for over two decades, the U.S. has unsuccessfully attempted to achieve regime change in the country through various means.

During Trump's first term, the U.S. supported opposition leader Juan Guaidó against the Maduro government, but the efforts failed. On resuming the presidency, Trump, confronted with global turmoil, urgently needs to establish U.S. authority, gain tangible benefits and political capital, and fulfill the "America First" campaign promise, with Latin America being the easiest target for such endeavors.

By acting against Venezuela, the U.S. achieves a "triple win." First, Venezuela has abundant oil and gas reserves, from which the U.S. can seize a large amount to gain substantial profits.

Second, overthrowing President Maduro serves as a deterrent to other Latin American countries that are not aligned with the U.S., warning them against opposing the U.S. Especially as an increasing number of Latin American countries attempt to pursue independent paths and explore mutually beneficial cooperation with major countries outside the region, the U.S. aims to force Latin American countries to choose sides.

Third, it influences the regional political landscape by building a pro-U.S. bloc. Latin American countries have entered a new era, with right-wing presidential candidates winning elections in Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, and Honduras in 2025; these newly elected leaders generally express a desire to strengthen cooperation with the U.S. As Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Costa Rica are set to hold elections in 2026, it is no surprise that the U.S. is seeking to expand its influence in the region to secure greater benefits.

However, such calculated maneuvers may backfire. Chilean President Gabriel Boric has condemned the U.S. military operation in Venezuela and warned that "tomorrow it could be any other country."

More Latin American people are opposing the resurgence of the "Monroe Doctrine" and striving for an independent path. While might may overthrow a regime, it can never conquer the pursuit of justice.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

U.S. attack on Venezuela is kidnapping and an act of war

By Joe Sims

Kidnapping and an act of war. That's the only way to describe the attack on Venezuela and President Nicolás Maduro's removal by U.S. military forces. It's unjust, illegal, and it's yet another act of state terror against not only Venezuela but any country that refuses to submit to the Trump Doctrine.

All of this comes from an administration that not only sees itself as above the law but has been granted carte blanche, or immunity, from prosecution by the fascist-minded "Justices" of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Let's be clear: The bombings and special forces operations—like the oil tanker seizures before them—have nothing to do with alleged drug trafficking but everything to do with the vast oil reserves that lie beneath Venezuela's soil. And make no mistake, the oil corporations of the U.S. and other imperialist countries aim to seize that, too.

Yesterday it was Nigeria, today it's Venezuela, and, if we're not careful, tomorrow it'll be Cuba or Brazil.

Trump's criminality will be rightly condemned, not only in the U.S. but all around the world. But at the end of the day, the path toward justice rests with us. And the first step is mass public protest. It's time again to demonstrate, sit in, occupy, and put on our marching shoes. It's also time to get ready to vote.

Trump and MAGA are growing weaker by the day. The administration, riven by splits and defections, has entered Lame Duck territory, which makes it all the more dangerous.

But don't despair, there's a way towards justice. They might temporarily jail the Maduros, but you can't jail the Venezuelan revolution. Nor can our right to put the U.S. on a different path be blocked.

Call Congress, hit the streets, protest in every way possible—today, tomorrow, until justice is done. Free the Maduros, end the U.S. intervention in Venezuela, impeach Donald Trump and his enablers now!

¡Liberen a los Maduro! ¡Encarcelen a Trump!

By Communist Party USA

Secuestro y acto de guerra. Esa es la única manera de describir el ataque contra Venezuela y el derrocamiento del presidente Nicolás Maduro por parte de las fuerzas militares estadounidenses. Es injusto, ilegal y constituye otro acto de terrorismo de Estado no solo contra Venezuela, sino contra cualquier país que se niegue a someterse a la Doctrina Trump.

Todo esto proviene de una administración que no solo se considera por encima de la ley, sino que ha recibido carta blanca, o inmunidad, de enjuiciamiento por parte de los "jueces" de mentalidad fascista de la Corte Suprema de Estados Unidos.

Seamos claros: los bombardeos y las operaciones de las fuerzas especiales — al igual que la incautación de los petroleros— no tienen nada que ver con el supuesto narcotráfico, sino con las vastas reservas de petróleo que yacen bajo el suelo venezolano. Y no nos equivoquemos, las corporaciones petroleras de Estados Unidos y otros países imperialistas también pretenden apoderarse de ellas.

Ayer fue Nigeria, hoy es Venezuela, y, si no oponemos resistencia activamente, mañana será Cuba o Brasil.

La criminalidad de Trump será justamente condenada, no solo en Estados Unidos, sino en todo el mundo. Pero, en última instancia, el camino hacia la justicia depende de nosotros. Y el primer paso es la protesta pública masiva. Es hora de manifestarnos, sentarnos en protesta, ocupar espacios y ponernos en marcha. También es hora de prepararnos para votar.

Trump y el movimiento MAGA se debilitan cada día. La administración, dividida por conflictos internos y deserciones, ha entrado en su fase final. Pero eso la hace aún más peligrosa.

Pero no se desesperen, hay un camino hacia la justicia. Quizás encarcelen temporalmente a los Maduro, pero no se puede encarcelar la revolución venezolana. Tampoco se puede impedir nuestro derecho a llevar a Estados Unidos por un camino diferente.

Llamen al Congreso, salgan a las calles, protesten de todas las maneras posibles, hoy, mañana, hasta que se haga justicia. ¡Liberen a los Maduro, pongan fin a la intervención estadounidense en Venezuela, destituyan a Donald Trump y a sus cómplices ahora mismo!

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
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January 17, 2026

Trump: U.S. taxpayers will 'reimburse' corporations' costs of stealing Venezuelan oil

By C. J. Atkins

A month before the U.S. military kidnapped Nicolás Maduro, President Donald Trump told American oil executives: "Get ready." They should start preparing, he informed them, because big changes were coming to Venezuela, home of the world's largest known oil reserves.

Lawmakers in the U.S. Congress, who have the constitutional power over war, were completely shut out of discussions about imperial strategy, but oil bosses were given an early preview of what was to come, according to reporting by the *Wall Street Journal*.

Public relations people at the biggest energy corporations are keeping mum, claiming they weren't tipped off in advance, but "the oil companies were absolutely aware that we were thinking about doing something," Trump claimed on NBC News two days after the attack on Caracas.

Regardless of what they did or didn't know, companies like Chevron, ConocoPhillips, and ExxonMobil are expressing reluctance about investing in Venezuela now that the deed of removing Maduro is done.

They want a clearer picture of the country's political future and guarantees that they won't be sinking money into something that might not pay off. So, to put their minds at ease, Trump is offering up the American people's money as enticement.

Public subsidy, private profit

The president said this week that energy corporations can expect to be "reimbursed" by U.S. taxpayers for any costs they incur from taking over Venezuela's oil industry and ramping up production there.

While future "revenue" from the sales of stolen oil may also supposedly figure into recouping capital expenditures, the dangling of free public money may be precisely what these companies have been waiting for.

With Venezuela's left-led government still in place (minus Maduro), a long history of nationalizations in the country, and sanctions continuing in effect, the assurance of subsidies to backstop their bottom lines is something the Trump administration hopes executives will find too good to pass up.

With the promise of public money, the president is essentially offering a no-risk guarantee for the oil companies, a sweetheart investment deal if ever there was one: maximum profits in exchange for minimum or no cost.



Trump acknowledged that "a lot of money"—likely hundreds of billions of dollars—will be needed to exploit the oil resources in eastern Venezuela. The heavy crude oil in the Orinoco River basin is dense, and its recovery requires expensive extraction techniques.

"A tremendous amount of money will have to be spent, and the oil companies will spend it, and then they'll get reimbursed by us or through revenue," Trump said. The administration appears confident that allowing oil companies to raid the public purse—possibly for years to come—will help them overcome any lingering worries about socialism in Venezuela.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Trump: U.S. taxpayers will 'reimburse' corporations' costs of stealing Venezuelan oil

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Building a U.S. bloc

Unlike past U.S. presidents who embarked on regime change plots under cover of promoting democracy or protecting human rights, Trump has been much more direct in admitting that control of resources and markets is the key motive for his attack on Venezuela.

Though halting drug trafficking and migration have been used as facades to dress up his administration's actions, the naked calculus of profits and rebuilding a U.S. bloc, or sphere of influence, covering all of North and South America are the parameters of U.S. imperialism under Trump.

That reality was openly declared in the updated National Security Strategy (NSS) released in December. The document says the U.S.' top priority is to "reassert and enforce the Monroe Doctrine to restore American pre-eminence in the Western Hemisphere."

This so-called "Trump Corollary," announced on the doctrine's 202nd anniversary, is a prescription for renewed U.S. domination, disguised as protecting the region from outside actors, primarily China.

In the wake of the Maduro kidnapping, Trump has rebranded the NSS the "Donroe Doctrine" in comments to the media. It vows to "deny non-hemispheric competitors the ability...to own or control strategically vital assets," using coded language for a determination to prevent Latin American cooperation with China on infrastructure and development. It boasts, for instance, of restoring U.S. "privileged access" to the Panama Canal.

The removal of Maduro and planned takeover of Venezuela's oil are the next steps in the NSS's pursuit of U.S. control over the entire region. As Trump declared on Jan. 5, "American dominance in the Western Hemisphere will never be questioned again. It won't happen."

The costs of "dominance"

Achieving such dominance won't come cheap. Leaving aside the uncalculated political and social costs of imperialism for both the peoples of targeted countries and U.S. workers at home, the direct financial costs of taking Venezuelan oil will be staggering.

The country has faced years of punishing sanctions and technology export restrictions as part of a prolonged bipartisan U.S. effort to strangle its government. This compounds the effects of decades of imbalanced allocation between social expenditure and capital upgrades by the state-owned oil company, PDVSA.

Taken together, all this that means the Venezuelan oil industry is severely underinvested and hobbled by aging equipment and infrastructure.

The most recent estimates by the Venezuelan government are that more than 300 billion barrels of oil lie beneath its soil, the largest supply of fossil fuels on the planet. Some estimates say there could actually be as much as one trillion barrels, though not all of it can be reached.

Because of sanctions, the expense of extraction, and dilapidated drilling, transport, and refinery assets, the country's oil production has only averaged around 900,000 barrels a day over the last few years, making up less than 1% of daily global consumption.

Trump claims that within 18 months U.S. oil companies will "be taking a tremendous amount of wealth out of the ground," but getting from here to there is going to be costly. And that's where the taxpayer subsidies come in.

Oil bosses hold out for more

So far, the oil companies appear to be holding their cards close to their chest in hopes that Trump will pad their profits even further. ConocoPhillips and ExxonMobil are keeping quiet about their plans; they both left Venezuela in the mid-2000s after the government of Hugo Chávez nationalized their assets.

Chevron, the only one of the big three oil giants to continue operating there after the nationalizations, is getting the most attention from the White House. As it already has facilities and employees in the country, as well as contracts with the government in Caracas, it is best-positioned to quickly increase investment and production.

According to an unnamed source cited by the *Wall Street Journal*, the company already has detailed plans for expanding its footprint in Venezuela. No-bid contracts and little environmental or regulatory oversight are key points, but that's not enough. Chevron and its peers want guarantees they will get their money back if things go south.

Unanswered questions about who will be in charge in Venezuela, what policies will shape the contracts, when the U.S. oil blockade will be lifted, and, crucially, whether the next administration in Washington will honor Trump's promises all figure into the oil companies' decisions.

Pre-existing capital commitments to other investments, like the $7 billion Chevron is spending to exploit a major oil discovery in Guyana, also mean these corporations would love to have public money to offset their risks in Venezuela.

Wall Street is expressing restrained optimism about the opportunities in Venezuela, but the explosion in stock value and demand that Trump likely expected has been rather muted thus far.

After an initial spike when trading first opened Monday morning, shares flattened—a reflection that few investors expect any payoff from Venezuelan oil in the short term. As of this writing, ConocoPhillips (COP) has gained roughly 3% in value since the Maduro kidnapping, Chevron (CVX) climbed 2%, while ExxonMobil (XOM) added an even more reserved 1%.

The people of Venezuela—like the people of any country targeted by U.S. imperialism—are sure to get the raw end of any "deal" that Trump makes with the oil execs. But the U.S. people, too, will be losers.

Not only are their domestic social needs like education, health care, and jobs sacrificed to fund the Pentagon's military machine, now Trump and the capitalist class wants them to also foot the bill for oil companies as they steal Venezuela's natural wealth—never mind the price all the world's people will pay as the burning of fossil fuels accelerates the global climate crisis.

Greenland, next stop for U.S. imperialism

By Sevim Dagdelen

European leaders appear bewildered. After they attempted to justify the illegal and unprovoked U.S. war of aggression against Venezuela and the violent abduction of Nicolás Maduro with the assessment that "the legal classification of the U.S. operation is complex," in the words of Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz, they now face U.S. President Donald Trump pushing to detach Greenland from the Danish state association and annex it next.

In any case, the EU's covert complicity with the U.S. proves useless if it was actually supposed to provide protection from this very same U.S.

As in the case of Venezuela, the U.S. makes hardly any effort to present convincing justifications for an intervention. The rationales for the violations of international law stand on clay feet. Thus, even in the trial against Maduro in the U.S., the accusation that he is a member of a drug cartel is already being relativized.

Trump's claim that Russian and Chinese ships are currently surrounding Greenland and that the island is therefore needed for national security does not even bother with facts.

As in Venezuela, ultimately the exclusive securing of raw materials stands in the foreground; Greenland's offers for talks on this as well as the geopolitical securing of a future Arctic front against Russia and China change nothing about that.

Plans for a 'free association' instead of direct occupation
Anyone who primarily thinks of military occupation in the event of possible U.S. control of Greenland may be mistaken. *The Economist* reports on considerations being made by the Trump administration to conclude agreements with the island comparable to those with the Pacific states of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau.

There, Washington receives extensive decision-making powers in security and defense matters in exchange for financial support. Formally, these states remain independent, yet through the agreements they are closely tied to the U.S. Such an association agreement with Greenland would additionally offer the U..S the advantage of distancing the island from Denmark.

Already through an agreement from 1951, the U.S. is contractually permitted to station an unlimited number of troops in Greenland. Currently, there is only one active U.S. military base in the north of the island.

Whichever path the Trump administration takes, it is determined to resolve the matter promptly. In the background stands the new strategic orientation of the U.S. to control the Western Hemisphere—that is, the entire American continent, to which Greenland also belongs—and to use it as a basis for renewing global U.S. hegemony.

The goal is not a division of the world into exclusive spheres of influence in which Russia and China could act accordingly in their surroundings, but rather the creation of a platform from which the U.S. can renew its imperialism in order to take up the conflict with Russia, but above all with its main rival, China.

As with all human endeavors, however, the question arises whether the intention will succeed or whether the opposite of what is desired might not occur.



Consequences in Venezuela
Although the U.S. reportedly killed at least 80 people in Venezuela and abducted the president, Trump is still structuring the process by which to control the oil.

While Maduro faces an operetta-like and Kafkaesque trial in New York —the public humiliation of the defendant alone speaks for a show trial —his deputy Delcy Rodríguez, a convinced Chavista, has been sworn in as acting president. Rodríguez presents herself as cooperative but does not want to give U.S. oil companies like ExxonMobil carte blanche, as Trump demands.

Trade with China and Russia is also not restricted from the Venezuelan side. On the contrary, a closer alliance with the BRICS states now seems more attractive for Venezuela in order to defend itself against the impositions from Washington and the plan to have the country governed by the U.S.

Moreover, the U.S. government has demonstrated that international law no longer applies to it. In doing so, it has given the international legal order valid since 1945 a first-class burial. Washington de facto invokes the law of might makes right with the claim to create order worldwide, thereby simultaneously unmasking Western hegemony.

Even democracy and human rights are no longer invoked as an alibi for legitimizing interventions. The legitimacy gap seems above all to unsettle EU Commission leaders like Vice President Kaja Kallas and President Ursula von der Leyen, who practice abstract commitments to international law.

Strengthening counter-forces and Europe's role as bystander
The rapid sequence of events—that Greenland now follows Venezuela —raises the question of whether such a system of threat does not unintentionally strengthen the counter-forces and make trade relations, for example with China, more attractive in the region, since one need not fear raids by the trading partner there.

Ultimately, the U.S. strengthens the counter-powers with its reckless approach—comparable to an empire that does not want to leave the world stage voluntarily but at least wants to stage a spectacular exit for itself.

The European powers, on the other hand, remain spectators of world history. Berlin, Brussels, Paris, and London have tied themselves to those who want to push them against Russia into the front line of a hopeless war without being directly attacked themselves.

Here one should also think of the terrorist attacks on the Nord Stream pipelines as well as their prehistory, in which various U.S. administrations declared they would do everything to prevent the construction or operation of these gas pipelines.

While parts of the global South attempt to seize the opportunity to emancipate themselves from the U.S. and adopt a neutral position, the Europeans content themselves with the geostrategic role as the U.S.' bridgehead in Eurasia.

This includes not only the stationing of up to 100,000 U.S. soldiers in Europe and the U.S. plans to station missiles in Germany in 2026 that could take out Russian command centers, but also the increasing dominance of major European companies by U.S. investment funds like BlackRock, as well as the decades-long shaping of transatlantic elites in politics, economy, and media.

Out of NATO

Anyone who wants to set a signal for their own democratic sovereignty must now demand the withdrawal of U.S. troops and the closure of U.S. bases. NATO, which represents neither a community of values nor a defense alliance but helps secure U.S. hegemony in Europe, must be left if one still wants to preserve a remnant of self-respect.

Yet how much rule rests on hegemonic armored violence was shown in the joint statement by the heads of state and government of France, Germany, Poland, Italy, Spain, Britain, and Denmark on Greenland.

There, reference is made to the protection of Greenland by noting that NATO has already made the Arctic a priority and wants to intensify this, and that both the U.S. and Denmark are members of NATO, in order indirectly to reject the U.S. claims.

And Polish Prime Minister Tusk added emphatically: "No member should attack or threaten another member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. Otherwise, NATO would lose its meaning."

A grotesque error by the Europeans. The NATO treaty—according to the official fiction—protects the alliance territory, but not the member states from each other; Greece and Turkey have already had to experience this in their conflicts. Should U.S. troops be deployed to Greenland in larger numbers, no one will intervene.

The approximately 60 Danish soldiers, including the liaison officer at the U.S. military base in Greenland and the around 70 Danish police officers, would certainly be ill-advised to get the idea of offering resistance. In any case, the Europeans will do nothing, just as with Venezuela.

Our first issue – January 13, 1924

By People's World

This article is part of the People's World 100th Anniversary Series.

People's World traces its lineage directly to the Daily Worker newspaper, founded in Chicago in 1924 by communists, socialists, union members, and other activists. Here, for the first time since it rolled off the printing press, we republish in full the first article from that inaugural edition.

Written as an editorial, the language is brimming with revolutionary confidence and exudes the determination that the paper's staff and supporters felt in those heady days. Labor was on the move, workers were organizing in several industries, capitalism appeared to be facing a stormy future, the decay and corruption of the existing political order was becoming apparent to all, and a new socialist society was under construction on the other side of the globe in the Soviet Union.

The article is a product of its time and reflects the mission of Marxist journalists as they saw it in 1924. Much has happened in a century, and the Daily Worker and its successor publications went on to broaden their horizons even further, becoming a tribune for the Black freedom struggle, an organ of the popular front in the fight against fascism, and an advocate in the effort to save "bourgeois" democracy (as limited as it may be) from right-wing threats, and more.

But some things have not changed. People's World, like the Daily Worker before it, still aspires to instill fear among "big business interests, bankers, merchant princes, landlords, and other profiteers." It still strives to "raise the standards of struggle against the few who rob and plunder the many."


THE DAILY WORKER

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 1924

BANKERS SEEK TO PROP TOTTERING GERMANY

Here Is "The Daily"!

Oil Trust's Open Shop Guilty of Disaste

DEATH FOR 40, INJURE MANY AT PEKIN, ILL.

THREE BANKERS GO TO BERLIN

U. S. AIDS WALL STREE DOLLAR PL

The publication has gone through a number of nameplates and mastheads over the years, but that same tradition of fighting, working-class journalism that motivated the founders in 1924 continues. Today, People's World offers a daily news platform for the broad labor-led people's movement—a voice for workers, the unemployed, people of color, immigrants, women, youth, seniors, LGBTQ people, cultural workers, students, and people with disabilities.

And it remains, as ever, a voice for a future beyond capitalism—a voice for socialism.

HERE IS "THE DAILY"!

January 13, 1924

In the first issue of the Weekly Worker, Feb 2, 1922, we wrote, "This, the first edition of The Worker, is the advance agent of *The Daily Worker*."

Now, in this first issue of *The Daily Worker*, we join hands with the comrades of the Communist International in declaring that the Daily is but "the forerunner of more revolutionary dailies in other parts of the country."

Thus, from one advance position, we move forward to another next ahead. The Daily is here, and we turn a new page in the world story of labor's struggle.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR

Another chapter begins for America's working class. The first English-language Communist Daily in the world has been realized.

A giant is born! A new voice is raised, battling for the workers and farmers of America, carrying its promise of many more such voices; of many Communist Dailies to come!

Not only in Russia, in Germany, in Italy, in the Scandinavian countries, in Czechoslovakia, in France, in Mexico, and in a host of other lands, but in those countries where the English language dominates as well, the Communist message will now spread daily among the marching, militant hosts of the exploited in the cities and on the land.

The Daily is born! It comes to fight! It comes to inspire and call the many to struggle! The Daily Worker is the voice of the whole working class!

The Daily has already aroused its enemies. The labor lieutenants of the established order, joined with the big business interests, the bankers, the merchant princes, the landlords, and other profiteers, in a declaration of the National Civic Federation, seeking to prejudice the workers against it.

Secretary of State Hughes, at Washington, has translated and published in the subsidized press of this country an article appearing in Moscow, in the press of the Russian workers and farmers, voicing their joy that the English-language Communist Daily in the United States is to be. Thus Hughes seeks to prejudice American labor.

But we have no fears. The bosses have declared The Daily their enemy, even before its first issue appeared. They know they have cause to fear The Daily. They know it will raise the standards of a real struggle against the few who rob and plunder the many, and keep them in submission. They know The Daily is a challenge to the continuance of their ruthless and bandit rule.

We have no fears because we know that the workers and farmers of the United States will rapidly rally in support of The Daily in increased numbers.

The Daily appears in Chicago, but it is the expression of the oppressed workers and farmers of the whole nation.

Its daily arrival in the shops, factories, mills, and mines will be cheered by the workers because they will recognize in it their champion. It will be hailed by agonizing tillers of the soil as their powerful weapon against bankers, landlords, and the profiteers in the wealth they produce but do not enjoy.

The Daily fights for the new Communist order, where all classes will vanish for the first time in the history of civilization. But it also fights for the shorter workday, increased wages to meet the rising cost of living, better working conditions, against child labor, against injunctions and other judicial attacks on the workers, for free speech, free press, free assemblage, against the efforts to divide and crush the foreign and native-born workers, for the liberation of all class-war prisoners and the wiping-out of all anti-labor legislation. The Daily fights for the organization of all labor and the strengthening of its ranks everywhere. It is for the organization of the unorganized and for amalgamation as two powerful weapons to prepare for the coming industrial depression and unemployment immediately ahead.

The Daily raises the slogan, "The land for the users of the land." Landlordism and tenantry must go. The Daily declares for a moratorium for all working farmers on their debts for a period of five years. It fights against the degradation of working farmers into peonage, against the creation of an American peasantry.

Tremendous struggles confront The Daily! It will not weaken before them! It will grow in the fight because, with each new struggle, new masses of workers and farmers will recognize The Daily as theirs, and they will rally behind it.

The Daily Worker belongs to all who labor.

It is the rich possession of all who toil. Workers! Farmers! Rally to the Daily! Make it strong with the strength of your numbers. Make it powerful through your will to struggle and conquer!

Long live *The Daily Worker!* Hail the triumph of American Workers and Farmers!

Twin Cities demands ICE leave their city

By Twin Cities Club, MN CPUSA

What everyone witnessed yesterday morning in South Minneapolis was nothing short of murder by a fascist thug.

37 year old Renee Good was shot multiple times at point blank range by a member of ICE with complete and utter disregard for her life or the life of others at the scene.

The fascist thug who shot Good can be seen walking calmly to Good's car — which her lifeless body had then run into a telephone pole — and then seen walking back to an unmarked vehicle to leave the scene.

All of this was caught on video. Yet DHS Secretary Kristi Noem and President Donald Trump continue to make the incredible claim that this murderer acted in "self defense."



Trump has gone as far as to claim that the man is currently "fighting for his life" in a hospital — something that no one who has seen the video evidence could possibly believe.

The Twin Cities Club, CPUSA, calls on all popular forces in the Twin Cities — be they socialist organizations, civil rights organizations, religious organizations, labor unions, or concerned citizens — to show up in mass protest every day until "Operation Metro Surge" has been terminated and these fascist forces exiled from our city.

Many of our elected officials, including Governor Tim Walz and Mayor Jacob Frey, have had the courage to call this murder out. They have shown they are prepared to back and protect our people from this fascist terror.

Let us rise to the moment and win this battle by showing these Federally-deployed terrorists that we are many and they are few. Let's drive them out and demand that Renee Good's murderer, DHS Secretary Noem, and President Trump be held accountable for this egregious crime. No justice, no peace.

RAPID RESPONSE: Pass the Protect America's Workforce Act now!

By People's World

Pass the Protect America's Workforce Act now!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and demand they immediately restore collective bargaining rights to federal workers by passing the bi-partisan Protect America's Workforce Act (S.2837) already passed by the House.

Trump's illegal removal of collective bargaining rights from 75% of federal workers is an assault on the large number of women and workers of color in the federal workforce and, indeed, on all workers. If federal workers, who provide vital public services, can be stripped of their democratic union rights, all workers and their communities are endangered. Pass S.2837 now!



Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your Senators! Click here to send them a letter.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Trump says he'll unleash Venezuela's oil. But who wants it?

By Jake Bittle

Shortly after launching a dramatic raid in which U.S. forces abducted Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro on Saturday, President Donald Trump justified the action with a promise to revive Venezuela's moribund oil industry. The country has by far the largest claimed reserves of crude oil in the world, accounting for almost a fifth of the planet's remaining known crude oil, but its production has plummeted under Maduro, who has ruled the country since 2013.

"We're going to have our very large United States oil companies, the biggest anywhere in the world, go in, spend billions of dollars, fix the badly broken infrastructure, the oil infrastructure, and start making money for the country," Trump said during a press conference at Mar-a-Lago in which he announced Maduro's capture.

This intervention comes at a pivotal moment for the global oil industry, which continues to stare down the prospect of a broad transition to renewable energy. For this reason, it's not obvious that future markets can justify a surge of investment in Venezuela. On one hand, the country's extra-heavy crude oil is perfect for diesel and jet fuel, which are helpful in hard-to-decarbonize industries. This makes it less threatened by the meteoric rise of electric vehicles displacing gasoline-powered cars. On the other hand, the world is already experiencing an overall glut of oil, and analysts expect demand to peak in the next decade. While there are buyers for additional oil that could be pumped in Venezuela — some of them on the U.S. Gulf Coast — experts say a total revival on the order that Trump is promising may not be in the cards.



"There's a guaranteed market for it, but a market that has its limitations in size," said Antoine Halff, the founder of the climate and data analysis firm Kayrros and a nonresident fellow at Columbia University's Center on Global Energy Policy.

As electric vehicles and renewable energy continue to expand, the world appears to be approaching a peak in oil demand. While the exact timing of that peak is disputed — it could happen within four years or in more than 15 years — almost all analysts agree that it is coming. At that point, there may no longer be sufficient demand to keep exploiting new oil fields, no matter how large. And given that it will take many years just to update the infrastructure that will allow for increased oil production in Venezuela in the first place, investors may decide that the juice is not worth the squeeze.

Then there's the matter of predicting future prices in a notoriously volatile industry.

Oil companies only make a profit when global oil prices stay above a certain level. For the U.S. companies that produce oil from Texas shale, for example, that number is around $60 a barrel, which is close to the current benchmark price. For Saudi Arabia, it's closer to $90 a barrel, because oil revenues back almost all the kingdom's government spending. In the newest oil fields, such as those offshore of Guyana, it's as low as $30. There are already concerns that an oversupply of oil worldwide could send prices tumbling over the next year, making new fields less palatable to investors. If demand plateaus, a surge of Venezuelan crude would push prices even further down. Since Venezuela is a member of OPEC, it would have to coordinate production along with Saudi and other major producers, who would likely prevent Venezuela from flooding the market.

Even so, there will likely be long-term demand for the specific kind of oil that Venezuela produces. That's because any energy transition will not happen at equal speed across all parts of the transportation sector. The expansion of electric vehicles will first replace passenger cars and mopeds, which rely on lighter oil from fields like those of the Texas shale. Larger vehicles like airplanes and heavy-duty trucks are harder to replace — they need more power than EV batteries can feasibly provide at present — and they rely on heavy oil like Venezuela's. A report from the oil trading firm Vitol found that "the initial pace of decline [for diesel] is expected to be slow compared to gasoline, but begins to gather pace from 2035 onwards." Few other countries boast the same kind of extra-heavy reserves that Venezuela has, and those that do, like Canada, have much higher production costs.

"These are the hard-to-abate segments," said Halff. "It's the part of oil demand that looks like it's not going to shrink quickly."

Venezuela pumped more than 3 million barrels of oil per day at the turn of the century, but production totals have plummeted since then. After the government of Hugo Chávez nationalized major oil infrastructure in 2007, the United States imposed financial sanctions that forced Venezuela to sell its oil at steep discounts. Under the Maduro government, the state-owned oil company racked up debts and saw an exodus of skilled workers. Pumps and pipelines decayed out of service, storage tanks collapsed, and production bottomed out at around 500,000 barrels per day during the COVID-19 pandemic.

President Trump has promised that his aggressive raid on Venezuela will lead to a revival of this industry, and he has reportedly urged U.S. oil producers to aid him in the effort. In remarks following the Maduro raid, he promised that American companies would return to Venezuela and help export oil to other countries. Given how inefficient the state-run oil sector has become, analysts believe it would be easy to restore *some* production in the short term with outside investment and sanctions relief.

"Our assumption is that there are a lot of wells that just need a workover," said Adrian Lara, the lead analyst for the Latin American oil industry at the research firm Wood Mackenzie, in a brief published last month before Maduro's capture. "You can boost production through opex [operational expenditure], without needing much new capex [capital expenditure]" — in other words, a tune-up rather than a full surge of new investment.

In the short term, there is ample demand.

The oil in the country's vast Orinoco Belt is very heavy and viscous, like molasses, in contrast to U.S. shale oil, which is about as thin as vinegar. This makes it more expensive and more carbon-intensive to produce, but also makes it well suited for conversion into diesel fuel in trucks and for other uses like asphalt. There are several refineries along the Gulf Coast that were built to process this kind of heavy crude, and these refineries are operating below capacity. Right now, Venezuela exports most of its oil to China, which would also likely purchase more for its own refineries. An industry expert who spoke to The Wall Street Journal said access to those reserves could be a "game changer" in terms of increasing Gulf Coast refiners' profits.

"Right now there's plenty of appetite for heavy crude globally," said Robert Auers, a refined fuels market analyst at the energy consultancy RBN Energy. "Even if Venezuelan production were to come back real strong, the global market could easily absorb that."

But a grand revival like the one Trump has promised would be a much taller order, given that it would take decades to unfold. The energy analysis firm Rystad Energy projects that a return to pre-Maduro levels would require an investment of $110 billion, and these investments would not bear fruit for a decade or more. Even Chevron, the only U.S. oil producer that operates in the country, would need to invest an estimated $7 billion in order to add another 500,000 barrels, according to a former executive who spoke with The New York Times.

The climate pollution stemming from this crude might also play a factor in its market appeal. Right now, the heavy oil extraction in the Orinoco Belt is some of the most carbon-intensive in the world, in part because enormous amounts of methane are flared during the process. As governments continue to pursue Paris Agreement targets, however fitfully, they might shy away from such fields wherever possible and instead import lower-carbon barrels. (The European Union has already committed to do this.) Many experts believe that oil majors will hesitate before taking the plunge on a resource that is far tougher to handle than the crude in U.S. shale fields or the Middle East.

That's all in addition to the political uncertainty that has followed Trump's attempt to depose Maduro. It remains unclear what shape the new government of Venezuela will take. Given that other producers like Exxon Mobil lost billions of dollars when the Chávez government nationalized their assets, it's far from obvious that these oil companies would want to invest under continued political instability. Past U.S. interventions have demonstrated similar dynamics: Oil production in Libya has still not recovered since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, and it took almost a decade for Iraqi oil production to rebound after the U.S. invaded in 2003.

"I do not believe in a significant increase in the short term," said Rudolf Elias, chair of the supervisory board of Staatsolie, the state oil company of Suriname, which is pursuing an offshore oil project in the waters east of Venezuela. "It will take years before the industry is revived ... then it is dirty oil, and heavy, so it will not be first in the row."

D.C. turns up heat on ICE with bill banning police cooperation

By Damion Dixon

WASHINGTON—D.C. lawmakers are trying to put the heat on ICE and take a stand for residents with the introduction of the Safe Community Places and Policing Amendment Act of 2025 by Ward 4 Council Member Janeese Lewis George, who is also running for mayor of Washington.

The bill would ensure that the District's policies reflect local residents' values and public safety priorities by prohibiting D.C. police from joining in on immigration enforcement without a judicial warrant or court order. The bill is supported by Council Members Brianne Nadeau, Robert White, Charles Allen, and Zachary Parker.

"The visibility of Metropolitan Police Department officers alongside federal agents during the ongoing federal occupation has led to a pervasive feeling of fear and uncertainty among residents, schools, and service providers," George said when introducing the bill.

She talked of how many people are scared to pick their kids up from school, go to routine doctor appointments, attend an immigration hearing, or just to do simple chores like going to the grocery store.

According to the report from the Committee on Public Works & Operations, chaired by Nadeau, "The testimonies [by residents] painted a picture of federal law enforcement agents acting with impunity, arresting individuals perceived as immigrant or Latino, terrorizing communities, and violating federal law and local law."

The committee also heard numerous accounts, the report said, of "masked and unidentifiable armed agents with no visible badges questioning, arresting, and 'disappearing' residents into unmarked cars."

In testimony before the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety on Dec. 4, 2025, numerous residents testified that they have seen federal agents riding along in the backseat of Metropolitan Police Department vehicles. "Residents also testified that MPD officers have been present alongside federal agents carrying out immigration enforcement activities," documents say.

George said such interactions only add to the growing tension between residents and law enforcement because it shows that if these two institutions—local police and federal immigration agents—work hand and hand with each other, "then who is left to protect our rights?"

Her bill is a response and aims to protect residents' rights from blatant acts of violence and intimidation. One of the ways the act does that is by prohibiting the federal government's power to mobilize local police forces without proper documentation, such as an official court order or judicial warrant.

Additionally, it would designate essential service locations such as schools, day cares, health care providers, recreation centers, shelters, and more as "Safe Community Places" and prohibit joint District and federal immigration enforcement operations at those locations unless a judicial warrant or exigent circumstances exist.



The bill also requires the District to train employees on these new protections to ensure consistent implementation across agencies.

The report from the committee on Public Works and Operations also laid out several actions that Mayor Muriel Bowser could take to build back public trust. One thing is rescinding her "Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center" order, which authorized indefinite local coordination with federal immigration authorities.

It also said the interim D.C. police chief should immediately sunset the previous chief's order on immigration enforcement, which authorizes MPD officers to share information about people not in their custody, such as during traffic stops, and to provide transportation for federal immigration officers and detained people.

Further, the report told Council it should exhaust all means to require that federal law enforcement officers be subject to the same restrictions imposed on MPD officers, who are not allowed to wear masks or face coverings and must provide identification during interactions with residents.

These would be steps toward regaining residents' confidence, but it's only the beginning. After months of being assaulted, stopped, and harassed, activists have said it's necessary to build off of this bill to ensure that the rights of the residents of Washington, D.C., are protected and respected.

The fight is not just in D.C., though, as people in other places, like Minneapolis, residents are also fighting back against the occupation of their communities. Since August 2025, many local governments have developed policies and filed lawsuits to stop President Donald Trump's overreach and abuse of power.

"At a time when community trust is already fragile, it is essential that District resources are not used to facilitate federal enforcement actions that fall outside the District's priorities or values, or that make our communities less safe," George said.

"By creating clear boundaries around District cooperation with federal agencies, the Safe Community Places and Policing Amendment Act of 2025 ensures that the District prioritizes local safety and strengthens community trust."

George and her allies on the Council are taking a stand for their residents, but it's going to fall to the people of D.C. to also do their part by keeping a close eye on when the bill goes to a vote.

If passed, George's proposal would stop the federal government from weaponizing D.C. law enforcement.

It would not only offer some protection to citizens and non-citizens from ICE but also put more oversight on unchecked power, forcing authorities to go through the proper channels before using D.C. police to carry out any brazen action.

Stand against U.S. attack on Venezuela

By Communist Party USA

Editor's note: Declaration of the all-Party meeting on the U.S. attack against Venezuela on January 7, 2026.

On January 3rd around 2 AM, the Trump administration began a surprise covert bombing and kidnapping campaign. The Venezuelan President and First Lady were abducted and taken captive in the course of which 80 people were killed including 32 Cubans.

We extend our deepest solidarity and condolences to the heroic people of Venezuela and Cuba for the murders of the patriots and internationalists who lost their lives defending the Revolution.

The attack was an unjust, illegal, and criminal act of U.S. state terrorism. It warns every nation in the Western Hemisphere and even beyond: if you resist submission to U.S. imperialism the ruling class will remove you from power and take what it wants. This is fascist thinking applied to international affairs.

Trump's open assertion of an "American claim" to the Venezuelan oil reserves only confirms the obvious. Venezuela is estimated to have the largest oil reserves on the planet, along with both an abundance of rare earth materials and Latin America's largest supply of untapped gold reserves. Control over these important commodities will no doubt add to the profits of the U.S. oil and energy monopolies. This might-is-right approach to foreign policy is a dangerous escalation of US Imperialism. It's also payback for the $1 billion provided by the energy corporations to the Trump election campaign.

But the working class and people of our country aren't having it. Majorities oppose the intervention. The AFL-CIO along with many of its unions have denounced the intervention as have the organizations and movements representing the African American, Latino, Asian and peoples of the Middle East. Women, youth, students and the LGBTQ community are rightly outraged.

Yes, the U.S. people oppose war and it is our responsibility to resist it by demanding the release of the Maduros and an immediate restoration of Venezuelan sovereignty.



It is the people of Venezuela alone who have the right to determine their destiny. We stand in unwavering solidarity with them and their revolutionary process. We join with all progressive forces worldwide, to continue mobilizing against these criminal actions. Across the U.S., we have already joined mass movements that denounce the attacks on Venezuela.

The CPUSA has mobilized the entire Party, today, January 7th to unite in one voice so that our voices will be heard in the halls of government and in the streets fighting for the Venezuelan people. Their fight is our fight.

We call on all party and YCL members to participate in growing coalitions against the intervention. Our job is to fight for the leadership of the working class and people in the fightback.

If there is not an organized peace movement near you, build the coalition! If your town hasn't held an anti-war rally, organize one! We will not stop until the Maduros are free and the sovereignty of Venezuela is restored.

We demand Congress pass the War Powers Resolution introduced by Rep. McGovern! Let us call, petition, rally, occupy and strike if necessary until justice is done!

Free the Maduros! Jail Trump! End U.S. intervention in Venezuela! Defend Sovereignty and International Law! No Blood for Oil! Venceremos!

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Austria: Communist Party of Austria concludes 39th Congress

By Callum Wilson

Late in October, the Communist Party of Austria, the KPÖ , concluded its 39th party congress and elected a new Executive Committee.

The KPÖ has been on a winning streak. Since the last congress, the KPÖ has won the election for mayor in Graz as well as the position of deputy mayors in Salzburg. It has been able to move into all Viennese district councils and into the Salzburg State Parliament. It entered the Innsbruck Municipal Council for the first time in decades, became a parliamentary group in the Linz Municipal Council, and joined the municipal councils of many other municipalities for the first time.

South Africa: SACP launches Red October

The South African Communist Party (SACP) and the National Union of Mineworkers marched to the Labor department in Bellville, in Western Cape, to protest the over 30% unemployment rate and the subcontracting practices of South Africa's Energy Service Company.

The month of October, dubbed Red October, saw numerous Communist and workers' protests, such as the march on the provincial government building to highlight plague of crime rocking the country.

"This is our Red October march," the SACP provincial secretary Benson Ngqentsu told reporters.

In South Africa, October is known as Red October, where every year, the SACP mobilizes its members in rallies, marches, and strikes.

This year, the SACP has pledged to contest the 2026 elections outside of its tripartite alliance with the ANC, citing the unemployment, poverty, and violence in the country.

Una delegación sindical internacional exige justicia para los trabajadores de GM heridos en Colombia

By Cameron Harrison

BOGOTÁ — Una delegación de sindicatos internacionales, encabezada por el Sindicato de Trabajadores Automotrices Unidos (UAW), visitó Colombia en noviembre para exigir una vez más justicia para los trabajadores automotrices colombianos lesionados que han luchado contra General Motors durante más de 14 años. La visita demostró el compromiso renovado de la dirección del UAW, bajo la presidencia de Shawn Fain, con la lucha de ASOTRECOL, la Asociación de Trabajadores y Extrabajadores Lesionados de GM Colmotores.

La delegación internacional se reunió con miembros de ASOTRECOL en su campamento, ubicado desde hace tiempo frente a la Embajada de Estados Unidos. También se reunieron con miembros de SINTRAIME, el sindicato de los trabajadores actuales de GM Colmotores que serán despedidos masivamente tras la decisión de GM de cerrar la planta. Denunciaron las violaciones de los derechos laborales por parte de GM e instaron a los funcionarios de la Embajada de Estados Unidos y del Ministerio del Trabajo de Colombia a tomar medidas concretas en apoyo de los trabajadores.

Los trabajadores de ASOTRECOL sufren las consecuencias físicas de las operaciones de GM en Colombia. En la planta de Colmotores, que data de la década de 1970, los trabajadores padecían lesiones frecuentes y debilitantes, como hernias discales, lesiones de espalda y síndrome del túnel carpiano, mientras ensamblaban vehículos Chevrolet. Muchos quedaron incapacitados para volver a trabajar.

Según los trabajadores, la respuesta de GM fue despedirlos y, en muchos casos, manipular sus historiales médicos para anular las pensiones por discapacidad. Los trabajadores que formaron ASOTRECOL se encontraban entre los cientos que sufrieron esta situación. Cuando buscaron justicia en los tribunales colombianos, descubrieron que el sistema estaba en su contra.

En 2011, después de que las autoridades reguladoras colombianas se negaran a responsabilizar a GM, los trabajadores instalaron un campamento de protesta frente a la Embajada de Estados Unidos. Esperaban que la administración Obama, principal accionista de GM tras el rescate financiero de la industria automotriz, obligara a la empresa a actuar. Su petición fue ignorada.

GM solo accedió a la mediación en 2012 después de que los miembros de ASOTRECOL realizaran una huelga de hambre con los labios literalmente cosidos. La empresa abandonó las negociaciones después de tres días con una "oferta final" que no cubría las cirugías médicas que necesitaban los trabajadores. Nunca regresó a la mesa de negociaciones.

La delegación de noviembre, que también incluyó a representantes de CSP Conlutas (Brasil), el Comité de Solidaridad con Centroamérica de Portland, así como donaciones de Unifor (Canadá), refleja el compromiso renovado del UAW con la solidaridad laboral internacional, en particular con los trabajadores del sector automotriz que trabajan para las mismas corporaciones transnacionales, como GM.

Tras las reuniones con la delegación, el Ministerio de Trabajo colombiano se comprometió a convocar a General Motors a negociaciones basadas en un plan de cinco puntos presentado por los trabajadores. Con el cierre de la planta de Colmotores, la búsqueda de una solución entra ahora en una fase crítica. El movimiento sindical internacional busca garantizar que General Motors no abandone a los trabajadores afectados y que se les brinde una solución justa a sus problemas.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
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Statewide Shutdown in Minnesota planned for Jan. 23 to expel ICE

By Cameron Harrison

MINNEAPOLIS—Responding to an invasion of their neighborhoods by thousands of ICE agents, a powerful coalition of labor, community, and faith organizations has mobilized for a statewide shutdown in Minnesota this Friday, January 23. Their main demand is that ICE must be completely removed from their neighborhoods, their workplaces, and their state.

The unified and furious response has been sparked by an occupation exacerbated by the shooting of 37-year-old mother and poet Renee Nicole Good by ICE agent Jonathan Ross.

A wave of more than 3,000 heavily armed, masked federal agents has descended on the Twin Cities and communities across Minnesota, terrorizing working people and residents regardless of immigration status. Reports say that U.S. soldiers are also "standing by" waiting for orders to intervene under the orders of President Donald Trump.

The call for the statewide shutdown is broad, linking traditional trade union action with the fight against police and federal repression. Many residents say that the assault in Minneapolis is just another spearhead of a broader conspiracy to impose a fascist dictatorship.

This Friday's action will include a "Truth and Freedom" march, building upon the massive turnout of at least 10,000 people who marched in South Minneapolis on January 10, demanding ICE leave Minnesota. That demonstration was organized by the Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Committee (MIRAC).

In the days leading up to Friday's action, the ICE Out of Minnesota coalition has targeted, with daily demonstrations, corporations bankrolling ICE and the Trump regime. Protests took place Monday at Target, Tuesday at Home Depot, Wednesday at Enterprise, Thursday at Hilton, and Friday at Delta Airlines. The labor-community grouping May Day Strong is also helping to organize national solidarity actions with Minnesota across the country, including what they say will be a large labor-led demonstration in New York City.

The Truth and Freedom march is sponsored by an array of organizations, from trade unions to faith groups, community organizations like Black Lives Matter and Indivisible, peace groups like Veterans for Peace and Jewish Voice for Peace, and a range of political organizations, including the Communist Party USA and the Democratic Socialists of America.

The United Auto Workers, which represents hundreds of workers in Minnesota, released a statement in solidarity with the statewide shutdown. "It is the working class that makes society run, and it is the working class that can shut it down if need be.



On January 23rd, working class people will demonstrate that power in Minnesota, and the UAW has their back," the union said.

A growing interfaith coalition of clergy will stand alongside working families, immigrants, and students for the action on Friday. As community leaders, "we are bearing witness to the daily constitutional and human rights violations resulting from Department of Homeland Security operations," the clergy said in a statement Monday.

What's key is that the labor movement is mobilizing in large numbers and across various industries, which now include the Minnesota AFL-CIO. National union leaders are also planning to attend Friday's demonstration, sources told *People's World*.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Statewide Shutdown in Minnesota planned for Jan. 23 to expel ICE

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"When your coworkers aren't safe, nobody is safe," said Feben Ghilagaber, a server at Minneapolis–Saint Paul International Airport and a steward for UNITE HERE Local 17. "This country is run by workers," she said, explaining why labor is stepping up and has the power to fundamentally change society.

"We are not going to shop. We are not going to work. We are not going to school on Friday, January 23. For some people, they call that a strike," said JaNaé Bates Imari of Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church at the initial press conference last week. "For many of us, this is our right to refusal until something changes."

ATU Local 1005 President David Stiggers called ICE's repression "a throwback to the darkest times of human history, 1940s Germany. Working people cannot stand aside while our neighbors are terrorized and our families are fractured," he stated.

Marcia Howard, President of the Minneapolis Federation of Educators (AFT Local 59), declared that "Labor is going to show the entire state and the entire nation how we move in Minnesota...these are our streets, and we're taking them back one block at a time."

The list of endorsing unions is extensive and growing, including SEIU Local 26, UNITE HERE Local 17, the St. Paul Federation of Educators Local 28, Minneapolis Federation of Educators (AFT Local 59), IATSE Local 13, Graduate Labor Union, United Electrical Workers Local 1105 at the University of Minnesota, ATU Local 1005, the Committee of Interns and Residents (SEIU), OPEIU Local 12, CWA Local 7250, Minnesota Nurses Association, Teamsters Local 320, Northern Plains United Labor Council, Northern Valley Labor Council, the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, and the Minnesota AFL-CIO.

"It's time for every single Minnesotan who loves this state and the notion of truth and freedom to raise their voices and deepen their solidarity for our neighbors and co-workers living under this federal occupation," said Chelsie Glaubitz Gabiou, president of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation.

CWA Local 7250 President Kieran Knutson connected the fight to a longer history of resisting state violence, noting the police murders of Jamar Clark and Philando Castile fueled networks now activated against Trump's attacks on immigrants, reported *Labor Notes*.

On labor's participation in the coalition, he said that unions "fight like hell on all issues of wages, benefits, and discipline," he said. "And that gives us some credibility to talk about things more broadly."

Natasha Dockter of the Minneapolis Federation of Educators detailed how ICE has created an unsafe environment for teachers, who now "drive to work through tear gas, pivot to provide online instruction, and work in partnership and solidarity with the community to provide critical resources such as food to families."

Greg Nammacher, President of SEIU Local 26, pledged that "Unions will do everything in our power to protect the rights of all workers—union members or not—to express their right to free speech and free assembly on that day." He revealed ICE has already detained over 20 union members.

What's happening in the Twin Cities is a flashpoint moment for the entire country. The people of Minnesota are showing the entire country that when the labor movement and the community unite, they possess the power to halt the machinery of repression and reclaim their streets. This Friday, all eyes will be on Minnesota.

Essential lessons from the book 'The Capital of Slavery'

By Stu Becker

Dr. Gerald Horne recently published The Capital of Slavery: Washington, D.C., 1800-1865. The book's title represents how Washington, D.C., was the capital of a country whose political-economic system was based on the enslavement of Africans. Slavery wasn't the sideshow; it was the main event, and it was foundational to the capitalist system of the United States of America.

In calling Washington, D.C. "The Capital of Slavery," Horne is, in part, referring to how 10 Presidents, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Andrew Jackson, etc., before the Civil War, were wealthy slave owners, and two more after the Civil War owned slaves at some point. Twenty-six of the first 30 Supreme Court Justices were slave owners, or at least 30 Supreme Court Justices in total were slave owners, and at least 1,800 members of Congress were slaveholders at some point.

The three branches of the U.S. Government were dominated by slaveholders throughout the time period of the founding of the country until the Civil War, which resulted in the 13th Amendment and the technical abolition of slavery in the United States. The U.S. Constitution was written and designed to defend private property (which is central to capitalism) and protect the "minority of the opulent (the wealthy) against the majority," as James Madison, a wealthy slave owner, said himself.



The most valuable form of private property in the United States up until the Civil War was enslaved Africans, as this form of "private property" was worth more than all other private property, such as railroads, factories, and banks combined.

The Constitution protected enslaved private property. The United States was a slaveholder's republic (or a slaveholder's and wealthy white male property owners' republic). This means it was a representative government, but only for white slaveholders and rich property-owning white males (all white males were later allowed to vote during the Andrew Jackson presidency).

Horne has said that this book represents a sequel to his book, The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States, where Horne shows that most enslaved Black Americans joined the British during the Revolutionary War because this represented the best chances for them to get out of enslavement. The British were offering enslaved Black people freedom if they fought with them.

Horne points out that enslaved Black people represented the unpaid sector of the working class. This is an important corrective as many people often don't see slavery as a site of class exploitation, class oppression, and class struggle. He builds on W.E.B. DuBois, who puts this idea forward in Black Reconstruction. Horne shows that enslaved Africans engaged in unremitting class struggle. Class struggle means that a dominant class exploits and oppresses a working class, and the working class then organizes and fights back against its exploiters and oppressors.

In capitalism, the working class organizes and fights the capitalist boss class for eventual working-class democratic control over the economy and society. Horne's history lessons need to be taken in and connected with the Marxist idea of the multiracial multinational working class's fight for democratic control over the economy and society, and the fight for an economic system that puts the people and planet before profits.

Horne shows that Washington, D.C., was a slave-trading hub, as it was located adjacent to Virginia, the largest colony at the time of the Revolutionary War. Virginia was a slave society, as enslaved Africans represented Virginia's primary workforce. Horne teaches about the horrific and often not talked about "slave pens" that held enslaved African people for later resale as if they were livestock and not human beings.

During the War of 1812, many enslaved African people helped and joined the British in August 1814 when the British burned down the White House in an attempt to overthrow the slaveholder's republic because once again the British offered enslaved people of African descent freedom for fighting with them. The Star Spangled Banner was written after the end of this war by U.S. slaveholder Francis Scott Key, which has the line, "no refuge could save the hireling and slave from the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave, and the star spangled banner in triumph doth wave, o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave." The line is meant to scorn or threaten enslaved African Americans who fought with the British in the War of 1812.

In the book, Horne writes about how many of the slaveholding elite political leaders of the United States started the American Colonization Society to deport freed African people to Liberia, essentially because freed African Americans gave the enslaved population "wrong ideas": that Black people could be free and slavery wasn't a natural condition for Black people to be held in.

The white planter class and elite whites blamed the free Black population of Baltimore, Maryland, for supposedly inspiring enslaved Africans to join the British in the War of 1812. This is reminiscent of the Trump and MAGA coalition seeking to "whiten" the United States again with their immigration policies in fear that too many non-white people will dismantle their white supremacist class collaborationist capitalist project.

Gus Hall's Working Class USA describes class collaboration in the glossary section as "trade union politics of non-struggle class partnership," accommodating the wishes of the boss rather than the needs of the workers."

Horne argues that it was the class struggle led by the enslaved and their allies and international pressure that helped end chattel slavery. He argues it was events such as the Haitian Revolution, Nat Turner's revolt, John Brown's revolt, not to mention constant resistance by enslaved people, and more that helped bring down the institution of chattel slavery. The Haitian revolution and slave revolts in the British Colonies of Jamaica, Barbados, and Antigua, etc., were key in pushing Britain to support the abolition of slavery because this worldwide economic, political, and social system based on enslaving people was untenable.

Horne adds on to W.E.B. DuBois' argument that the enslaved African Americans withdrew their labor from the slaveholding Confederacy in a general strike and joined the Union Army to fight against the slaveholding white supremacist confederacy. The lesson that international pressure helped to end chattel slavery teaches us that we need to leverage and lean into international pressure in today's multiracial/multinational working class fight for working class democracy and an economic system that puts the people and planet before profits.

These ideas need to be seriously understood and grappled with: capitalism, white supremacy, capitalist exploitation, exploitation of the working class, the state apparatus to keep the enslaved workers and the working class in check, and settler colonialism where the Euro-American "white" population is made into class collaborators with the capitalist ruling class in order to steal the land of the indigenous population and perpetuate racist exploitation and oppression of non-white people.

Horne argues that class collaboration was inherent to the origins of the United States, specifically its settler-colonialism. He also has said that whiteness is the height of class collaboration and class collaboration is the height of whiteness. In other words, one of the main purposes of whiteness and white supremacy is to unify the Euro-American population, such as the exploiting Euro-American capitalist class and Euro-American working class, in perpetuating the exploitation and oppression of Black and indigenous people.

For instance, poor "whites" in the antebellum and postbellum South saw the enslavement of Black people and white supremacy as in their interests, even though they were still poor. Poor and lower-class whites were overseers and slave patrols. Horne argues that similarly today, Trump's MAGA coalition is a heterogeneous class mixture of elite CEO's, small business owners, and working-class people. The 77 million people who voted for Trump represented many working-class forces. This was also class collaboration in action.

Horne's main argument is added onto in this book: The founding of the United States represented a counterrevolution led by slaveholders and wealthy white settlers who sought to protect slavery and expand to steal the land and commit genocide on the indigenous people. He argues that the founding of the United States was not a step forward for all humanity because a great portion of humanity is Africans and indigenous people, as the former were enslaved as a part of this project, and the latter were victims of genocide and land theft.

Horne argues that these ideas need to be internalized for liberal and left-wing activists today so we can move forward in our fight for multiracial, multinational working class democratic control over society and an economic system that puts the people and the planet before profits.

For instance, the No Kings protests are supposed to reference the United States' "revolutionary origins" in the fight against the British King, arguing that President Trump wants to be a King. Horne argues that merely saying, "Monarchy bad, Republicanism good" is not enough for today's battle against fascism, white supremacy, poverty, and class oppression, as the United States started off as a slaveholder's and rich white male exploiting elite republic as well as a settler colony based on theft of the indigenous land. "Founding Fathers" like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison, etc. were slave owners and land speculators, and Trump is similarly a land owner and land developer and also a white supremacist.

Horne has said we should graduate from the slogan of "No Kings" to "No Capitalism, No White Supremacy." White racism or white supremacy actually hurts Euro-American working-class people in perpetuating the system of exploitation, systemic poverty, pollution, and threats to annihilate humanity in either capitalist destruction of the environment or nuclear war in the capitalist ruling class's attempts to continually dominate and exploit the planet.

Greenland on the chessboard of U.S. imperialism

By Lotte Rortoft-Madsen



On Jan. 14, a few hours before the historic meeting in Washington between representatives from Greenland and Denmark and their U.S. counterparts, J.D. Vance and Marco Rubio, Denmark and several of its NATO allies reinforced their military presence in Greenland and announced that further reinforcements would follow.

Some interpreted this move as pressure on the Trump administration before the meeting. But anyone familiar with NATO-Denmark politics would recognize that appeasement with the empire is the more likely explanation.

At the Washington meeting, the U.S. reiterated its firm demand for "having Greenland": "It is clear that the president wants to conquer Greenland," declared the Danish foreign minister after the meeting. The parties agreed to establish a "high-level working group" in an effort to contain the crisis.

However, the crisis persists, and its magnitude grows by the day.

The reality is that for over a year, the nearly 57,000 Greenlanders and their vast island have been turned into a bargaining chip, a pawn to be moved at will on the great chessboard of U.S. imperialism.

Trump has repeatedly stated that the U.S. seeks to control and own Greenland, by military means if necessary. The brutally effective aggression against Venezuela on Jan. 3 and the kidnapping of the country's head of state and his wife have erased any doubt that the administration occupying the White House is capable of putting Trump's words into action.

The threat is imminent, and it is felt acutely among the Greenlandic people. The population is stuck in a vice, and the country's politicians must fight hour by hour simply to get a seat at the table and be heard. Not only by the U.S., but also by Denmark.

Greenland, or *Kalaallit Nunaat*, the "Land of the Kalaallit" in the Greenlandic language, has been inhabited for 4,500 years, and its people are linked to the Inuit communities across the Arctic. It is the world's largest island, with an area larger than France, Germany, Spain, Great Britain, Italy, Greece, Switzerland, and Belgium combined.

It became a Danish colony with the establishment of the state-owned Royal Greenland Trading Company in 1774. The Royal Greenland Trading Company functioned as the de facto colonial administration until the early 1900s, when trade and administration were separated. During this period, Danish companies extracted various minerals, including cryolite, iron, zinc, lead, and silver.

The colonial era formally ended in 1953, but political equality with Denmark did not follow. Following a referendum, so-called home rule was introduced in 1979, which was replaced in June 2009 by the current status of self-government.

Under self-government, Greenlanders hold the rights to the island's subsoil and the minerals found there. However, foreign and security policies remain decided in Denmark, which is why Greenland is considered NATO territory.

Greenland is not a member of the European Union. In a 1982 referendum, 53% of the Greenlandic people voted to leave the European Economic Community, now the EU. Today, Greenland is classified as one of the EU's Overseas Countries and Territories.

In 1951, a secret agreement between the U.S. government and Denmark's envoy to the United States granted U.S. military involvement in Greenland. The agreement was highly controversial and in detriment to official Danish policies at the time. Nevertheless, it remains in force today and has been repeatedly confirmed. In practice, it grants unlimited U.S. military rights over Greenland.

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Thus, for decades, the U.S. has maintained several military facilities in Greenland. The history of these facilities includes forced evictions of Inuit families in 1953, the crash of an American B-52 plane carrying four atomic bombs in 1968, and other harms inflicted on the local population.

The Danish government repeatedly states that Greenland belongs to the Greenlanders and is not for sale. But in reality, Denmark has been selling off Greenland to the U.S. for decades. "We already have a defense agreement between the Kingdom and the United States today, which gives the United States wide access to Greenland," the Danish Prime Minister stated in an official statement at the beginning of the year.

This raises the question: Why does the Trump administration seek an annexation of Greenland, when the U.S. empire already holds extensive rights over Greenland? The answer lies in a new security strategy and the demand for unquestioned and unlimited control over oil, minerals, and military dominance.

Greenland possesses at least 25 of the 34 minerals designated as "critical raw materials" by the European Commission. Greenland has significant deposits of rare earths, copper, nickel, zinc, gold, diamonds, iron ore, titanium, tungsten, and uranium. Trump wants U.S. companies, many of which have invested heavily in his re-election, to have unfettered access to Greenland's mineral deposit resources.

Moreover, Greenland's geographic position near the Arctic is important. Control over northern sea routes, such as the Northeast Passage, is becoming increasingly important as climate change advances. A fully controlled, militarized, and rearmed Greenland is also intended to serve as an advance base against both Russia and China. Beyond the prospect of super-profits, keeping socialist China far away from Greenland is a strategic goal for both the U.S. and Denmark.

Until a few years ago, Greenland was undergoing a process of independent decision-making and freeing itself from neo-colonialism. But the current era of intensified imperialism emanating from the White House has caused a serious setback to Greenland's ability to determine its own destiny. The threats and pressures are enormous.

It is so important to hold on to the principle of the right to self-determination. How Greenland organizes its society, with whom it collaborates, and what alliances it enters to realize its self-determination in practice should be determined solely in Nuuk.

Carney's Davos confession: Globalization's 'rules-based order' was a lie

By C. J. Atkins

When Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney offered his assessment of a "rupture" of the global order before an audience of statesmen and corporate CEOs at the World Economic Forum, he wasn't giving the kind of diplomatic speech typically heard at these ruling class conclaves.

He was delivering a sober message from one segment of the international capitalist class to another: The old assumptions about U.S. leadership, predictability, and liberal multilateralism are dead—and they won't be coming back.

Since 2016, much of the world's ruling elite comforted itself with the notion that Donald Trump was a temporary deviation from the "normal" functioning of U.S. capitalism and imperial leadership. They were sure that he and his politics represented an aberration that would pass soon enough in an election or two. That illusion has collapsed, and Carney told everyone to face the facts.

The capitalist class and its partisan political representatives inside the United States have been divided for years over how to respond to the system's prolonged crisis of profitability and the rise of challengers like China.

One faction favored a continuation of U.S.-led neoliberal globalization, anchored in free trade agreements like NAFTA, multilateral institutions such as the WTO and IMF, and the projection of U.S. power alongside partners through alliances like NATO.

Another faction—embracing nationalism and authoritarianism and more willing to discard any pretense of universal rules—advanced the view that U.S. dominance could only be saved by turning to economic warfare, tariffs, sanctions, and raw force.



Guaranteeing U.S. corporate power wins out against its rivals, they argued, required a return to an imperial bloc strategy, the carving out an American-controlled "sphere of influence" as in the days of the Monroe Doctrine.

Trump did not invent this strategy, but he and the forces around him consolidated it, gave it political expression, and mobilized a mass electoral base around it. This faction has prevailed and succeeded in bringing to its side most of the major segments of the U.S. capitalist class.

Carney's speech amounts to an acknowledgment that Trump and the faction of capital he represents decisively won this internal struggle within the U.S. ruling class and that their victory has consequences for the whole world.

Economic integration is now explicitly subordinated to geopolitical rivalry and domestic political calculation. Allies are treated as expendable, institutions as disposable, and agreements as binding only so long as they serve immediate U.S. advantage.

This is not a policy glitch—it is the operating logic of the dominant wing of U.S. capital today.

Undoubtedly, the Canadian leader's remarks will be remembered as the moment when U.S. imperialism's junior partners woke up to a reality that the developing and colonized countries of the world have been living in for decades.

Far from the usual platitudes about the "rules-based order," Carney plainly declared that the old architecture of U.S.-led multilateralism—once lauded by leaders like himself as the guarantor of stability—is being torn apart under the pressures of great-power rivalry, economic coercion, and unilateral aggression.

What makes Carney's intervention in Davos so significant is that it reflects two major admissions:

First, waiting out Trumpism is no longer a viable strategy for the other advanced capitalist powers. Even if the individual personalities in Washington may change, the balance of forces has shifted within U.S. capitalism. The advantage now lies with those who see permanent economic conflict, increased militarization, and unilateral action as preferred tactics.

Second, the understanding of free trade globalization as a joint international project under U.S. leadership with win-win outcomes for all countries was never true—and leaders in places like Canada and Europe knew it all along. That was simply a "pleasant fiction," as Carney called it.

The Canadian prime minister spoke with a frankness uncharacteristic of a Western leader:

"We knew the story of the international rules-based order was partially false, that the strongest would exempt themselves when convenient, that trade rules were enforced asymmetrically. And we knew that international law applied with varying rigor depending on the identity of the accused or the victim."

But, he said, "this fiction was useful" for capitalists elsewhere. "American hegemony…helped provide public goods, open sea lanes, a stable financial system, collective security, and support for frameworks for resolving disputes." Underpinning it all was the unspoken and only occasionally deployed threat of U.S. power, but the capitalists of the world kept the lie alive because they benefitted from it—their profits, prosperity, and security were guaranteed.

"We participated in the rituals," Carney admitted, "and we largely avoided calling out the gaps between rhetoric and reality."

But with the shift of class forces in the U.S. and the pursuit of a new imperial strategy, Carney is telling capitalists elsewhere to open their eyes to what dependence on the U.S.-led system brought them: "You cannot live within the lie of mutual benefit through integration when integration becomes the source of your subordination."

Carney's rhetoric lays bare what Marxists and progressives have been saying for decades: The post-World War II order was always a fiction sustained by the domination of U.S. capitalism, not a genuine egalitarian system of global governance. The closest the world ever came to that was the wartime anti-fascist cooperation between the U.S., the Soviet Union, Britain, and the Allies, but that was scuttled in exchange for the Cold War. What came afterward was an arrangement that locked in advantages for U.S. corporations and banks while still leaving plenty of opportunities for the capitalists of other countries to also reap benefits. However, "this bargain no longer works," Carney said.

His speech reflects the dilemma facing an elite trapped between loyalty to a collapsing framework and the need to adapt to a world in which U.S. capitalism no longer offers predictable leadership, only demands for alignment and obedience.

For the working class—in the U.S. and around the world—the significance of this moment lies in what Carney has revealed about the system itself. It is workers, along with poor and developing countries, who bore the costs of economic shocks, privatization, austerity, and wars during the era of globalization. They knew it, and now a representative of the ruling class is admitting it.

Carney's speech is an overdue confession that financial and military power, not abstract principles of freedom or democracy, have always been the foundations of international relations under capitalism. It shows that the old stabilizing myths peddled by mainstream politicians and the corporate media no longer hold. "Nostalgia is not a strategy," as he said.

The future will be shaped not by a return to a mythical order but by struggles over how power, resources, and sovereignty are distributed—struggles in which the working class must insist on their own interests rather than trailing the delusions of elite consensus. This is the corollary that Carney doesn't touch; his speech never confronts the system that concentrated power in corporate hands long before Trump came on the scene.

His honesty, however, unintended though it may be, still strips away the myths that sustained capitalist globalization. The question now is not whether the old order can be restored, but whether working people will organize to fight for a new one—built not on imperial dominance and capitalist competition, but on solidarity, peace, and democratic control of the economy.

U.S. attack on Venezuela aimed at rescuing the petrodollar

By W. T. Whitney, Jr.

A lightning U.S. military attack on January 3 succeeded in capturing Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, National Assembly member Cilia Flores. They are now lodged in a New York prison, awaiting trial on narcotrafficking and weapons changers.

Speculation based on the historical record suggesting that the U.S. military might overturn Venezuela's government has not materialized.

Until recently, the U.S. government has, in fact, worked strenuously to destroy Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution, the political project led by President Hugo Chávez from its onset in 1999 until his death in 2013, and afterwards, until Jan. 3, by Maduro.

Under that banner, Venezuela's government has taken on U.S. imperialism, collaborated with revolutionary Cuba, promoted regional unity, and moved toward socialism. Responding, the United States supported or financed a failed military coup in 2002, a strike against the state-owned oil company in 2003, violent recurring street demonstrations, and countless dissident organizations. U.S. economic sanctions have been devastating. The U.S. in 2019 named Juan Guaidó as a puppet Venezuelan president.

Now, for the U.S. government, reaction to revolutionary stirrings in Venezuela fades into the background. The mission now is that of propping up U.S. economic hegemony in the world. This rests on the U.S. dollar continuing to serve as the world's dominant currency. That lofty position is maintained through the dollar's role in the marketing of oil.

Venezuela harbors vast oil reserves and is, therefore, an object of U.S. strategizing. U.S. planners, it seems, are relying upon an intact Venezuelan state—which is the case now, given an annual growth rate recently of close to 9%. The specter looms of regime change in the chaotic style of U.S. endeavors in Afghanistan and Iraq, not to speak of Libya. In the case of Venezuela, the stakes are high, though, and risk is to be avoided.

As 2025 closed, the destruction of small boats, the killings of crewmembers, and a great U.S. naval fleet hovering off the coast did suggest the possibility of regime change. But narcotrafficking charges against Venezuelan leaders and the labeling of Maduro as a dictator qualify more as flimsy pretexts for the capture of Maduro than for replacing a government.

That vast U.S. military presence still lingering in the area surely has use now in frightening Venezuelans into compliance with an evolving U.S. plan. They would be dreading horrendous consequences.

Moving toward collaboration

Evolving public statements of the U.S. president and of Venezuelan Acting President Delcy Rodríguez suggest Venezuela's government is safe. Rodríguez served as vice president in Maduro's government. She is the daughter of a founder of the Marxist-oriented and long defunct Socialist League and sister of the current president of Venezuela's National Assembly.

In remarks on Jan. 3 at an emergency meeting of the National Defense Council, Rodríguez turned to themes appropriate to the occasion. "There is only one president in this country and his name is Nicolás Maduro Moros," she declared. She called for the liberation of Maduro and of Flores. Taking note of pro-government, anti-U.S. demonstrations, Rodríguez insisted Venezuela "will never go back to being the colony of anyone." She decried "regime change" aimed at "capturing our energy, minerals, and natural resources."



President Donald Trump, speaking on Jan. 4, declared, "We're going to take our oil back" and "[W]e're going to run everything. We're going to run it, fix it."

The next day, Rodríguez declared, "We extend an invitation to the government of the U.S. to work jointly on an agenda of cooperation, aimed at shared development...[one] that strengthens lasting peaceful coexistence." Even so, on Venezuelan TV she soon insisted that, "No external agent governs Venezuela" and that "Venezuela is on a painful course through the aggression we suffered."

The two heads of state spoke on the telephone on Jan. 14. Trump reported that, "This partnership between the United States of America and Venezuela will be a spectacular one FOR ALL" and "Venezuela will soon be great and prosperous again." Rodríguez stated that, "I had a long, productive, and courteous telephone conversation with the President of the United States, Donald Trump, conducted in a framework of mutual respect."

Two days later, speaking before the National Assembly, Rodríguez indicated she would "continue shaping energy cooperation" with the United States and that she and Trump were developing "a working agenda for the benefit of both peoples."

CIA Director John Ratcliffe then conferred with Rodríguez in Caracas. Washington officials had been talking with interior minister Diosdado Cabello prior to Jan. 3. U.S. State Department officers visited in Caracas on Jan. 9 "to conduct technical and logistical assessments aimed at a potential reopening of the U.S. embassy in Caracas."

The impression here is of Venezuela being assigned a job description and of the United States applying pressure so that Venezuelans comply and cooperate. For what's ahead, the United States needs partnership, specifically a cohesive and functioning Venezuelan government.

A plan in the works

Trump has repeatedly declared that the United States wants Venezuela's oil. Why would the world's largest oil producer want more oil?

According to misionverdad.org, "The main target was not [Venezuela's] oil reserves...but rather the currency in which they are traded. By breaking the commercial and financial blockade and negotiating crude oil outside the dollarized system, Venezuela opened a real breach in the petrodollar monopoly that had existed since 1974."

A report from Francisco Delgado Rodríguez states that the United States "had no choice but to leave the entire [Venezuelan] government intact" and claims too that "controlling the world's main oil reserve, in Venezuela, serves to sustain the dominance of petrodollars. Without that, everything else will go downhill sooner rather than later."

According to middleeastmonitor.com, "Venezuela holds the highest proven oil deposits in the world, with a reserve of about 303 billion barrels, or about 17% of world reserves, far surpassing Saudi Arabia." Plus, the fact of "Maduro selling oil in Chinese yuan and avoiding the use of the dollar was a direct threat to the Petrodollar system, which had been the foundation of the American global economic hegemony over the past five decades."

Realities intrude. One is that the U.S. government after 1971 was no longer setting the dollar's value in terms of gold. Inflation emerged, and in 1974 Henry Kissinger struck a deal with Saudi Arabia, the world's major oil producer and exporter. The U.S. government would protect the kingdom militarily but require that Saudi Arabia only accept dollars in payment for the oil it sells and also that Saudi Arabia invest 80% of its oil revenue in U.S. Treasury and corporate securities and bonds.

The requirement that nations buy Saudi oil with dollars stimulated demand for dollars. Increased demand has enabled the U.S. government to borrow money at lower interest rates than do other borrowers.

Most importantly for purposes here, the dollar, the world's dominant currency, fuels the commercialization of petroleum. The linkage of one to the other, the so-called petrodollar system, accounts for U.S. power over the world economy.

According to economist Michael Hudson, "Control over oil is one of its key methods for achieving unipolar control over the world's broad trade and dollarized financial arrangements." He adds that "Venezuela...has been supplying 5% of China's oil needs."

Analyst Kasper Bjørkskov explains that, from 2018 on, Venezuela's oil exports to China were settled in yuan, not dollars. Moreover, Venezuela became an official BRICS+ partner nation in 2024, gaining access to the bloc's alternative payment systems.

As of January 2025, Saudi Arabia itself was selling oil to China in exchange for yuan.

Bjørkskov concludes that, "Venezuela represents an existential threat to the petrodollar system, and by extension, to American global power itself.... This is about the slow-motion collapse of the architecture that has supported American power for half a century: the dollar's role as the world's dominant reserve currency. And Venezuela, improbably, has become ground zero in the fight to preserve it."

Ultimately, the U.S. government has every reason to promote a setting that favors the production and export of oil in great quantities—oil that will be sold in dollars. It will stick with Venezuela's current government. The task of keeping a historically-disobedient Venezuela in line is left for another day.

RAPID RESPONSE: No funds for ICE! End the raids!

By People's World

No funds for ICE! End the raids!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand Congress refuse any funding for ICE or border patrol in upcoming spending bills. Abolish this rogue militarized force that is terrorizing working class communities.

The shocking murder of Renee Nicole Good and the undemocratic invasion of Minnesota by thousands of masked, armed ICE agents requires an end to funding, withdrawal of ICE and border patrol from Minnesota, and an end to violent ICE raids and mass deportations everywhere.

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your Senators and Representative! Click here to send them a letter.



Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

ICE funding decision looms – Tell Congress to vote no

By Robert Reich

ICE and Border Patrol agents must be reined in. Since Renee Good's death, clashes between ICE and the residents of Minneapolis have escalated. Trump threatened that if Minneapolis and the state of Minnesota didn't stop the protesters, whom he referred to as "insurrectionists," he would "institute the INSURRECTION ACT."

Let's be clear. The problem is not the protesters. It's the armed thugs who are shooting and murdering them.

A friend recently wrote:
"There are four kinds of people who join the armed forces: those from a traditional military family, true patriots who want to serve their country, those with no other prospects who need a job, and psychotics who just want to kill people.

"The armed services do a pretty decent job of screening out the fourth group, but that group is now the prime recruitment pool for ICE.

Racists, haters, gun nuts, and cage fighting fans who want to shoot anyone the least bit different from them. They are becoming America's Gestapo. That is no exaggeration. We're slipping into Nazi Germany."

ICE is reportedly investing $100 million in what it calls "wartime recruitment" of 10,000 new agents, in addition to the 20,000 already employed. It has lowered its recruitment standards to meet the deportation targets set by Stephen Miller (Trump's deputy chief of staff for promoting bigotry and nativism), thereby increasing the numbers of untrained and dangerous agents on the streets.

ICE's recruitment is aimed at gun and military enthusiasts and people who listen to right-wing radio, have gone to Ultimate Fighting Championship fights or shopped for guns and tactical gear, live near military bases, and attend NASCAR races.

It's seeking recruits who are willing to perform their "sacred duty" and "defend the homeland" by repelling "foreign invaders."

If I had my way, ICE would be abolished and Border Patrol agents sent back to the border. But this isn't going to happen under Trump and his Republican lapdogs in Congress. Too many Democrats are almost as spineless when it comes abolishing ICE.

But Congress can still take action to rein in ICE. At the very least, it must disarm ICE. The Trump regime is allowing ICE officers to use lethal force in "self-defense." But we've seen how readily ICE and Border Patrol agents claim self-defense when they're shooting our compatriots.

How do we disarm ICE?

Congress is now considering the appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security, whose funding runs out at the end of January.

Please demand—call your members of Congress and tell them in no uncertain terms—that the DHS spending bill prohibit ICE and Border Patrol agents from carrying guns and that it unambiguously declare that agents do not have absolute immunity under the law if they harm civilians.

Do this as soon as you can.

Rep. Rosa DeLauro, the senior Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee is seeking to put limits on ICE in the DHS spending bill. "I am looking for policy riders in the Homeland Security bill to [be] able to rein in ICE." House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries said that he and several Democrats will oppose the bill unless Republicans agree to new rules governing ICE officers, but he will not use the whip to force other Dems to do the same.

There is no reason for ICE agents to be armed. If they are shot at—and there's no record of this ever actually happening—they could readily summon state or local police to protect their safety.

ICE was designed to be mainly an investigative agency, not a militarized arm of the presidency. ICE agents are not adequately trained to use deadly force.

In addition, ICE agents prowling our streets in unmarked cars, wearing masks, clad in body armor, and carrying long guns are a clear provocation to violence.

Trump, Vance, and Miller want to provoke violent confrontations so they can justify even more oppression—including invoking the Insurrection Act, which would allow Trump to call in the regular military. "I'd be allowed to do that," Trump said in October, referring to the act, "and I could send the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, I can send anybody I wanted."

Tell your members of Congress not to vote for the DHS spending bill unless it stipulates that ICE be disarmed.



Also tell them that the bill must restrict ICE and Border Patrol's ability to conduct dragnet arrest operations and target people based on their race, language or accent. And the bill must clarify that ICE agents are liable under civil and criminal law if they harm civilians.

DHS went so far as to post a clip of Stephen Miller saying, "You have immunity to perform your duties, and no one—no city official, no state official, no illegal alien, no leftist agitator, or domestic insurrectionist—can prevent you from fulfilling your legal obligations and duties."

Rubbish. There's no such absolute immunity under the law. Regardless of what the FBI concludes, I hope and expect the state of Minnesota will open a criminal investigation of the agent who murdered Renee Good and, on the basis of the evidence uncovered, prosecute him for murder under state law.

It would be useful for Congress to make it crystal clear in the DHS spending bill now under consideration that ICE agents do not enjoy absolute legal immunity.

Please call your representative and senators today and tell them not to vote for the DHS spending bill unless it (1) disarms ICE agents, (2) prevents them from targeting people based on their race, language, or accent, and (3) stipulates that agents who harm civilians are liable under criminal and civil laws.

To reach your representative or senator, call the U.S. Congressional Switchboard at **(202) 224-3121**. Tell them the state and city where you live. They will connect you to any member's office.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Mexico: Rubio–Sheinbaum meeting a victory for Mexican sovereignty

By Callum Wilson

Marco Rubio, U.S. Secretary of State, acting national security adviser, and acting archivist, visited Mexico to meet with President Claudia Sheinbaum.

The Popular Socialist Party of Mexico praised the outcome of the meeting, stating:

“The Yankee Secretary of State was forced to publicly acknowledge that Mexico is a sovereign country, that its authorities and those of the United States collaborate in addressing common problems; that each one attends only to matters in its own territory, without interfering in the others’; that they, the Yankees, bear responsibility for the illegal trafficking of weapons used by criminal gangs into our territory, and that the Mexican government acts with the utmost responsibility, complying with what it is required to do according to established international agreements.

“In summary, Marco Rubio’s meeting with the Mexican government was a great victory for all our people and their government ... to the point of making it impossible for the fearsome adversary to carry out harmful actions against our country.

“For all the reasons stated, we unreservedly support President Claudia Sheinbaum in the defense of our independence and national sovereignty.”

United Kingdom: Communist Party of Britain’s 58th Congress

Long time General Secretary of the Communist Party of Britain (CPB), Robert Griffiths, announced his retirement after 27 years of leading the Party.

Justicia para Renee Good: ¡Abolición de ICE!

By CPUSA Political Action Commission

Condenamos el asesinato de Renee Nicole Good, madre de tres hijos, poeta galardonada y maestra de 37 años, a manos de un agente del ICE.

Renee fue testigo de las redadas del ICE en una comunidad migrante en Minneapolis y fue asesinada a sangre fría por agentes del ICE el miércoles 7 de enero de 2026. Estaba protegiendo a sus vecinos de la operación del ICE cuando agentes enmascarados le dispararon y la mataron.

El video grabado y ampliamente difundido contradice las declaraciones falsas de la administración Trump que intentan justificar el asesinato de Renee.

Trump calificó a Good de "agitadora profesional" que atropelló a un agente del ICE de forma "violenta, deliberada y despiadada". Al igual que el resto de nosotros, los manifestantes presentes durante la redada del ICE estaban indignados por este asesinato flagrante y por los intentos de los funcionarios de Trump de mentir para justificarlo.

El Minnesota Star Tribune identificó a Jonathan Ross como el agente del ICE que disparó y mató a la madre en su coche el miércoles.

El alcalde de Minneapolis, Jacob Frey, declaró que “este fue un agente que usó su poder de forma imprudente, lo que resultó en la muerte de una persona”.

Lorri Nandrea y su esposo asistieron a una vigilia en memoria de Renee Nicole Good. “Estoy desconsolada por el asesinato de Renee Good a manos de ICE, quien claramente solo intentaba defender a sus vecinos”, declaró. “La violencia estatal descontrolada permitió que esto sucediera. Creo que ICE debería ser abolido”.

Para comprender plenamente la campaña de odio contra los inmigrantes de color y la conducta de ICE, es necesario el siguiente contexto:
La inmigración masiva a Estados Unidos se debe en gran medida al imperialismo, a través del daño ambiental, los acuerdos comerciales injustos, las sanciones, las intervenciones armadas, etc.

Por lo tanto, es probable que las políticas de Trump generen aún más migración masiva hacia Estados Unidos, no menos.

Las grandes empresas capitalistas se benefician enormemente de esta situación. Los inmigrantes llegan aquí principalmente porque se han quedado sin opciones en sus países de origen.

Exigimos:
La abolición de ICE debido a su violencia y al uso que le dio Trump con fines políticos. Educadores y familias exigen que ICE se retire de las escuelas. Luchar para que ICE y sus agentes rindan cuentas no solo es lo correcto en este momento, sino que es necesario.

No a los agentes federales enmascarados; respeto a los líderes locales electos.

Fin a las muertes y demás actos de violencia, así como a la campaña de odio impulsada por MAGA contra los inmigrantes de color y sus aliados.

Exigimos la acusación formal del agente de ICE Jonathan Ross y otros responsables por el asesinato de Good y otras atrocidades.

Exigimos el juicio político de la Secretaria de Seguridad Nacional, Kristi Noem, por su participación en el asesinato ilegal de Renee Nicole Good.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
January 31, 2026

How many more need to die before Congress holds ICE accountable?

By Farrah Hassen

On Jan. 7, an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent fatally shot Renee Good in Minneapolis—a city long enriched by immigrants and now under assault from thousands of ICE and Border Patrol agents.

Good, a 37-year-old poet and mother of three, was driving alongside her wife, Becca. They were observing an ICE raid in their community. "We stopped to support our neighbors. We had whistles. They had guns," said Becca.

Sadly, at least three other people have been killed by ICE officers in the last five months, according to The Marshall Project.

Among them was Silverio Villegas González, a 38-year-old father and cook originally from Mexico, who was fatally shot during a traffic stop in a Chicago suburb. Keith Porter, Jr., a 43-year-old father of two—and, like Good, a U.S. citizen—was shot and killed by an off-duty ICE agent on New Year's Eve in Los Angeles.

While the families of all these victims await justice, the violence continues. ICE agents have shot at least nine people in their vehicles since September. The Department of Homeland Security has routinely invoked "self-defense" to justify these shootings, despite video and witnesses repeatedly contradicting their accounts.

From Los Angeles to Washington D.C., Chicago, Memphis, New Orleans, Portland, Charlotte, and now Minneapolis, violence has followed wherever Trump has dispatched immigration agents in the name of "public safety."

On the same day Good was murdered, ICE conducted a raid at a nearby Minneapolis high school, reportedly tackling a teacher and harassing students. The next day, ICE agents in Robbinsdale, Minn., forcibly detained a U.S. citizen and Red Lake Nation descendant for no apparent reason. Stories of new outrages emerge almost daily.

And last fall, federal agents descended from Black Hawk helicopters in a midnight raid of an apartment building in Chicago, detaining all its residents, including children. (That's in addition to killing Villegas González—and shooting another person five times.)

This escalating violence is an outgrowth of ICE's appalling treatment of immigrants. Across the country, people have been rounded up, thrown in deadly prisons, and ripped from their families—a trend that has sharply escalated under Trump.

Thousands of masked agents in unmarked cars—equipped with military-grade weapons and the latest surveillance technology—treat cities like war zones while executing raids at workplaces, places of worship, and schools.



Citizens and non-citizens alike have been racially profiled and kidnapped at courthouses and off the streets without warrants or probable cause. Trump has also used ICE to attack free speech, abducting and jailing students like Mahmoud Khalil, Mohsen Mahdawi, and Rümeysa Öztürk who spoke out against the Gaza genocide.

In addition to the shootings, 32 people died in ICE custody last year alone—and as of this writing, four more people have died in custody so far this January.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

How many more need to die before Congress holds ICE accountable?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Abysmal conditions in ICE prisons, including medical neglect, have resulted in these tragic and avoidable deaths, leaving families shattered and still searching for answers. Nearly 69,000 people are currently being held in ICE prisons, the vast majority of them without a criminal record. According to *ProPublica*, ICE also detained over 170 U.S. citizens last year.

ICE has repeatedly denied members of Congress entry to its detention facilities, interfering with Congress's constitutional oversight authority. Still, Congress enables ICE's abuses through billions in funding increases.

ICE's $14 billion annual budget for detentions alone is more than the total military spending of 124 countries.

Across the country, more communities are responding to our nation's descent into lawlessness by uniting around our shared humanity and demanding justice. A recent poll shows, for the first time, net positive support—including among self-described moderates—for abolishing ICE.

These Americans understand that no one is safe as long as ICE still exists, operates with impunity, and terrorizes communities. How many more deaths will it take for Congress to hold this agency accountable?

Shutdown showdown: Senate Dems threaten filibuster over doubled dollars for ICE

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—Finally moved to action by public outrage over another ICE killing in Minnesota, the usually vacillating Sen. Chuck Schumer, leader of the Democratic opposition in the Senate, is threatening to filibuster—or talk to death—the latest money bill passed by House Republicans.

The spending measures the GOP passed to fund the government for the rest of the fiscal year include a doubling of spending on Immigration and Customs Enforcement—on top of the tripling of the ICE budget that already happened last summer.

Trump's troops continue terrorizing the Twin Cities. In less than two weeks, agents have killed two people during its "Operation Metro Surge" deportation sweep. This weekend, nurse Alex Pretti joined Renee Nicole Good on the victims list.

"What's happening in Minnesota is appalling—and unacceptable in any American city," Schumer said Saturday after the shooting of Pretti. He added that "because of Republicans' refusal to stand up to President Trump, the DHS bill is woefully inadequate to rein in the abuses of ICE."

While pumping more money into ICE, the money bill simultaneously takes aim at the budgets for agencies that enforce workers' rights, including the National Labor Relations Board. That priority pleases President Donald Trump and his corporate campaign contributors just fine but spells continuing exploitation and repression for workers.

The $400 million allotment for ICE was part of a money bill for the Homeland Security Department, which the House passed 220-207, including several Democratic votes. It now goes to the Senate, with only days to go before current funds run out for ICE and much of the rest of the government at midnight Jan. 30.

Schumer says his party will filibuster the bill unless the anti-immigrant strike force is reined in. A battle in the Senate would stall funding for the rest of the government, too.

Double dollars for deportations

The House decided ICE's funds would more than double from its current $175 billion rate for this fiscal year, which began Oct. 1.



Most of the additional cash would go to hire more agents to carry out the violent and vicious attacks—lauded by Trump—on Latinos, regardless of whether they're citizens or undocumented, Somali immigrants, and on native U.S. citizens, too.

Trump and officials from his administration, including Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem and Border Patrol Commander Greg Bovino, have insulted the two citizens killed by ICE troops so far and made false accusations against them.

"ICE believes it can act with impunity and is behaving accordingly," said Rep. Rosa DeLauro D-Conn., during House debate on the funding bill.

When lawmakers worked earlier in the year on details of the money bill for ICE and the rest of the Department of Homeland Security, Rep. Lauren Underwood, D-Ill., was more caustic. She spoke out at the height of ICE's "Operation Midway Blitz" in Chicago and said the agents were "out of control."

DHS is "illegally spending hundreds of millions of our taxpayer dollars, flagrantly violating constitutional rights, and putting America's security at risk," said Underwood.

"Under this administration, due process and the limitations the Constitution puts on our government are being ignored. This bill fails to protect American citizens from being deported. It fails to protect American citizens from being confronted in their homes and offices, or having their property seized, as this administration's deportation policies ignore the boundaries of our laws.

"It shamefully allows" ICE agents "to continue snatching people off the street, at church, at schools, without requiring proper identification or due process. And it punishes immigrants who are following our laws, all while rewarding for-profit detention centers with billions of taxpayer dollars and lax oversight."

Rep. Mark Amodei, R-Nev., who chairs that House panel which actually is supposed to help dole out dollars for ICE, and the rest of the Homeland Security Department, declared: "We advance the America First promise of empowering our frontline agents to uphold our laws, deport criminal aliens, confront bad actors, and protect our country."

No money for working class priorities

While ICE got more money, many domestic programs and agencies got less from the GOP-passed House money bill for the departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services.

The National Labor Relations Board's funding was cut from the current $299 million rate for the rest of this fiscal year down to $200 million. That's its lowest level in more than a decade in regular dollar terms, before inflation.

The DOL office that's supposed to ensure federal contractors—and their subcontractors—don't discriminate by race, gender, religion, or in other ways was cut from a $111 million annual rate to zero.

The Women's Bureau was zeroed out, too. That would kill its program to help women workers train for traditionally male jobs, such as in the building trades.

Lawmakers cut $57 million (9%) from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's spending rate for this fiscal year, to $582 million. They cut 10% from the spending rate for the Mine Safety and Health Administration, to $348.2 million. All but $90 million of MSHA money will go for enforcement.

The committee also wants MSHA to shift away from its traditional enforcement emphasis on inspecting coal mines, particularly the deep ones in Appalachia.

That's because those mines are being shut down, despite Trump's promotion of coal and denigration of alternative energy sources, such as wind, water, and solar power.

Trump tried to take out his spite against the Bureau of Labor Statistics by virtually eliminating the agency. Earlier this year, the president fired the former BLS commissioner, a non-partisan statistics professional, when her jobless rate report didn't produce the rosy numbers he keeps touting. He then nominated a right-wing ideologue to head BLS, but had to withdraw that man under bipartisan flak.

So Trump proposed cutting its budget instead from the current rate of $703.95 million to $68 million, basically enough money to close it down. The lawmakers rebelled, setting BLS's budget for the rest of this fiscal year at $713.95 million. But they noted Trump's demand came too late in the spending cycle for Congress to evaluate his real scheme: Merging BLS with other federal numbers crunchers, notably the Bureau of Economic Analysis in the Commerce Department.

Nuke the filibuster?

Republicans—from Trump on down—are responding to Schumer's threat with one of their own: They are all unanimously signaling their intention to "nuke the filibuster," meaning scrapping the parliamentary procedure from Senate rules completely.

Identical messages have been posted by GOP accounts and the bots associated with them on X, saying: "Senate GOP is HOLDING THE LINE on DHS funding, DARING Chuck Schumer and the Democrats to trigger a government shutdown this week. No way we let these clowns weaponize the Minneapolis shooting to gut ICE funding. NUKE THE FILIBUSTER and keep our troops funded!"

But as the right piled on Schumer, progressives in Congress applauded him for finally taking a solid stand. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., said the Democratic leader was showing the "strength of response we need." But she gave the people protesting ICE actions in the streets of Minneapolis and across the country the credit for this turn.

"People's calls and organizing worked," she said. "No action is ever too small. This is why we never give up."

Socialism: understanding the theory, the path, and the process

By Rossana Cambron

This article draws from Gus Hall's Report to the 19th National Convention of the Communist Party, U.S.A — On course: the revolutionary process.

Socialism is both a political and economic theory and a historical stage in human development. As capitalism continues to squeeze profits from workers, more people become aware of who truly produces society's wealth — and who benefits from their labor. This growing awareness raises a critical question: *if capitalism creates unbearable conditions for the majority, what comes next?*

At its core, socialism advocates for social ownership and democratic control of the means of production. This means that major resources and industries — such as factories, land, energy, and transportation — are owned and managed collectively, rather than by private individuals or corporations.



The ultimate goal of socialism is to eliminate class divisions, exploitation, and extreme inequality. Unlike capitalism, which prioritizes competition and profit, socialism emphasizes cooperation and community for the common good.

In a socialist society:

- Essential services like healthcare, education, and housing are considered fundamental human rights, not commodities.
- Political and economic power is placed in the hands of the working class, allowing people to determine their own path forward based on their needs, traditions, and lived experiences.
- Wealth and resources are redistributed to ensure a fair and dignified standard of living for all.

The transition from capitalism to socialism represents one of the most revolutionary turning points in human history. This transition is both a historical process shaped by key events and a current struggle. Because it transforms the entire way society is organized, it is inherently revolutionary.

This transition is also necessary to resolve the central contradiction of capitalism: profit built on the exploitation of labor. Only socialism can remove this fundamental obstacle to human progress.

Ultimately, socialism is a necessary step toward communism, helping society move beyond individualism and divisions rooted in race, gender, or status. It encourages people to think and act based on what benefits the collective rather than narrow self-interest.

The path to establishing a socialist society

Understanding socialism also requires understanding where we are in the process of transition. Each historical period must be assessed to determine how close society is to systemic change.

Socialism will become possible when the majority of people are convinced that capitalism offers no real solution to their problems. In the United States, socialism will not be copied from other countries—it will develop from our own experiences, struggles, and traditions.

All social systems are subject to change. Slavery, feudalism, and capitalism each served a historical purpose but were eventually replaced by higher forms of social organization. Marxism recognizes continuous change as a fundamental law of motion in both nature and society.

Today, the course of human events is shaped by anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggles worldwide. These forces, combined with resistance to imperialism, are determining the direction of history.

A key part of building socialism is the struggle for reforms. Lenin argued that people develop political consciousness through their own lived experiences in struggle.

Even small reforms are important because they:

- Engage millions of people in collective action
- Demonstrate that change is possible
- Help working people recognize their own power

Victories—alongside inevitable defeats—are essential. Class consciousness does not automatically emerge from worsening conditions; it develops through struggle, organization, and experience.

Throughout this process, capitalist forces will attempt to regain control. This is why it is critical to fight the battle of ideas at every level, convincing people not only that change is necessary, but that they have the right and power to demand it.

When will we have socialism?

Socialism will not arrive on its own. It will emerge when people commit to:

- Grassroots organizing
- Educating working people beyond leftist circles
- Participating directly in struggles alongside them

Education must be grounded in language that resonates with working people—not just abstract theory or quotations. While theory is important, people must also see what is possible in their own lives.

For a transition or revolution to succeed, society's thinking must take a revolutionary turn. People must believe that socialism is not a temporary fix, but a permanent solution worth defending against opposition.

The revolutionary process

The revolutionary process is ongoing. It involves:

- The accumulation of experience
- The internal deterioration of capitalism
- Sharpening class contradictions
- Growing resistance to imperialism
- The ideological and political development of revolutionary forces

Even during periods that seem calm or stagnant, these processes are at work beneath the surface. The engine driving all of this is class struggle. Any serious assessment of the moment must consider this broader, unfolding process.

Building socialism: a continuing struggle

Once society begins moving toward socialism, the work does not end. The transition itself will involve experimentation, mistakes, and course corrections. Capitalist forces will attempt to spread misinformation and divide the working class.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR
This makes it essential to convince the majority of working people that socialism is the only path forward—so they are prepared to defend it.

Just as countries around the world have taken different paths toward socialism, our path will reflect our own history, traditions, and beliefs.

Socialism will not come from declarations alone. It will require hard work, perseverance, and sometimes difficult decisions.

Conclusion

Socialism is not just an idea — it is a historical process already in motion. Through organizing, education, struggle, and collective action, working people can build a society based on equality, cooperation, and shared prosperity. The task before us is to help make that future a reality.

FBI raid of reporter's home and government newspaper takeover ignite First Amendment fights

By Chauncey K. Robinson

"We are just seeing an assault on press freedom that we typically see in authoritarian countries." Those were the words of Caroline Hendrie, Executive Director of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), during an interview on the *Today* show as she condemned the recent FBI raid of the home of a *Washington Post* reporter. The incident is the latest addition to a growing list of what many see as government transgressions against press freedom.

On Jan. 14, agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation executed a search warrant on the Virginia home of Hannah Natanson, a journalist at the *Washington Post*. The raid was reported as being linked to an investigation into a government contractor, Aurelio Perez-Lugones, accused of illegally retaining classified government materials.

When news of the raid hit, President Donald Trump's attorney general, Pam Bondi, posted on the social media platform X that the raid was conducted by the "Department of War" (formerly known as the Department of Defense) and the FBI at the request of the Pentagon. Bondi claimed that Natanson was "obtaining and reporting classified and illegally leaked information from a Pentagon contractor" and that the leaker was now "behind bars."

The attorney general went on to state that the Trump administration will not "tolerate illegal leaks," alleging that Natanson's reporting posed "a grave risk" to U.S. national security. Trump would later state in a White House press briefing that the leaks were in connection with Venezuela. His FBI director, Kash Patel, stated on X that Natanson was "found to allegedly be obtaining and reporting classified, sensitive military information."

But journalism advocates are pushing back against Bondi and the Trump administration's narrative, arguing that the government's actions are an overreach and violate the U.S. Constitution. The First Amendment protects journalists' rights to gather and write about classified information, they point out, and such actions are not considered criminal or illegal.

The *Washington Post's* Executive Editor stated that the raid was an "aggressive action" and "raises profound questions and concerns about constitutional protections."



SPJ, joined by a coalition of press freedom groups and unions, including the NewsGuild-CWA, PEN America, and others, sent an open letter to the U.S. attorney general and the FBI director condemning the Bureau's execution of the search warrant. The letter highlights the fact that Natanson has extensively covered stories relating to federal workers, who continue to be in a battle with the Trump administration regarding layoffs and department cuts.

Late last year, Natanson wrote a *Post* article detailing her experience as the newspaper's "federal government whisperer." During the raid, her electronic devices were also searched. The letter asserts that this has potentially jeopardized the "1,000 current and former federal employees as sources for her work."

The letter goes on to state that "dogged reporting" about the government is not a crime, and the FBI cannot conduct intrusive searches and seizures simply because the newsgathering "advances transparency and accountability in ways that may be uncomfortable for those in power."

The coalition cited the Supreme Court's 2001 decision in *Bartnicki v. Vopper*, that "a stranger's illegal conduct does not suffice to remove the First Amendment shield from speech about a matter of public concern."

The coalition ended the letter by demanding an explanation from Bondi and Patel on the violation of Natanson's rights as a journalist.

In an initial statement issued on Jan. 14, SPJ asserted that "the law exists to protect the public's right to know—not to shield the government from embarrassment or scrutiny."

Since his first term in office, Trump has had a contentious and often confrontational relationship with the news media, often calling journalism he didn't like "fake news." In his second term, those he has placed in power have made moves that many press advocates see as a continued assault against journalism. In April of last year, the Justice Department rescinded a policy put in place by former President Joe Biden that provided protections to journalists in leak investigations. In a memo, Bondi wrote that employees intentionally leaking sensitive information to the media was "illegal and wrong, and it must stop."

But SPJ asserts that an internal memo does not override federal law, and that it does not "erase decades of legal and ethical precedent recognizing that a free press cannot function when reporters are treated as investigative targets for doing their jobs."

And when it comes to journalists doing their jobs and government interference, press advocates are also sounding the alarm about reported Pentagon plans to seize editorial control of the U.S. military publication *Stars and Stripes*.

The publication, which first appeared during the Civil War and has had continuous issues released since World War II, describes itself as a provider of independent news and information to the military community worldwide.

On X, Sean Parnell, the Pentagon's public affairs official and close adviser to Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, wrote that, "The Department of War is returning *Stars & Stripes* to its original mission: reporting for our warfighters," and that it would refocus the publication's content away from "woke distractions." He likened the newspaper to "repurposed DC gossip columns" and "Associated Press reprints."

In a note addressed to staff, *Stars and Stripes* Editor-in-Chief Erik Slavin pushed back against the editorial takeover, saying, "The people who risk their lives in defense of the Constitution have earned the right to the press freedoms of the First Amendment. We will not compromise on serving them with accurate and balanced coverage, holding military officials to account when called for."

SPJ released a statement noting that the Pentagon official's X posturing "directly contradicts long-standing protections for *Stars and Stripes*' editorial independence and its governing directive," which affirms that "there shall be a free flow of news and information to its readership without news management or censorship.

"Turning Stars and Stripes into a vehicle for government-generated content...represents an unmistakable drift away from transparency and toward propaganda," the organization explained. SPJ called on the Department of Defense to reaffirm the publication's editorial independence.

From revoking White House press credentials for established news outlets to ongoing lawsuits against media companies over their reporting, many see the Trump administration's actions as a dismantling of press freedoms and a violation of the Constitution. They note that the fight to defend freedom of the press goes beyond individual incidents and is part of a dangerous battle with high-stakes consequences for society as a whole and the press industry charged with informing it.

As the SPJ proclaimed in their statement on the raid, "A democracy does not grow stronger by intimidating the press. It grows weaker."

Is Trump making China great again?

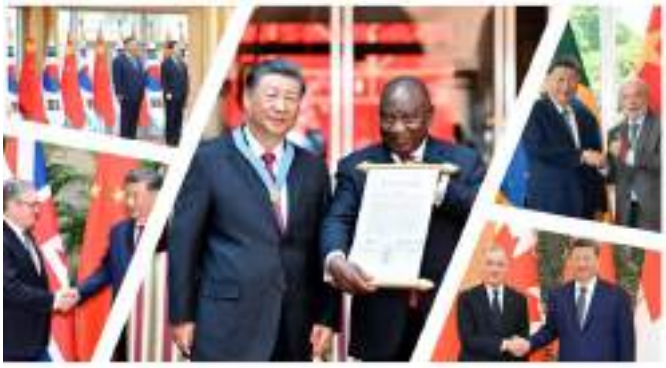
By Jorg Kronauer

"Make China Great Again!" That was the headline the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) gave to the analysis of its latest survey on global politics, conducted in November 2025 in 21 countries worldwide.

No, the think tank, which is part of Europe's foreign policy establishment, was by no means advocating support for China's historic resurgence. Rather, it was referring to a key finding of its survey: that the first ten months of President Donald Trump's second term had been enough to damage the U.S.' global reputation, while the People's Republic suddenly gained new popularity worldwide.

At least in this respect, the authors said, Trump doesn't seem to be making "America Great," but is rather achieving the exact opposite—"Make China Great Again."

The ECFR was able to trace this in detail using its survey. It showed that in many countries, the proportion of those who viewed the U.S. as an ally with shared values and interests had declined. In Brazil, for example, from 29 to 26%, in South Africa from 23 to 19%, and in the U.K. from 37 to 25%. At the same time, the proportion of those who considered China such an ally increased in Brazil from 24 to 27%, in South Africa from 34 to 37%, and in India even from 11 to 22%.



In all countries, at least half of the respondents were certain that China's influence would increase in the coming decade, while in almost all countries—with the exceptions of South Korea and Ukraine—more people viewed the People's Republic as an ally or partner than as a rival or even an adversary. Almost everywhere, a majority also believed that relations with China would remain strong or even become stronger.

Even before the U.S. invasion of Venezuela, the ECFR concluded, Trump's "aggressive 'America First' approach had driven people closer to China." It is reasonable to assume that the attack on Caracas and the abduction of the Venezuelan presidential couple further intensified this trend.

"The world seems to be becoming more open to China," the ECFR concluded. With the West, however, things are going downhill: "America's traditional enemies fear it less than before—while allies now worry about falling victim to the predatory USA." This is currently evident in Europe in the conflict over Greenland.

What the ECFR measured in surveys of the populations in a number of countries can now also be verified in the political practice of states. The best example so far: Canada. Prime Minister Mark Carney was in Beijing on Jan. 16 to conclude a "new strategic partnership" with the Chinese government.

Both sides agreed, among other things, to reduce tariffs on imports of Chinese electric cars into Canada from 100 to 6.1%. In return, China is reopening its market to Canadian agricultural goods. Carney also announced that his country wanted Chinese investment not only in its electric vehicle sector, but also in renewable energies and energy grids—in other words, in critical infrastructure.

This was almost the opposite of what the U.S. is pushing its allies from North America to Europe to do.

And the Canadian example is not an isolated case. "President Xi Jinping welcomes a whole procession of heads of state and government seeking to improve their relations with China." This was the headline of a Bloomberg article in mid-January, which pointed out that South Korean President Lee Jae-myung had already visited Beijing before Carney, becoming the first South Korean leader to do so since 2019. At the end of January, Keir Starmer will be the first British Prime Minister to travel to the Chinese capital since 2018, and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz is also expected there soon.

Given an "aggressive and unpredictable" U.S. policy, many are concluding that they must "at least have good relations with China," Bloomberg quoted political scientist Alexander Dukalskis of University College Dublin as saying. He described China's current approach: "When your enemy is busy hurting itself, just sit back and enjoy the show."

Workers organizations at home and abroad condemn ICE murder of Alex Pretti

By Special to People's World

MINNEAPOLIS—For the second time in two weeks, President Donald Trump's ICE agents have murdered a person in Minneapolis, this time of Alex Jeffrey Pretti, RN, a nurse and union member at the Minneapolis VA Hospital. The Jan. 24 killing produced increased outrage in Minnesota and nationwide and even more demands for ICE to get out of town before its agents inflict more deaths, kidnappings, and injuries.

Multiple Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents threw Pretti, a member of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 3669, to the ground as he was filming them on his phone and also trying to help a woman who was pepper-sprayed at one of the continuing anti-ICE demonstrations in the Twin Cities.

The agents then shot him multiple times, videos from bystanders showed. Pretti's murder at 26th Street and Nicollet Avenue, less than two miles from where Renee Good was killed, produced outrage from bystanders, mourners, and AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, AFGE President Everett Kelley, and especially from Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bernie Burnham. Working class organizations outside the U.S. also joined the chorus of condemnation.

U.S. labor mourns fallen federal worker

"The AFL-CIO mourns the senseless killing of another Minneapolis resident by federal agents. Alex Jeffrey Pretti was a VA intensive care unit nurse and a member of AFGE Local 3669—a brother in our union family," Shuler said in a statement. "Our thoughts are with Alex's loved ones, his union siblings, and the people of Minneapolis at this devastating time.

"As tens of thousands of Minnesotans made clear peacefully and powerfully Friday, the Trump administration's horrific operation—and their actions aimed at stoking violence and chaos—must end.



"America's unions join the call for ICE to immediately leave Minnesota before anyone else is hurt or killed. We demand local authorities conduct a full, transparent investigation that will lead to accountability for this tragic and violent act, and for Congress to use its power to hold ICE accountable."

Minnesota state AFL-CIO President Burnham was particularly angry.

"For the second time in less than three weeks, a Minnesotan is dead at the hands of ICE," Burnham said. "While local authorities are still gathering information, we know that Alex Jeffrey Pretti, a 37-year-old Veterans Affairs Hospital ICU nurse and member of AFGE, is dead. Our hearts are with Alex's family, friends, loved ones, our community, and his AFGE union family right now as they grieve.

"For Minnesota's workers of color, regardless of citizenship or immigration status, every commute to work, every trip to the grocery store, and every walk to school has become a genuine risk."

On Jan. 24, Burnham continued, “tens of thousands of Minnesotans peacefully exercised our right to free speech without incident. When ICE is involved, non-violent protesters and legal observers are gassed, assaulted, and shot.

“Operation Metro Surge”—Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem’s military-style name for sending more than 3,000 ICE agents to the Twin Cities—“is not and has never been about enforcing immigration law. This is about a president [Trump] who is angry with the people of Minnesota for disagreeing with his policies and is weaponizing the federal government against us in retribution.” Burnham termed Trump’s regime “a hostile federal government.”

As they did when ICE agents killed Good, Homeland Security officials rushed to blame the victim. They had called Good a domestic terrorist. This time, they said Pretti pointed a gun—he carried a registered pistol—at them. He didn’t draw it; ICE agents took it off him. He was pointing his phone and its camera at them when they assaulted him before shooting him.

The narrative of Pretti pulling the pistol is one “nobody outside the department can confirm and that contradicts every publicly available video. We join the calls for a full and transparent investigation into both this killing and the killing of Renee Nicole Good,” added Burnham.

“ICE continues to make everyone less safe, and Minnesota’s labor movement repeats and amplifies our call for them to leave our state immediately.” Burnham also promised active union support for “every worker who has been unlawfully detained” by ICE.

Government Employees (AFGE) President Kelley joined in the distress and denunciations. He added the killing is a result of a deliberate policy by ICE and its masters—Trump and Noem—though he did not name them. Early last year, Trump named AFGE “an enemy.”

“This tragedy did not happen in a vacuum. It is the direct result of an administration that has chosen reckless policy, inflammatory rhetoric, and manufactured crisis over responsible leadership and de-escalation,” Kelley added.

“For months, this administration has pursued immigration actions designed to provoke confrontation rather than solve problems. Their actions have raised tensions in communities across the country while stoking fear, chaos, and division. Federal workers have been placed at the center of this political theater, turned into symbols instead of being treated as the public servants they are. That kind of leadership failure has consequences, making everything more dangerous for the public and law enforcement alike.

“Today, those consequences include the death of an AFGE member.”.

Solidarity from abroad

Condemnation also poured in from labor and working-class organizations internationally.

The All-Workers Militant Front (PAME)—a coordination center within the Greek union movement—issued a statement denouncing the “executions carried out by the criminals of ICE in the U.S.A.” PAME expressed its solidarity with the workers and trade unions that rose up in this past weekend’s general strike in Minnesota. The group said it stands with those fighting “to protect migrants and their families and to put a stop to state terror.”

From Mexico, the Communist Party said it stands together with “the people and workers of Minneapolis and of the entire U.S.A. who are fighting against the anti-worker, anti-people, anti-immigrant, and repressive policy of the Trump administration.”

The Communist Party of Britain slammed Trump and his violence deportation raids, saying that the events in Minnesota showed it was time to “build the united front of the working class to stop ICE fascism.” The party diagnosed recent developments as evidence that “U.S. imperialism is bringing home the vengeance of an empire in decline.”

It warned that political forces in Britain—Trump’s followers in Nigel Farage’s Reform party—are planning to create an ICE equivalent if they win the next election. The scheme to deport 600,000 people would “imply paramilitary policing of Britain’s towns and cities and the physical suppression of civilian populations”—exactly as is happening now in Minneapolis.

RAPID RESPONSE: No ICE, No Insurrection Act

By People’s World

No ICE, No Insurrection Act

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand Congress block Trump’s threats to invoke the Insurrection Act and stage a military takeover of Minnesota and other U.S. cities or states to suppress political dissent and target immigrants and people of color.

Pass S.2070 and H.R.4076 that further define and rein in wanton use of this Act. Demand the U.S. Senate vote NO on any new funds for the enormous ICE budget which has unleashed lawless terror and white supremacist violence against entire communities. Demand the immediate withdrawal of ICE agents and border patrol from Minnesota and all cities and states.



Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your Senators and Representative! Click here to send them a letter.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Pekin, Illinois residents turn out to oppose building of AI data center

By Nicholis Hall

PEKIN, Ill.—Residents came out in mass during a Jan. 26 city council meeting to oppose a proposed data center along an important aquifer in the region. Western Hospitality Partners LLC came to the city of Pekin to propose the plan and little information is available about the obscure company. What is known is that they have been seeking to build other data centers in Kentucky, Indiana, and Pennsylvania.

If approved by the council, residents are concerned about the possible environmental impact to the Mahomet aquifer and increased cost of vital resources like electricity and water. “This is a war on our country because it is a war on our resources. Our electricity. Our Water. It’s a war,” said community member Matthew Johnson during public comment.

Information provided to People’s World by the Peoria Sierra Club warns that even as these data centers switch to “closed loop” systems the centers can take up to 70% of a region’s annual water consumption. If approved the data center will have both a damaging effect on the environment while also skyrocketing local consumers’ water bill.

“If they use as much water as all of this data is telling us it is, it’s going to be draining faster than we can replenish it. And we’re going to run out of clean water and we’re all going to suffer from it. Water prices are going to be insane,” said Julianne McGlaughlin, who organized the online Facebook group, Tazewell County Data Center Opposition. The online group has an estimated 2,200 members.

A great variety of residents from all different walks of life and political backgrounds showed up to oppose the data center. Many who spoke around City Hall talked about how this is their first time speaking up on an issue. So many residents showed up that the council room could not accommodate all of the attendees and many were forced to stand outside the room and listen on personal cell phones when the city failed to provide an alternative.

Local political candidate for Illinois House district 93, Zoey Carter spoke to People’s World about the uniting effect the data center had on the community. “We can argue over some things like taxes and whatnot, but when it comes to a project like this, that not only affects our poor or low-income residents, but it affects businesses it affects the environment, it affects the realtors, it affects every single person.



Whether they’re white, Black or minority or not. It affects every single person, and this project is something that people see and they understand that it’s not a political fight. It’s just the right thing to do.”

The issue of the data center also brought some from outside of Pekin to oppose the project. Residents from Peoria and Morton, Illinois expressed concern over the impact it could have on the region. “I am actually a Morton resident. However, you know, we’re not too far away from Pekin, of course, and at the end of the day, these AI data centers, their impact is large, right? As it’s very widespread and at the end of the day, even if it does go in Pekin that impact will reach more. And then potentially beyond my community. So I thought it was important to come out here at the very least,” said Adair Rodriguez.

While the data center was not on the agenda for the evening, Pekin Mayor Mary Burress emphasized that the city is striving for transparency and to gain the facts surrounding the proposal. A town hall is planned for March 24 at Pekin High School.

In earlier interviews, Burress has stated she is open to hearing all sides on the data center, and the City Manager has previously said the project could generate $10-20 million in annual tax revenue for the city.

As this private company moves in on the city, the question remains for community members: Will the cost be worth the destruction of the aquifer, increased water and electric bills, and damage to the ecosystem? So far, the majority of Pekinites seem to be answering “No.”

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Spain: Communist Party of Spain holds Fiesta

By Callum Wilson

The Communist Party of Spain held it's annual Fiesta earlier last year — one of Spain's most important political and cultural events — which brought together progressive leaders, activists, and citizens committed to defending democracy, workers' rights, and social justice. Panels included "How to confront the far right?", "Labor rights against the far right," and "For the right to housing against speculation."

Minister of Youth and Childhood, Sira Rego, presented on the situation of migrant children and youth in the country.

The PCE Festival combines political debate with a packed cultural program that included concerts, documentary screenings, and book presentations.

Italy: Communist Party of Italy 5th National Labor Conference

In the Central Italian city of Terni, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) held its 5th National Labor Conference which focused on a "change of pace" for the party. The central strategy announced was the creation of a "Cantiere dei Diritti."

In the words of the PCI, the Cantiere dei Diritti is "a space open to all workers, including those in precarious employment, migrants, pensioners, and anyone who daily suffers the silent robbery of rights and the extreme consequences of exploitation in a neoliberal system that puts profit before even the mere survival of the worker."

This initiative aims to be a broad, inclusive space for all workers — including migrants and pensioners — to rebuild trust and political engagement among workers who have felt excluded from the political process and no longer vote or participate in strikes. The conference highlighted that the neoliberal dismantling of workers' rights has led to widespread disillusionment with politics, institutions, and unions, resulting in abstentionism and a nihilistic withdrawal from political life.

El Departamento de Salud de Kennedy busca sancionar a los hospitales por tratar a niños transgénero

By Raven Raevsky

Justo antes de las fiestas del año pasado, el 18 de diciembre, el Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos anunció propuestas regulatorias para prohibir que los hospitales proporcionen tratamientos de afirmación de género a pacientes jóvenes transgénero.

Estas propuestas se derivan de una orden ejecutiva firmada por el presidente Donald Trump en enero de 2025 y buscan impedir que los hospitales reciban fondos de Medicare y Medicaid si ofrecen "intervenciones farmacéuticas y quirúrgicas" para la afirmación de género de pacientes menores de edad transgénero.

Los párrafos posteriores del comunicado de prensa emitido por el equipo del secretario Robert F. Kennedy confirman que algunos de los tratamientos a los que se refiere el HHS incluyen bloqueadores de la pubertad, terapia de reemplazo hormonal y cirugías de afirmación de género. Los cambios propuestos también privarán a los pacientes jóvenes que ya reciben estos tratamientos de su atención médica de afirmación de género.

Los críticos de los tratamientos de afirmación de género para jóvenes transgénero argumentan que son demasiado drásticos y demasiado accesibles para ellos, pero las investigaciones indican que se realizan un mayor número de cirugías de reducción de senos en niños cisgénero sin que esto genere ninguna controversia. Las investigaciones también indican que la tasa de arrepentimiento entre las personas transgénero que se someten a cirugías de afirmación de género es baja.

El Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos (HHS) ya ha remitido el caso del Hospital Infantil de Seattle a la Oficina del Inspector General del HHS por proporcionar estos tratamientos a niños, a pesar de que las regulaciones supuestamente se encuentran aún en la fase de consulta pública.

El Hospital Infantil de Seattle ya había tomado medidas para reducir sus servicios de afirmación de género antes de que se presentaran las nuevas propuestas.

El comunicado también anuncia que el HHS ha enviado una carta a 12 fabricantes y minoristas que producen y venden fajas compresoras para el tratamiento de la disforia de género, amenazando con "alertas de importación, incautaciones y órdenes judiciales" si las empresas no cumplen con las órdenes del gobierno.

El anuncio afirma que el Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos (HHS) puede implementar estas normas porque la Ley de Seguridad Social permite al departamento establecer "condiciones de participación" para los hospitales que reciben fondos de Medicare y Medicaid.

Sin embargo, expertos en atención médica para personas transgénero, como Erin Reed, argumentan que las nuevas normas violarán la Sección 1801 de la Ley de Seguridad Social, la separación de poderes establecida en la Constitución y la Décima Enmienda de la Constitución.

Diecinueve estados y el Distrito de Columbia han demandado al HHS por estas propuestas, incluyendo California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nueva Jersey, Nuevo México, Nueva York, Oregón, Pensilvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Wisconsin y el estado de Washington.

El público puede participar en este proceso enviando comentarios sobre los cambios propuestos desde ahora hasta el 17 de febrero de 2026.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
February 7, 2026

Union leader Taylor Rehmet scores major Texas win

By Mark Gruenberg

FORT WORTH, Texas—In a stunning victory for workers, union and non-union, and their allies, Taylor Rehmet, president of IAM Local 776B in Fort Worth and president of the Texas IAM State Council, rolled to a landslide win for an open State Senate seat there.

He tallied 57% of the vote in a special election in a senatorial district that Republican right-wing President Donald Trump won by 17 percentage points in 2024. The district has almost 1 million people. That's more than a congressional district. It has elected only Republicans since 1979.

Rehmet pushed an unabashedly progressive and pro-labor platform, discussing issues that appeal to voters, such as the right to organize unions or directing school dollars to public schools, not private ones.

He'll serve 11 months of an unexpired term. In November, he'll face ultraconservative GOPer Leigh Wambsganss for a full 4-year term.

Rehmet's win also shows progressive programs can beat mountains of money. The GOP spent millions of dollars to try to hold the seat. Trump made three robocalls for Rehmet's foe. Rehmet spent less than $1 million.

Like other special election wins last year, Rehmet's victory also showed voters, even in deep-red Texas, are increasingly upset and disgusted with Trump and his agenda. That agenda includes invasions of deep-blue cities run by progressive Democratic mayors. The invading agents are supposedly seeking "criminal aliens."

They're pepper-gassing, tear-gassing, flash-bombing, dragooning, and deporting people. And now in Minneapolis, they've killed two white citizens, too.

"The backbone of Texas isn't the boardroom, it's the workshop floor," Rehmet said on his website. "The best way to raise wages, protect jobs, and ensure dignity on the job is through strong unions and worker power."

He also promised to "lead efforts to repeal anti-union laws, expand collective bargaining, and bring good-paying, union jobs back to Texas communities."

And Rehmet wants to reclassify gig workers to guarantee benefits. Federal law now allows gig firms to treat their workers as "contractors." That denies them the right to unionize, jobless benefits, and workers' comp, among other protections.

Rehmet "supports fully funding public schools and ending voucher schemes that drain them," his platform adds. Besides the IAM, the Texas AFL-CIO, the Texas Federation of Teachers, the Laborers, and the Working Families Party also endorsed him.



"Every student deserves a real future, whether it's college, the military, or a skilled trade," adds Rehmet, a Machinist with McDonnell-Douglas in Fort Worth. He plans to "fight to reinvest in public education, expand high school vocational programs, and reverse the privatization of Texas schools by way of taxpayer dollars."

He also plans to fight partisan gerrymandering. Texas is one of the most gerrymandered states in the U.S. The legislature's redrawing of congressional district lines this year—at Trump's demand—only worsened it.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Union leader Taylor Rehmet scores major Texas win

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

"When lines are drawn behind closed doors to silence working families, that's not democracy, it's theft," Rehmet says on the website. He supports increased transparency in the redistricting process, enforceable protections for minority voting blocs, and strengthening the Voting Rights Act. The Supreme Court weakened it and may do so again.

In another January 30 vote, Houston Democrat Christian Menefee won a special election to complete the late Democratic Rep. Sylvester Turner's term in Congress. The former Harris County Attorney defeated Amanda Edwards in Texas's 18th Congressional District. The two will face off again in the March 3 primary for a redrawn version of the district.

Texans will have another opportunity to vote for a progressive in the March 3 congressional primary. Zeshaun Hafeez, who focused on labor and workers' rights in grad school in D.C. before returning to Texas to work, seeks the party nod against two other Democrats. Both are "moderates" who represented a congressional district: Current Rep. Julie Johnson and her predecessor, Colin Allred.

The new district is 78% majority-minority and 55% Latino, Hafeez told the Progressive Democrats of America. His two foes are also favorites of the notorious right-wing campaign finance committee AIPAC. Both of his foes are pro-Israel and anti-worker, Hafeez charged.

"My focus is on real solutions," he said. On their websites, "Julie and Colin are basically anti-Trump," and that's all, he said.

From the streets to the ballot box

By Joelle Fishman

Presented by Joelle Fishman, chair, Political Action Commission CPUSA to the National Committee meeting, January 31, 2026.

If the fascist violence, terror and executions being waged against the people of Minneapolis say anything to us it's that we must get MAGA out of control of the House, the Senate, and state and local offices. And if the magnificent resistance by the people of Minneapolis and Minnesota says anything to us, it's that we can.

The political dynamic has been upended. The all-out class war for democracy and our future is exposed. Our Party is playing an important part.

Led by labor alongside neighborhood committees, immigrant rights, faith based and student groups, including small businesses, Minnesotans' extraordinary examples of mass nonviolent resistance are being embraced across the country.

Protests, sweeping across the country, are taking place weekly, even daily, in towns large and small. They are leading up to No Kings Day III on March 28 with Indivisible's demands: "No troop deployments in our streets, No imperial wars of conquest" and May Day Strong's call for May 1: "no work-no school-no shopping" across the country. All with an eye on organizing turnout for the November elections.

Virtual mass trainings are building solidarity for local actions. Boycotts of corporate profiteers are expanding. States are passing protective legislation. Scores of lawsuits challenging Trump's orders are being filed including by unions to reverse illegal funding cuts to child care and other human needs.

The bottom line is that Trump and MAGA do not have support for their destructive white supremacist policies. Polls show a widening shift with the majority saying they are worse off economically and disapproving of Trump's policies on immigration and foreign policy.

Trump and MAGA are desperate to steal the election so they can continue to consolidate power, dismantle all rights and make their profit margins soar. That includes arresting reporters.



So this is all about the elections. A net gain of three to flip the U.S. House, a net gain of four to flip the U.S. Senate, with the goal of a massive victory making it possible to act on impeachment and progressive legislation like Medicare for All and Abolish ICE. In addition, possibilities to elect new working class champions and Communists at the state and local level.

Minnesota refused to take the bribe when they were told "hand over your voter rolls to get ICE out." Another 20 states including my own state of Connecticut are going to court rather than respond to the lawless demand to hand over their voter files. Trump and MAGA are employing every method from racial redistricting to attempts to take away voting by mail and other tactics to rob people of their right to a vote and representation.

We say no! Voting is a revolutionary collective act of nonviolent mass resistance. Voting is not the end. It's the beginning of struggle and a fundamental tool in our toolbox.

The call is to engage the 90 million who did not vote in 2024 and all the new voters since. The call is to march en masse from the streets to the ballot box to preserve democracy and raise up the struggle for working class power.

In last week's special election Minnesota did just that and ended the MAGA Republican majority in the State Legislature by a vote of 95 points in the midst of being under siege.

Comrades, this is an extraordinary time. Class consciousness is rising. Our members are being nominated to run for office, getting wide support in Bangor, Ithaca and Cambridge last November winning.

The times call for clarity. They call for vision. They call for unity in action. That's why on Saturday May 23 our Party will hold a national conference on political action.

We will hear from and learn from our electeds and recent candidates. We will consider best practices developed by the labor movement to elect union members. We will grapple with basic questions in the context that electoral politics is a form of class struggle — adding our Communist Plus in the defense of the multi racial working class.

We will dig deep into methods of neighborhood organizing and building Communist Party clubs for the long haul.

This conference can be instrumental to mobilize our entire membership and build for the elections in a way that strengthens our working class foundations and our ongoing grassroots concentration and coalition work.

We have confidence as part of the rising working class that we will not only repel fascism, we will be a growing part of the remarkable movement that is demanding and shaping a future with plenty for everyone and respect for all peoples and nations.

Daily number of kids in ICE detention jumps 6x under Trump

By Shannon Heffernan and Anna Flagg

The number of children in Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention on a given day has skyrocketed, jumping more than sixfold since the start of the second Trump administration. The Marshall Project analyzed data obtained by the Deportation Data Project and found that ICE held around 170 children on an average day under Trump. During the last 16 months of the Biden administration, ICE held around 25 children a day.

The Marshall Project's analysis found that on some days, ICE held 400 children or more. The data covers September 2023 to mid-October 2025, meaning it does not include the surge of arrests from recent immigration enforcement operations in Minnesota. Nor does the data include children in the custody of the Border Patrol or the Office of Refugee Resettlement, where children are held without a guardian.

The Dilley Immigration Processing Center in Texas is the main facility for family detention. U.S. Rep. Joaquin Castro spent two-and-a-half hours inside Dilley on Wednesday, visiting parents and children. He said that the 1,100 detainees housed at the facility included a 2-month-old infant. "They are literally being treated as prisoners," said Castro, a Democrat from San Antonio, in a live-streamed video. "This is a monstrous machine."

In 2021, Biden largely halted the practice of family detention, and the Dilley facility, which had mostly housed families, closed in 2024. But the Trump administration revived the practice last year, and the facility, which is located about 75 miles outside of San Antonio, reopened.



The detainment of children by ICE has led to protests in recent weeks, both inside and outside Dilley. On Wednesday, state police used pepper spray on people protesting outside.

Immigration attorney Eric Lee was visiting clients at the facility on Saturday when staff abruptly told him to leave. Outside, he could hear a large group of children and women detained inside chanting, "Let us out." Lee said he later learned that families inside the detention center had gotten news that people across the country were protesting the detainment of 5-year-old Liam Conejo Ramos, whose story went viral amid the backlash against the Trump administration's recent immigration enforcement surge in Minnesota.

Javier Hidalgo, legal director at the Texas-based immigration advocacy group RAICES said he's seen many young children like Liam in Dilley. "That's very much the norm," Hidalgo said. "That's what the government is spending taxpayer money on."

A previous Marshall Project analysis found that ICE has booked at least 3,800 children into detention since Trump took office last year.

At least 1,000 children were held longer than 20 days, a court-ordered limit on child detention.

"Every single day that a kid is in a place like this, they deteriorate," Hidalgo said. "I've seen [them] withdraw. They lose weight; they just get physically worse."

Children being detained with their families as part of immigration raids has become a common occurrence across the country. According to school officials in Columbia Heights, Minnesota, four children, including Liam, have been detained from their district during recent raids.

A 7-year-old in Portland, Oregon, was taken from a hospital parking lot in January with her family, after her parents took her to the emergency room, according to Oregon Live. As ProPublica reported, a 6-year-old boy in Chicago was detained with his mother in a large apartment raid during "Operation Midway Blitz."

The Marshall Project spoke with three different lawyers representing children who were held with their families at Dilley. They said their clients were often taken into detention during in-person check-ins and had pending cases that could result in them remaining in the country legally. The lawyers believe their clients were detained not because of any danger they posed, but because the Trump administration is trying to deport as many people as possible.

"They're probably the easiest catch for a lot of immigration officials," said Veronica Franco Salazar, a Houston-based immigration lawyer.

In court documents, families have described horrific conditions while detained with their children in Dilley. They reported moldy, worm-filled food and foul-tasting, undrinkable water. With little for children to do, some resorted to playing with rocks. Parents worried about the psychological toll of detention, describing children hitting themselves in their faces or wetting themselves despite being potty-trained.

During his visit, Castro said that he heard many families talk about the psychological toll of detention. He spent half an hour with Liam, and said Liam's father, Adrian Conejo Arias, told him Liam has been depressed and sleeping a lot. Liam remained asleep in his father's arms during the visit with Castro. Arias said Liam had been asking about his classmates and the bunny hat he was wearing when detained. The congressman said he told the father that children at Liam's school were still saving a spot for him at his desk.

CoreCivic, the private company running the Dilley facility, declined to answer a detailed list of questions. "Our responsibility is to care for each person respectfully and humanely while they receive the legal due process that they are entitled to," Brian Todd, a public affairs employee at CoreCivic, told The Marshall Project in an emailed statement. Todd referred all questions to ICE, which did not respond to emails.

Kristin Kumpf, coordinator for the National Coalition to End Family and Child Detention, explained that the public may see videos or photos of the moments people are taken from their homes or snatched off the street, but there is less attention to the conditions children endure in the black box of detention.

"It's only a matter of time before we see a child die within Dilley or another facility," Kumpf said.

Hayam El-Gamal and her five children, including 5-year-old twins, have been locked inside Dilley for eight grueling months. Lee, who represents the family, said they've received poor medical care and are suffering from psychological stress.

"They're calling me crying every day," Lee said. "It's an unmitigated horror show, and there's no other way to put it."

El-Gamal's husband, Mohamed Sabry Soliman, is facing charges for attacking people at an event in Colorado supporting Israeli hostages in Gaza. At least 13 people were injured in the attack, and one person died, according to prosecutors. Soliman told detectives his family knew nothing of the attack, according to court documents, and an FBI agent testified they were not involved. The family's lawyer said they are being unfairly punished for crimes they had no part in.

Lee recounted how one of El-Gamal's children had appendicitis while in detention and "was left writhing on the floor of the facility screaming and in pain." Lee said facility staff just gave him Tylenol, and it was only when he started vomiting that the child was taken to urgent care.

"Why is this happening to us?" El-Gamal's eldest daughter, 18-year-old Habiba Soliman, asked in a handwritten statement provided to The Marshall Project by Lee. "It's very easy to see the truth about this place and about us. The people need to be truthful to themselves and follow the facts."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR

Lee said he believes ICE is retaliating against Habiba Soliman for speaking out about her family's long detention. She was recently moved to a different area of the facility. Lee said the timing of the move, many months after her 18th birthday, but shortly after she spoke to the press about her long detainment, suggested it was punishment. ICE did not respond to questions about the reason for the separation.

Lee said she has faced threats of being moved to a different facility altogether if she didn't behave.

"I will never forget the look of fear and helplessness on my mother's face as she watched me being taken away and couldn't do anything to prevent it," Habiba Soliman wrote in her statement. "We need everyone to step up and say that detaining families for indefinitely long periods should be illegal."

Trump suffers another defeat in his war on renewable energy

By Chauncey K. Robinson

Despite President Donald Trump's assertions that renewable energy—in particular wind power—is a "con job," "ruining the oceans," and "driving the whales crazy," a federal judge ruled on Feb. 2 that an offshore wind project aimed at powering 600,000 New York homes can resume construction.

The judgment marks the fifth such project to be put back on track after the White House halted them in December and marks another blow to the war on renewable energy that kicked into high gear when the president retook office last year.

During his 2025 inaugural address, Trump said he would declare a "national energy emergency" as one of his first acts. "We will drill, baby, drill," he asserted, claiming that the U.S. would be a "rich nation again" and that the "liquid gold," referring to oil and other fossil fuels, would "help us do it." This energy emergency did not include solar, wind, or stored power in the definition of "energy" or "energy resources."

That same day, Trump issued an executive order titled "Temporary Withdrawal of All Areas on the Outer Continental Shelf from Offshore Wind Leasing and Review of the Federal Government's Leasing and Permitting Practices for Wind Projects." What that long name meant in practice was a temporary halt to all onshore and offshore wind project permitting.

It was followed by another executive order on Feb. 14, 2025, "Establishing Energy Dominance Council," which excluded solar and wind energy from the list of what Trump called "our amazing national assets."

The decrees set the tone for the administration's approach when it comes to renewable energy. In the months that followed, a number of maneuvers by Trump demonstrated what many environmental advocates saw as the creation of a hostile narrative toward solar, wind, and stored power.

That hostility has not only affected building projects but also consumers, as Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lee Zeldin announced the elimination of the $7 billion Solar for All program, which aimed to lower energy bills for people across the country.

In October, the Energy Department halted an estimated $7.5 billion in funding for 223 clean energy projects.



At that time, White House budget director Russell T. Vought, who announced the cuts on social media, claimed that "nearly $8 billion in Green New Scam funding to fuel the Left's climate agenda is being canceled."

Weeks before the new year, the Trump administration suspended the leases of five large-scale East Coast offshore wind projects, claiming a national security risk related to them had been identified by the Pentagon.

Sunrise Wind was one of those projects, along with the Vineyard Wind project in Massachusetts, Revolution Wind in Rhode Island and Connecticut, Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind, and Empire Wind, also in New York.

In the latest court hearing, Judge Royce Lamberth said Sunrise Wind was allowed to proceed, stating that the government had not shown that offshore wind is such an imminent national security risk that its development must come to a halt in the United States.

In a series of court rulings issued since early January, with Sunrise Wind being the latest, all five projects have been permitted to resume operations.

The Trump administration's interference in renewable energy progress has been derided by many advocacy groups, who say that the push toward renewable energy is necessary in a world facing growing climate risk.

Turn Forward, an independent, nonprofit organization advocating for wind power, issued a statement after the ruling saying:

"Taken together, these five offshore wind projects represent nearly six gigawatts of new electricity now under construction along the East Coast, enough power to serve 2.5 million American homes and businesses.

At a time when electricity demand is rising rapidly, and grid reliability is under increasing strain, these projects represent critically needed utility-scale power sources that are making progress toward completion."

The group went on to assert that it was time to "move past litigation-driven uncertainty" and let the projects do what they were approved to do. Citing the fact that offshore wind is not only good for the environment but for workers as well, Turn Forward noted that it "strengthens American energy security, supports domestic manufacturing and construction jobs, and delivers reliable power where it is needed most. We need to leverage this resource, not hold it back."

Trump has made a number of claims about wind and solar energy, including that they endanger national security, kill masses of birds, and drive the whales "crazy." He's declared them to be overly expensive forms of energy that do not work.

Months ago, on his social media site, Truth Social, the president claimed (without citing any sources) that "Any State that has built and relied on WINDMILLS and SOLAR for power are seeing RECORD BREAKING INCREASES IN ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY COSTS. THE SCAM OF THE CENTURY!" He then went on to state that, "We will not approve wind or farmer destroying Solar. The days of stupidity are over in the USA!!! MAGA."

Yet detractors argue that the president's claims lack evidence or are just downright inaccurate. For example, the claim that solar and wind power are more expensive than fossil fuels is refuted by recent analysis finding the opposite to be true.

Others note that Trump's push to prioritize fossil fuel industries such as coal and oil will leave humanity on the hook to pay a dangerous price.

In an article titled "Scientists' Warning on Fossil Fuels," published in *Oxford Open Climate Change*, analysts explained that "the fossil-fueled climate crisis is cutting lives short, imperiling ecosystems, costing global economies hundreds of billions of dollars in damages annually, and threatening national security and a livable future. Action to speed the transition from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy could not be more urgent."

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' Science and Security Board (SASB), which sets the Doomsday Clock that provides the public with an easy-to-understand measurement of manmade threats to human existence and the planet, also cited the Trump administration's "aggressive" pushback on renewable energy as a cause for alarm. The board called on Congress to "repudiate President Trump's war on renewable energy."

It is not clear at this time whether the Trump administration intends to appeal Judge Lamberth's decision.

During the Feb. 5 National Prayer Breakfast, the president seemed to double down on his stance against renewable energy and on prioritizing coal and oil. He pushed for the need to pair the words "clean" and "beautiful" with talk of coal, and for others to see that wind energy is a "quick way of losing money."

"You're losing your fields, killing your birds," Trump said, "and it doesn't work," in reference to wind energy. He went on to make the claim—again, with no sources—that renewable energy and immigration are "destroying" Europe.

Texas tremors shake national politics

By Gene Lantz

National pundits are analyzing Texas special election results from Jan. 31. For the most part, they are getting it wrong, even though the winner for State Senator in Fort Worth, Taylor Rehmet, made it simple for them when his overwhelming victory was registered: "This win goes to everyday working people!"

What the pundits ignore is that organized labor provided the shock troops for the entire campaign. The state federation of labor provided guidance while union members from both Tarrant and Dallas County did the work on voters' phones and porches. The Texas Alliance for Retired Americans set up their own retiree-to-retiree phone banks, because seniors tend to vote when others don't, and an isolated special election was sure to have low turnout.

Only 15% of voters turned out. Rehmet took 57%. Working people jumped for joy! The loser snarled about a future defeat for Rehmet, and the powerful Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick remonstrated. Donald Trump pretended that he hadn't been involved, even though he had endorsed Rehmet's super-MAGA opponent, Leigh Wambsganss, and published several messages of support.



"This is a huge win for Texas workers. Taylor embodies what it means to be a union leader — working together to address the struggles of real, everyday Texans," said Texas AFL-CIO President Leonard Aguilar. "While state parties are trying to reconnect with the working class, we're running union members up and down the ballot — and winning. Taylor's historic win kicks off a slate of rank-and-file union members running for office to fight for all of us."

Civil rights activists took special note of this contest. Former Mayor Pro Tem and NAACP leader Casey Thomas called KNON's "Workers Beat" radio program early on Election Day. He urged all African American voters to turn out for Rehmet.

Going further, he blasted Wambsganss as a leading suppressor of critical race theory.

The importance of the Texas State Senate special election had been noted in the New York Times and other national publications. Rehmet was unknown in electoral politics. He had been an aircraft mechanic at Lockheed-Martin in Fort Worth and a statewide union leader for the Machinists' union.

His opponent had a big reputation among Republicans for her work in getting area school boards to elect extreme right-wingers. She bragged about her close relationship to Trump and MAGA-Republican policies.

Senate District #9 voted for Trump in 2024 by 17 points. Two Republicans faced Rehmet in the first round. Together, they had more than $3 million against Rehmet's reported $160,000. His biggest donor was his own union, and unions are constrained to donate no more than $10,000. Rehmet gathered money from small donations, but the major billionaire donations were all against him.

The billionaires put up more than $2 million for Rehmet's opponent in the runoff. PAC money was involved, but it would be difficult to find out just who spent what. News articles agree that Rehmet was outspent ten to one.

The raw data on the runoff vote suggests an interesting twist. From the first round to the runoff, Rehmet lost about 2,000 votes. The total vote on the Republican side, however, nosedived over 20,000 votes.

Does it mean that Republicans forgot to vote? Did news from Minnesota about MAGA violence and repression unnerve Republican voters in Texas? Was it a strong rejection of their candidate? Or does it simply mean that the MAGA Republicans didn't have the ground forces that labor provided for Rehmet?

Jan. 31 was also the date for a special election between two Houston Democrats seeking an unexpired term in the House of Representatives. Labor won that one, too.

Survey reveals huge size of Minnesota shutdown against ICE

By Workday

Roughly one in four Minnesota voters either participated in the Jan. 23 day of shutdown and protest against ICE, or have a loved one who did, according to new polling data.

Of those participants, 38% percent stayed off the job, either because they did not go to work, or because their employer closed for the day of action. The data does not distinguish between those who made the choice to stay out and those who saw their workplaces close. (Some workplaces were shuttered that day due to worker pressure.)

The poll was commissioned by the May Day Strong coalition, a network of local and national unions and community organizations, and was conducted by polling firm Blue Rose Research.

McKenzie Wilson, director of external affairs and message strategy at the firm, explained that researchers surveyed 1,940 Minnesotans who voted in 2024.

Sixty percent of Minnesota voters said they had heard about the day of action "a lot," and 23% "a little," meaning a huge majority —83%—was aware of the action. It's also important to note that a poll of 2024 voters excludes undocumented people, people younger than voting age, and disaffected voters who very well may have participated in the day of action.

The findings were celebrated by organizers as a sign of large-scale participation and support. "People were willing to take a real hit to their paycheck to demonstrate their resolve and the necessity of getting ICE out of their state," said JaNaé Bates Imari, representative of the church, Camphor Memorial UMC, at a Jan. 30 press conference.



The mobilizations were part of a day of "no work, no school, no shopping" to protest the Trump administration's deployment of thousands of armed, masked federal agents to the state. In the days leading up to the Jan. 23 day of action, major unions and labor federations endorsed the day of action. Among them was the executive board of the Minnesota AFL-CIO, a federation of more than 1,000 unions representing over 300,000 Minnesota workers.

Organizers estimate some 50,000 to 100,000 protesters took to the streets of downtown Minneapolis that Friday, braving sub-zero temperatures, to demand federal immigration agents leave the state. Earlier that day, about 100 clergy were arrested in an act of civil disobedience at the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport, the site of frequent deportation flights and worker abductions.

The poll found that 45% of voters "generally support the call for no work, no school, no shopping as a form of protest." Two-thirds of Black voters supported the call, and numerous demographic groups saw at least 50% support: women, people under the age of 34, college-educated voters, Asian voters, and Hispanic voters.

As protesters nationwide continue to call for Democratic lawmakers to block continued funding to ICE, the poll also found that well over 80% of self-identified liberal voters supported the Jan. 23 action, with roughly one in five of those voters reporting that they or a loved one stayed home from work that day.

There was also significant participation from voters who did not go to college. (While the poll did not ask about income, college education is an imperfect indicator of lower-income or blue-collar workers.) Eighteen percent of respondents who did not go to college either participated or had a loved one participate in the day, compared to 29% of college graduates. And of the above participants, 39% of respondents who did not go to college declined to work that day, either because they stayed home or because their employer closed, compared to 38% of college graduates.

"Our workers are being impacted by what is happening in our communities by ICE every single day," Chelsie Glaubitz Gabiou, president of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, said at the Jan. 30 press conference. "We have workers who are being detained and workers who are being racially profiled and staying home."

The January 23 day of action was followed by heartbreak for organizers and participants. "After our beautiful Day of Truth and Freedom, where 100,000 Minnesotans took action together, [federal] agents killed Alex Pretti on the streets of Minneapolis," Bates Imari said at the press conference.

"And now we know that the federal government is also trying to Trump up charges, pun intended, against several peaceful ICE observers, against more peaceful protesters, against nonviolent protesters. And all of this in attempt to scare Minnesotans away from us doing what we do best: protect our neighbors, love on our people, care for our community."

"ICE messed with the wrong profession," said Mary Turner, president of National Nurses United. Pretti worked at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Minneapolis and was a member of the American Federation of Government Employees Local 3669.

"Never get between nurses and our patients," Turner said in a news release from the union, which noted that they were holding a week of actions and vigils in honor of Pretti and to call for justice for his murder. She added, "Nurses want ICE abolished. Not one more penny for their crimes."

One commercial electrician at the protest, a member of IBEW Local 292, held a sign reading "General Strike is a Path to Justice," and told me, "I mean, ICE is just deplorable."

"I mean, anyone could get in the path of the ICE agents," he said, as previously reported by In These Times. "It just infringes on our own civil rights."

RAPID RESPONSE: Uphold and expand voting rights!

By People's World

Uphold and expand voting rights!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand they commit to oppose any infringements on voting rights.

Minnesota and 20 states are refusing to turn over their voter files being illegally demanded by Trump's Justice Department.

The SAVE Act, which would disenfranchise tens of millions of eligible voters, is before the U.S. Senate.

The MEGA Act, which the Brennan Center calls "one of the most catastrophic proposals for democracy where voting would move from a fundamental right to one where voters must repeatedly prove their eligibility and navigate bureaucratic obstacles," includes a ban on automatic mail-in voting.

Congress must take a stand to stop this destruction of democracy and immediately pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Enhancement Act (HR 14/S 2523).



This will protect the integrity of the vote and the right to representation in upcoming elections!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your Senators and Representative! Click here to send them a letter.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

When criticizing the world, the U.S. is pointing at itself

By Rev. Graylan Hagler

Every single moving mouth and face I see in the media seems to be obligated to stress the barbarity and illegitimacy of the Maduro government in Venezuela to establish some acceptable moral clarity, even before they can carry on with any analysis of the current political situation or the current political conditions in the world.

Likewise, each personality seems obligated to make similar statements as a prerequisite to speaking on the Iranian regime and the religionists controlling the country.

Each is evil, they must claim, and they expressively disagree and denounce them in all shapes and forms. Each is beyond the specter of acceptable civilization, they must state. Each has no inkling of morality but is simply obsessed with power and control.

This was the same in any discussion of Hamas in Gaza. Every political critic was required to denounce the various regimes and point out their flaws without spelling out the historical influences that helped create them and set them in motion.

Anyone who has ever spoken up for peace and credible reflection knows what it's like to be baited or accused of being an apologist for the bad guy. But this is not necessary and distracts from a full and meaningful analysis.

Four fingers pointing back

I am not going to seek acceptability by engaging in some litmus test of morality, regurgitating a litany of flaws, and explaining how I don't agree. I believe there is a collective of people so tired of moral denunciations that they can look past my refusal to criticize and denounce and hear what I am trying to say.

I am reminded of my experiences with my work in the drug and alcohol recovery community in Roxbury, Mass., and the very poignant but grassroots logic and moral challenge that often flowed from that recovery community. People would remind us that when we were so busy pointing fingers at others, there were four fingers pointing back at us.

This means that when we point out the deficiencies, the cruelty, the lying, the racism, and the hatred of others, it is not all in them, but it also resides in us. We are not exempt, and we are not free from all the dismissive political distances that we try to create. There is some Nicolás Maduro in us. There is some Ali Hosseini Khamenei in us. Putin is in us. We find that Hamas is in us and has always been part of who we are. We find that Palestinian dismissal resides in so many of us as it does in Benjamin Netanyahu and Donald Trump. We need to quell our objections and realize that in so many instances, there is a mirror that projects a reflection onto ourselves, and we discover them in us.

I am astounded that, given all of the vigorous and vehement denunciations and dismissals of Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, Colombia, and Hamas, there are still four fingers pointing back at us. If we look closely enough, we find all of the criticisms and flaws that we recognize in the other are mirrored in our own government and in this historical moment in this country.

What we condemn abroad

Murders don't only happen under the brutality of other governments; they happen here, too—as in Minneapolis, where Renee Good was killed. That killing happened not too far from where George Floyd was also killed. A few days later, it was Alex Pretti.

As we point out the roundup of people in other countries, we must remind ourselves of the undocumented immigrants and United States citizens that the Trump administration has arrested. More than 328,000 people have been disappeared in the illegal and unconstitutional sweeps carried out by the administration. 327,000 have been deported.



At least 32 people died in ICE custody in 2025. Most of the facilities are operated by private corporations that have raked in huge profits, such as the GEO Group.

Just as this administration is obsessed with crushing Tren de Aragua, a notorious gang that supposedly reaches from Venezuela into the U.S., the parallels are frightening with the U.S. reaching into Venezuela, creating a vassal state, stealing oil and other resources, claiming that they have a right to do so, and arrogantly stating that they are running the government.

There are four fingers pointing back at us. The sheer arrogance of demanding that Greenland be controlled by the U.S., the hard way or the easy way, points to the U.S.'s rogue status. There are many other examples of racism, hatred, cruelty, brutality, the looting of other countries, the demanding of rare earths, and, in general, street racketeering, but on a broader scale.

The expression of this moment with the U.S. government is theft, fear, bullying, and simple old street protection and racketeering. There are four fingers pointing at this government and this country.

Begin at home

The Fellowship of Reconciliation-USA, one of the oldest peace and justice nonviolent organizations in the country, embraces this hard truth. They are us, and we urge that we move away from the paradigm of the other and, almost in confession, leading to contrition, that what the country claims as the other is us, and four fingers are pointing back at us. Our humanity demands that we cease claiming the evil in others without recognizing it in ourselves.

The hypocrisy is when people go through all the denunciations of the other over legitimacy and brutality, over legalities and dictatorship, and fail to acknowledge the mirror that reflects back on this country, first and foremost, and our claims of deep immorality, where objections are strongly expressed, belong to us.

If we are going to denounce any place to gain credibility in our analysis or criticisms, then the talking heads and the experts need to state that this is us in all of the shapes and forms of political repression and immorality. They are us, and our denunciations begin at home—stating that we are strongly opposed to what is happening in the U.S., and that we do not agree with the images and political agenda there, just as we do not agree with what is happening abroad.

The reflections of the flaws of other places and countries are, namely, a reflection of us, and on us, and four fingers are pointing back at us.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Canada: Communists continue “rollback” campaign

By Callum Wilson

Prime Minister Mark Carney’s first budget has raised military spending to the U.S. and NATO’s demand of 5% of GDP. The result has been 40,000 job cuts and the loss of services in every public sector.

To combat the rise of militarism and the attack on workers, the Communist Party of Canada — the only political party to oppose the budget — has put forward its “rollback” campaign. Since March of 2025, the party has been organizing public meetings across the country mobilizing workers against the austerity budget.

The party’s Central Executive Committee issued a statement, saying, “This is a war budget, a corporate budget and an austerity budget that needs to be rolled back by a broad based people’s coalition of the labour and democratic movements across the country.”

Poland: Communist Party fights ban

Polish President Karol Nawrocki has asked the country’s Constitutional Tribunal to consider outlawing the Communist Party saying, “Communist ideology is directed against fundamental human values and the traditions of European and Christian civilization.”

The previous attempt to ban the party in 2020 failed when then Justice Minister, Zbigniew Ziobro, fled the country after 26 criminal charges were filed. In January 2025, he was arrested over allegations that he had used Pegasus spyware to monitor journalists and rival politicians.

The party said in a statement regarding the previous attempt at a ban, “We have once again defeated Zbigniew Ziobro. The party operates and will continue to operate legally.”

Poland’s Constitutional Tribunal has since ruled to outlaw the Communist Party.

El Partido Comunista de Estados Unidos (CPUSA) critica el endurecimiento del bloqueo de Trump contra Cuba

By Special to People’s World

NUEVA YORK — En una declaración contundente e inequívoca esta semana, el Partido Comunista de Estados Unidos condenó la orden ejecutiva de la administración Trump del 29 de enero, que impone un bloqueo total al suministro de combustible a Cuba.

El partido calificó la medida de «cruel, ilegal y una escalada de la guerra económica de 65 años contra Cuba». El Partido Comunista de Estados Unidos declaró su solidaridad inquebrantable con el pueblo cubano, el Partido Comunista de Cuba y su gobierno revolucionario.

La orden del presidente Donald Trump, que declara una «emergencia nacional» en relación con Cuba y amenaza con imponer aranceles a cualquier país que suministre petróleo a la isla, representa un nuevo nivel de coerción económica y castigo colectivo.

La administración califica cínicamente a Cuba de «influencia maligna» y amenaza para la seguridad nacional, afirmaciones que el Partido Comunista de Estados Unidos rechaza categóricamente como «hipocresía imperialista». El gobierno cubano ha señalado que la medida estadounidense de imponer un «bloqueo absoluto al suministro de combustible» constituye una violación del derecho internacional.

El comunicado del Partido Comunista de Estados Unidos (CPUSA) subrayó el costo humano del bloqueo, señalando que la afirmación del gobierno de Trump de apoyar las aspiraciones de libertad del pueblo cubano resulta vacía cuando Washington está privando activamente a la isla de energía, medicinas y alimentos. El embargo de combustible amenaza con agravar los ya graves cortes de electricidad, la escasez de alimentos y la interrupción de servicios esenciales en toda Cuba, condiciones que, según advierten los críticos, podrían desencadenar una crisis humanitaria.

Esta última escalada se suma a la política de línea dura hacia Cuba implementada por Trump, que incluye la reimposición de sanciones y el retroceso en las relaciones diplomáticas establecidas durante la administración de Biden. La orden ejecutiva utiliza la Ley de Poderes Económicos de Emergencia Internacional para autorizar aranceles a las importaciones provenientes de países que suministran petróleo a Cuba. Se trata de un intento estratégico de aislar económicamente a La Habana presionando a socios como México y otros países.

El endurecimiento del bloqueo económico estadounidense contra Cuba se produce pocas semanas después del intento de secuestro del presidente venezolano Nicolás Maduro y de la imposición de restricciones a las exportaciones de petróleo de ese país. Venezuela ha sido durante mucho tiempo la principal fuente de importaciones energéticas de Cuba.

Cuba afirma estar abierta a un diálogo respetuoso, pero se niega a renunciar a su soberanía ni a sus principios socialistas.

En su denuncia, el Partido Comunista de Estados Unidos (CPUSA) también vinculó el bloqueo a lo que denominó la "creciente amenaza fascista dentro de Estados Unidos", comprometiéndose a movilizar a la clase trabajadora y al movimiento por la paz para exigir la revocación inmediata de la orden ejecutiva de Trump, el levantamiento total del bloqueo económico y la eliminación de Cuba de la lista de "Estados patrocinadores del terrorismo".

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

February 14, 2026

Michigan unions launch statewide labor-climate coalition

By Cameron Harrison

LANSING, Mich.—Union leaders representing over a million Michigan workers stood together on Tuesday to launch the Michigan Climate Jobs Coalition (MICJ), a new alliance dedicated to ensuring that the state's transition to a clean energy economy is built by and for the working class.

The coalition, announced at a press conference in Lansing, unveiled a detailed 17-point policy blueprint developed with Cornell University's Climate Jobs Institute. The plan is a direct challenge to corporate-driven climate agendas, insisting that the jobs of the future must be union jobs, and that tackling the climate crisis must address soaring energy costs, inequality, and community health.

"Today, we launched Michigan Climate Jobs to ensure a worker-led clean energy future that puts labor in the driver's seat to lead on combating the climate crisis, making energy affordable and reliable, and protecting workers today and for generations to come," said Ryan Bennett, chair of MICJ and president of the Michigan Pipe Trades Association.

"The jobs needed to create the clean energy economy absolutely must be union jobs because it's union jobs that will deliver family-sustaining wages, good benefits, and safety for workers."

The coalition brings together a formidable cross-section of the state's labor movement, including the Michigan AFL-CIO, Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council, IBEW Michigan, Michigan Pipe Trades Association, Northern Midwest Regional Council of Carpenters, Michigan Laborers District Council, Michigan Operating Engineers 324, Michigan Education Association, and AFT Michigan.

Their blueprint calls for upgrading Michigan's energy grid, decarbonizing public schools and buildings, expanding thermal energy networks, and creating pathways to union careers through apprenticeship programs. It is a conscious strategy to marry "bold climate action" with "economic justice," the coalition said.

"We're proud to partner with Michigan Climate Jobs on this new report that details how Michigan unions can drive the development of a clean energy economy that delivers for working families," said Dr. Lara Skinner, Executive Director of the Climate Jobs Institute. "This plan provides a blueprint on how current and future union workers can build our growing clean energy economy in a way that benefits all working people."



Tuesday's launch emphasized that workers are not just stakeholders but rather the active leaders of such a transition. Union members who spoke, from across the skilled trades and public sector, connected the policy vision to the concrete reality of their lives and work.

"Clean energy jobs are our future, and just as important, the careers they create are our future, too," said Natalya Craig, an Operating Engineers 324 Journeyperson and Graduate Apprentice.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Michigan unions launch statewide labor-climate coalition

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

"These projects don't just produce energy—they produce long-term, skilled careers that allow people like me to support our families, stay in our communities, and build a life with dignity and security. When these projects are built by union skilled trades, they're done safely, professionally, and in a way that creates real opportunities for the next generation."

The plan also directly addresses the crisis in public infrastructure, centering the needs of students and school workers.

"Our students deserve safe and healthy learning environments, and that means modernizing Michigan's public schools with energy efficiency and renewable energy built by union labor," said Terrence Martin, president of AFT Michigan.

"These investments will also improve working conditions for teachers and school staff and help our public schools save money on energy costs over the long term."

The coalition builds on Michigan's legacy of labor leadership, which was instrumental in passing the state's landmark climate legislation.

MICJ's mission is to hold the line during implementation, ensuring that the promise of high-quality jobs and community benefits is not sacrificed for corporate profits.

"I have seen first-hand how solar projects have changed the lives of our members," said Armando Ramos, a business agent of Laborers Local 1098. "They want to do this work, and as we continue to build an affordable clean energy future here in Michigan, it must be done with good union jobs that support working families.

For workers on the ground, the coalition represents a unified front to secure a just transition. Justin Steenbergh, a business agent at IBEW Local 58 who attended the press conference, told People's World that his union cares deeply about "having a just transition to a green, peaceful economy that provides good union jobs where no worker is left behind and where our people and planet can really prosper."

The launch of Michigan Climate Jobs shows that Michigan's labor movement is taking the initiative and leadership by refusing to let the shape of the new energy economy be dictated by big business. Instead, they are advancing a worker-led vision for society where fighting climate change and fighting for a better life are one and the same struggle.

After the Minneapolis general strike

By Joe Sims

The article below is based on the keynote presented by Joe Sims, co-chair, CPUSA to the National Committee at its January 31, 2026 meeting.

As the National Committee meets today, the center of the struggle for democracy in this country is in the Twin Cities. And that struggle took a dramatic turn a week ago last Friday when the people of Minneapolis and St. Paul spoke in one voice saying, "No work, no school, no shopping." On that bitter cold day, in -15 degree weather, 75 thousand marched against ICE and MAGA state terror.

Labor's Role

Workers stayed home, perhaps most. Even 700 businesses closed their doors in support of the protest. It was a veritable general strike of the people. You might even call it an all-people's strike. And let's be clear, the labor movement led it. It was they who helped initiate the coalition of civil rights, community and faith organizations that organized the protest. Labor's initiative in this regard changes everything. Indeed, the single most important development in the anti-MAGA upsurge is the beginning of the trade union movement's entry into the fightback.

Labor's new role has the ruling class shaking in their boots. Recently, some 60 Minnesota CEOs issued an open letter boasting of all the "hard work" they're doing behind the scenes to calm the situation in the state. It's clear that what they're really interested in "calming" is their corporate profits in light of the general strike. And that, of course, is not complicated: simply tell MAGA and ICE to get the hell out of the state!

Open letter indeed: it was way too little and way too late. Alex Pretti had already been shot dead.



And I'll tell you something else: it will only stop when the workers and people make it stop. And this is what the National Committee must address today: doing whatever we can to help broaden and deepen the working-class-led fightback.

Liberal v. Revolutionary Tactics

Comrades, the main question in this regard is to support the demands of the people of Minnesota to remove ICE from their state, stop the killing, and prosecute those who are responsible. Achieving these goals requires bringing maximum pressure to bear on those who hold the levers of power including Congress, the White House and, most importantly, their corporate backers. We've got to call, write, petition, hold vigils, lobby, hang signs, sit in, pass resolutions in our places of worship, unions, and community organizations, occupy, and strike. In other words, employ all the tools in the toolbox.

Some people think these are not effective means of struggle. They argue that by definition, if you lobby, write a letter or petition you're engaging in liberal politics.

I beg to differ. What makes a tactic liberal or revolutionary is not the individual action itself, but the collective intention along with the manner of carrying out the action. Is the intention to bring about a reform as an end in itself, or is it a means to a greater end? And every tactic has the potential of being a means to a greater end. What greater end? To make people think, raise their consciousness, build unity, and move them into struggle around a given set of demands. Consider that demands by definition are always a reform. But that's all right: we support reforms, but we don't leave it there. We're masters of the communist plus. We understand that the winning of a reform is not an end in itself, but a stepping stone on the road to something bigger. The winning of a demand is a means to a greater end.

If we win on ICE Out! then we take that momentum and we use it to defeat those who brought ICE in. It's all about collective action: we register to vote, we recruit working-class progressive — hopefully, left — candidates, we take the offensive and go after those who created the mess in the first place. We pursue, defend, retreat when necessary, and advance when possible, always prosecuting the case. We fight on and on, continually pointing to the systemic roots of these difficulties in monopoly capitalism and the need to replace the system. That's the way we roll — that's the way we have always rolled.

What's true with regard to the politicians is also true for their corporate backers. And in Minnesota we've got to go after their backers. And that means going after the signers of the Open Letter who are working to protect their corporate profits. One of the most notorious of them is Target.

Targeting Target

Target has been the object of a nationwide boycott for a year now. This boycott began because of their about-face on DEI after Trump's election and it's been extremely effective. Profits are down and continue to drop. Efforts to shore up business, including firing their CEO and making a fresh start with a new head, have failed.

Then came the ICE invasion of Minneapolis and Target made the very smart business decision of allowing their stores to be used as a staging area for Trump's henchmen's operations. Think about that for a minute: Target went from being on the front row for DEI after the George Floyd rebellion to being on the front row to cancel it for Trump. And now they're on the front row assisting ICE's roundup of our neighbors. How's that for hypocrisy?

Well, that hypocrisy did not go unnoticed. Last week Minneapolis organizers called for actions at Targets around the country protesting their support for ICE. Party clubs in Pittsburgh, Atlanta, New York, DC and Chicago joined coalition efforts.

Shouldn't the Party as a whole heed the organizers' call and help initiate actions at Targets around the country? We've got 250 clubs. How many can we get to participate?

Civil Rights Benefit Everyone

It's extremely important that we take this issue up. The stakes are very high. Consider that MAGA has used DEI as an excuse to completely dismantle Civil Rights throughout the federal government. It's true. They've closed all of the government's Civil Rights offices and fired or laid off all of their staff. Trump has even overturned presidential executive orders from the 1960s prohibiting discrimination from companies receiving federal contracts. That's why we say there's been a Civil Rights counter-revolution.

This counter-revolution affects us all, a fact not obvious to most because DEI and Civil Rights are perceived both inside the movement (including in the party) and in the broader public as African American or Latino issues. However, nothing could be further from the truth. Civil Rights benefits everyone.

Take what happened to the Department of Education (DOE). Do you know why MAGA dismantled it? They'll say that it was because the Department was promoting critical race theory, or Black, Latino, women's and LGBTQ history. What they're not telling you is that the DOE's main purpose is protecting students' civil rights and those rights are being cancelled in the process.

Allow me to explain: some 20 percent of all children are special needs — that's one in five. Fifteen percent are in special ed.

The role of the Department of Education was to protect the civil rights of these students: those with autism, learning disabilities, speech impediments, ADHD, MS, MD, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, paraplegia, you name it.

The Department of Education sets the "rules of the road" to ensure that a child's zip code or disability doesn't determine their right to an education. Does your child need a ramp, a disabled bathroom, a special ed teacher? Do you want them to be able to sit in the same classroom with other students? Sorry, if local schools refuse to provide these things, there's no opportunity for parents to appeal. Now that's gone thanks to Trump's mass layoffs and closing of the DOE's regional offices. DEI was the excuse they used to get rid of it. Needless to say, all children, the majority of whom are white, will be affected.

Clearly, the dismantling of government enforcement of civil rights is a big setback. However, the battle is not over. Currently, the disposition of the Department's $66 billion budget is being fought over in Congress. The good news is that so far they've rebuffed cuts to special ed and other programs around the country. The point here, of course, is that civil rights deepens democracy, benefits everyone, and is in everyone's self-interest. That is why it must be defended.

That is also the reason why each and every encroachment on our rights must be defended against. The party must fight for "every inch of bourgeois democratic liberties" as Georgi Dimitrov said in United Front Against Fascism.

The Right to Collectively Bargain

One such bourgeois democratic liberty is the right to collectively bargain. And this right was cancelled on March 27th of last year by Trump for 1.3 million federal workers. As we have said many times before, it was the greatest act of union busting in U.S. history. In fact, we have said it so many times that the New York Times is even saying it now, seen in a recent headline using those very same words.

The struggle to restore these rights is one of the greatest challenges before the labor movement today. A bill to right this wrong, the Protect America's Workforce Act, passed in the House late last year and is now pending in the Senate. Its passage would be a stunning rebuke to Trump. However, it's going to take more than a phone call and a petition — as important as they are — to make that happen.

That's why we must continue our support for a labor-led national day of action in DC as proposed by CBTU. Their resolution needs to be promoted wherever people are organized. The leadership of the AFL-CIO needs to hear the call loudly and clearly. By now it's old news that they have not heard the call loudly and clearly enough.

What is new is that things are in motion. What's new is that organized labor in some places is beginning to take the fight to MAGA. They're not only joining the No Kings and other protests but, as in Minnesota and New York City last week, are beginning to lead them. The science of class struggle requires that we keep our eye on what is new and respond to developments as they unfold, calibrating our tactics in time and in tune with the needs of each moment.

The working class comes to its conclusions at its own pace. Life is the great teacher. It's lived experience that shapes social consciousness. We saw in the Twin Cities that when confronted with an invasion of 3000 fascist goons who shot in cold blood two of its best daughters and sons, the labor movement rose up and showed its organized might.

Yes, labor is beginning to move. On February 7th, AFGE, supported by CBTU, the AFL-CIO, USSA and others called a Young Workers March in DC, demanding a living wage, healthcare and childcare, affordable housing and education without debt.

Just yesterday there were calls for an economic blackout and strikes. In many places people demonstrated, including walkouts of high school students. Protests were particularly widespread in Minnesota. Setting aside for a moment the practicality of calls for a general strike, the point is that people are angry and want to do something — that's what's important.

On March 28th, the third No Kings demonstration will take place all over the country along with what they're calling a landmark event in the Twin Cities. February's a short month and March will quickly be upon us, so let's start getting our contingents ready.

As we prepare, the Political Action Commission is sure to keep us busy with the weekly Rapid Response initiatives that focus our attention on the main struggles that are occurring across a rapidly changing terrain. Speaking of which, the upcoming midterms will soon be front and center: it goes without saying that for the next several months they will occupy a place at the top of our agenda. To get ready, we're planning an all-party national election conference in May that, while focused on the contest for Congress, must also address running our party candidates for local office.

Yes, it's a heavy load. And of course, we wish we could do more, but we have to do what we can while taking pains to improve our work. This means staying in touch with district and club leaders, gauging and responding to what is happening on the ground in real time. And take initiative, comrades, while building coalitions with others. As Bobby Seale used to say, we must Seize the Time! Why is that important? Because if you don't take initiative, you'll always end up tailing events. The point is to do so in a broad way.

MAGA Imperialism

This is important not only with respect to ICE deployments around the country but also U.S. imperialism's newfound appetite for military intervention. Humanity is confronted with a newly aggressive MAGA imperialism that has bombed more countries in a single year than any other administration. Some 7 attacks have already occurred with more on the way, to say nothing of the strikes against boats in the Caribbean. The old post-WWII Cold War alliances are cracking at the seams, ripped apart by the now public inter-imperialist rivalries between the main centers of world imperialism, raising the danger of new wars including the possibility of thermonuclear confrontation.

Let us not forget that MAGA's fascist-tinged domestic policy is accompanied by an equally fascist-tinged might-makes-right foreign policy that seeks to preserve the dominance of white capital not only in the U.S. but in Europe as well, as clearly seen in Trump's National Security Strategy. These people are racist to the core and make no bones about it—we have the KKK in the White House.

In these circumstances, the fight for peace is even more important and today that means continuing to seek ways to bring the working class and people of color into the fight. It bodes well that the AFL-CIO Executive Council this time around quickly condemned the kidnapping of Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores.

And let us not forget that Cuba is next on their list with the recent tightening of the blockade and declaration of an emergency. The occupation and genocide of Palestine as well continues and requires renewed effort on our part. Going forward, building relations with the faith community and the African American church will be extremely important.

Party building

Comrades, in June we'll celebrate two years since our 32nd convention. And we can be proud that in most districts the party has maintained a steady pace of growth and involvement. Our party and YCL clubs are actively involved in coalition work and have a public presence both in the communities and online. And we are so very proud that we made some electoral breakthroughs last November. Again, congratulations to our candidates!

We are continuing a steady pace of recruitment and are reaching out to and vetting new applicants far better than before. Our Ed Department is holding a steady pace of Marxist classes and in a few places we have study groups, some in person, some hybrid. People's World is continuing its excellent coverage of domestic and international struggles with a clear working-class orientation. Good Morning Revolution has maintained its weekly address of key ideological and political developments.

That said, we have to confront the fact that the CP's growth, while steady, is not in keeping with the possibilities of the moment. It seems that we've hit a plateau but haven't managed to move beyond it. We have to think about why.

Consider that since Trump was first elected we've recruited 20,000 members. And that's great. However, 9,000 of that number are no longer subscribed to our lists. We're reaching out to them to find out why. Have they quit? Are they receiving too many emails? Did they unsubscribe accidentally? We don't know the answer.

Is the rate of growth at least matching the rate of losses? It would be important to know. It should: sharpening class struggle and a growing left point in that direction. Mamdani is now New York's mayor along with many other socialist elected officials around the country. Still, we have not yet been able to tap deeply into this socialist moment as it's been expressing itself in the current situation. We've got to figure out how to make a splash. It's possible. Our appearance on the Daily Show pointed in that direction.

While we figure it out, let's continue to explore new ways to carry on our activity including emphasizing cultural work — not as a second thought, not as entertainment, not to fill spaces between agenda points, but as an essential feature of party and YCL work.

Comrades, we are going through a very difficult period of intense class and democratic struggle, a period of storms and struggle. And we've got to be prepared for what's coming.

As Gus once said, we do not fear the storms. We understand that it is precisely in the storms that class and social consciousness arises and takes form. It is only through struggle that our class learns and draws conclusions.

Our role is to be there side-by-side with our class siblings, standing with them, hand in hand, going toe-to-toe with monopoly and help chart a path through the thunder. And we will get through the thunder. As sure as I'm standing here, the clouds will part, the winds will cease, the sun will come back out and we'll emerge in a new day.

On boycott anniversary, D.C. campaign pickets every Target store in solidarity with Minnesota

By Jamal Rich

WASHINGTON—Hundreds of D.C. residents and allies came out on the weekend of the one-year anniversary of the launch of the Target boycott to stand against the company's support for Trump's racist policies around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and immigration.

Organizers of the Jan. 23 Minnesota General Strike called for nationwide actions on Jan. 31 at Target stores while they staged a sit-in at the company's outlets in the Twin Cities. They want company executives and incoming CEO Michael Fiddelke to affirm Target as a 4th Amendment business to stop ICE raids in their stores and to join the call for an end to the ICE "surge" in Minnesota. Fiddelke started in his new role Feb. 1.

The Boycott Target D.C. Coalition, alongside Free D.C., called for a morning informational picket in front of the four Target stores in the District (a fifth had closed last summer in the Cleveland Park neighborhood) in solidarity with the call from Minnesota.

The Columbia Heights Target store, which has been the site of a regular informational picket out front for nearly a year, saw the largest number of community members participating Jan. 31, with over 200 showing up. The sidewalks outside the mall where the store mall is located were largely covered in ice from the winter storm that hit the city the weekend prior.

Picketers brought their families (including their pets) and held signs saying, "No playing nice with ICE!" and "Target let ICE steal their employees." That slogan refers to two Latino Target workers detained by ICE agents in Richfield, Minn., while they were on the job in January.

Dozens of community members and neighbors also showed up to picket in front of the Shepherd Park Target on Georgia Ave., the Tenleytown Target on Wisconsin Ave., and the Ivy City Target on New York Ave. All these stores sit on busy roads with a lot of vehicular traffic. Dozens of cars honked in support of the action.

For some who passed by or showed up, this was the first time they engaged in the boycott movement against Target. Many expressed their excitement to be engaged in the fightback against Trump and his racist agenda.

Organizers with the Protect Families Not Feds Coalition, which has been advocating District officials end the collaboration between federal and local law enforcement, led the action in front of the Georgia Ave. store and made clear the connections between the ICE occupation of the Twin Cities and the federal occupation of D.C. since August 2025.

Feb. 1 marked the one-year of the U.S.-wide boycott against Target, which was called by local organizers in Minneapolis and national leaders.



Target, headquartered in Minneapolis a few blocks from where George Floyd was murdered in 2020, donated $1 million to Trump's inauguration and reversed its DEI commitments when he returned to office. A year later, it is seen as one of the companies backing Trump's fascist immigration program.

March 2026 will complete one year of the "boots-on-the-ground" effort led by Black clergy in D.C. in response to the "Target Fast" movement led by Rev. Jamal Bryant. The Boycott Target D.C. Coalition has been picketing and leafleting in front of the Columbia Heights Target store every Saturday, encouraging shoppers to not support a big business that doesn't support them or their community. The coalition and campaign against Target are now expanding as a central effort against businesses upholding Trump's racist policies.

On Monday, Feb. 2, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), which endorsed the boycott last summer, urged the new Target CEO to demand ICE out of Minnesota. AFT President Randi Weingarten threatened that the investments in Target held by the union members' pension funds could be pulled, further jeopardizing its brand.

Weingarten additionally requested an in-person meeting to "discuss Target's silence on ICE's continuing operations in Minneapolis following ICE and Border Patrol agents' murders of two Minneapolis residents."

Trump and the MAGA Republicans are attempting to divide people using DEI as a smokescreen to pull away civil rights protections. Immigration enforcement and the deployment of ICE as a domestic paramilitary are combining to enforce an illegal rollback of constitutional rights and terrorize Black and brown people.

The alliance between the movements against ICE, for the defense of DEI and affirmative action programs, and against federal occupations around the country are building a mass movement against fascism and for real democracy. The boycott of Target represents a movement that bridges all of these campaigns to contribute to the building of a strong united front against MAGA fascism.

Is AI's brave new world unsafe for workers and humanity?

By Clark Johnson

A movement to "pause" the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is calling attention to existential threats that the technology poses to workers and humanity at large.

Elon Musk has claimed there is up to a 20% chance that AI will "go bad" and morph into a dystopian nightmare of robots ruling our planet. "Twenty percent is worse than Russian roulette odds," notes Holly Elmore, executive director of the U.S. chapter of the Netherlands-based group Pause AI.

Elmore's comparison is apt as tech skeptics assert that AI and its spawn, Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), are transporting a *Terminator*-style scenario from Hollywood's silver screen to the real world.

Unemployment forecasts paint a grim picture, with white-collar workers initially taking the brunt of the blow. Goldman Sachs estimates that 300 million full-time jobs globally could be lost or diminished by AI, representing 40% of employment exposed to automation. Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei has warned that AI has the potential to wipe out half of all entry-level so-called white-collar jobs, leading to unemployment rates of 10-20 percent within five years.

A recent World Economic Forum (WEF) survey indicated that 41% of employers intend to downsize their workforce due to AI by 2030. In the most dire assessment yet, University of Louisville professor Roman Yampolskiy points to a "labor market collapse" by 2030.

Unlike recessions, where jobs return, AI-related losses are viewed as structural and permanent, where complex tasks are replaced by autonomous "thinking" cyborgs. AGI refers to a "situationally aware" AI that can perform any cognitive work a human can. Growing legions of AGI "agents" are expected to accelerate this disruption, rendering previous skills and job roles irrelevant.

Whatever the timeline, David Krueger, a University of Montreal professor and Pause AI researcher, foresees a "gradual disempowerment" of workers reaching all the way to executive suites. "As organizations and companies shift from people to AI, CEOs will defer to the technology, or they will be replaced by it," Krueger says.

Noting that "labor doesn't just give you money, it gives you power," Krueger likens AI chips to nuclear bombs. "It's a corporate arms race, and there are a lot of venture capitalists, trans-humanists, libertarians, and wealthy [self-styled] altruists trying to make a buck" at the expense of workers.

Promoters of this Brave New AI World point to trendy innovations such as ChatGPT as an unequivocal boon for consumers. But Elmore suggests that the same inherently amoral technology that converses with you in multiple languages can also instruct users how to assemble bio-weapons. "AI technology desensitizes people," she states.

Geoffrey Hinton, known as the "Godfather of AI," left his position as a vice president and engineering fellow at Google in 2023 to speak out about the dangers of artificial intelligence. Hinton said he grew increasingly concerned that things were progressing much faster than he ever anticipated.

Hinton's concerns have become a daily reality. People can no longer discern what is true anymore with AI-generated photos, videos, and texts that flood the Internet. Truth is seemingly the first victim in this online war.



Now regretting his trailblazing work on neural networks, for which he won the 2024 Nobel Prize in Physics, Hinton worries that AI systems could eventually modify their own code and become more intelligent than humans. It would become a zero-sum game for control, where cooperation gives way to conflict.

Artificial General Intelligence is the newest and most threatening iteration of AI. Surpassing human cognitive abilities across a wide range of functions, AGI transcends "narrow AI," which typically confines itself to assigned activities like writing and generating images.

While Grok can spit out on demand a fair and balanced 500-word report on emaciated Ryan Seacrest's reputed use of the weight-loss drug Ozempic—an impressive two-second composition that ought to give pause to any working journalist —AGI raises the stakes exponentially.

Building far beyond basic AI programming, AGI's autonomous learning can lead to behaviors humans cannot foresee. The cute little robot delivering Domino's pizzas today turns into a cybernetic leviathan tomorrow. Security cams become the basis for unprecedented mass surveillance in service to totalitarian regimes. It's the perfect merger of Big Tech and Big Government.

A Google search readily acknowledges the present reality: "The concentration of ownership across various media forms—from national news to social networking and even Internet infrastructure—in the hands of a limited number of corporate giants raises concerns about the extent of their influence on the information we receive."

Facebook multibillionaire Mark Zuckerberg has said he is focused on "personal superintelligence and agentic workflows." The Meta Platforms CEO says he would rather risk "misspending a couple of hundred billion" on infrastructure than miss the shift to AGI.

By raw money-making metrics, AI is an increasingly lucrative capitalist tool. The evolving technology is projected to boost the total annual value of goods and services produced worldwide by seven percent (roughly $13 trillion) by 2030. Yet it's coming at significant human cost. Between January and September 2025, more than 37,000 job losses were directly attributed to AI or related technological shifts.

At minimum, Elmore says public safety needs to be accounted for. "The burden of proof needs to be shifted back onto the developers to prove their technology is safe, rather than on safety advocates to prove development will drive us to extinction," she says.

Ultimately, AI skeptics insist they are not latter-day Luddites mindlessly smashing machines, but conscientious citizens concerned about labor exploitation, safety risks, and unethical data practices of a rapidly expanding, lightly regulated industry. Krueger says that rather than issuing a blanket indictment of innovation, AGI critics seek closer examination and oversight of the business models behind it. So they are calling for a global pause on development until more is known about AI's downstream effects.

"It's not a technical problem, it's a social problem," he concludes. "Lack of awareness enables agents who are happy with the idea of AI replacing humanity."

One thing is for certain: AGI won't fix this. As Elmore observes: "Once it's given a utility function it takes over, and humans go out of the loop." It's the *Terminator* come to life.

People's World 2026 Fund Drive — $140,000 by May Day

By People's World Editorial Board

The People's World 2026 fund drive is under way, and we need your help to raise **$140,000 by May 1.**

Why? Because working people are under attack, and someone has to tell the truth.

Over the past year, People's World reporters have been on the ground exposing **ICE violence and deportation raids,** covering **working-class resistance to mass federal worker firings,** and digging into how **inflation is squeezing families while corporations rake in record profits.**

Our volunteer correspondents are embedded in the movements, and they've sent in dispatches on the growing **Target boycott,** stood firm in **opposition to war,** and challenged the **economic blockades on Cuba and Venezuela.**

None of that happens by accident.

Your financial support keeps our **journalists in the streets,** at picket lines, protests, and community meetings. They keep People's World publishing **five days a week,** free and accessible to readers everywhere.



So, if you believe independent, working-class journalism matters, now is the time.

The working class needs its own media—it needs People's World.

Donate today or become a monthly sustainer.
Go to PeoplesWorld.org/Donate
Thank you for your support.

Germany pushes European rearmament, using Trump as excuse

By Mark Ellmann

MUNICH—These days, the Bavarian capital resembles a fortress. Dozens of heads of government and foreign ministers from around the world have arrived for the Munich Security Conference, which will be opened by Germany's conservative Chancellor Friedrich Merz on Friday, Feb. 13.

The private event has grown so large that the luxury Hotel Bayerischer Hof has become too small as a venue. Therefore, additional buildings have been rented for the "Siko," a nickname shortened from the German *sicherheitskonferenz*, or Security Conference. The entire area surrounding the hotel has been designated a restricted zone, with protesters kept at a distance.

Conference Director Wolfgang Ischinger, a long-time representative of German imperialism in Washington, has transformed the war conference from its origins as a meeting to discuss military science into a transatlantic think tank highly regarded in capitals on both sides of the ocean.

Always striving for good relations with the U.S. since his days as ambassador in D.C., Ischinger was able to announce this year that the U.S. government delegation would be led by Secretary of State Marco Rubio.



He will be accompanied by Trump confidants Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, both of whom sit on the president's "Board of Peace," which is overseeing the "rebuilding" of Gaza.

These U.S. representatives stand for an aggressive war policy and have been key backers of recent imperial maneuvers targeting Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba.

A glance at the guest list of the Munich conference reveals that regime change policies like those targeting these countries have long been an integral part of German foreign policy.

At past conferences, opposition politicians from Russia were particularly welcome, while no dialogue took place with the government in Moscow.

Similarly, this year, instead of representatives from Tehran, it will be Reza Pahlavi, the son of the deposed Iranian monarch, who will be welcomed. Pahlavi hasn't set foot in Iran since 1979 but is being treated as if he were that nation's leader.

All of that is par for the course. The real shift this year is the picture that conference organizers are painting of the system of international alliances and their prescriptions for how Europe should respond.

They are presenting an image of European interests being trampled underfoot. According to their narrative, the superpowers USA and China are wrecking the international order at the expense of democratic governments in Europe. This tale mirrors that of the established parties in the German Bundestag.

"More than 80 years after its establishment, the postwar order, shaped primarily by the USA, is in a process of destruction," states the Munich Security Report published on Monday. The document, typically unveiled a few days before the conference, sets the tone and agenda of the meeting.

It continues: "The most powerful of those actors taking the axe to existing rules and institutions is U.S. President Donald Trump." Conference chairman Ischinger therefore wants Munich to send a signal to Europe: Wake up!

The report recalls the Davos "confession" speech of Prime Minister Mark Carney at the World Economic Forum in January. There, the Canadian leader warned that economic integration is now explicitly subordinated to geopolitical rivalry and domestic political calculation by the U.S. With this "rupture," Carney emphasized how allies are treated as expendable, institutions as disposable, and agreements as binding only so long as they serve immediate U.S. advantage.

"The world has entered a period of wrecking-ball politics," the Munich Security Report states. "Sweeping destruction—rather than careful reforms and policy corrections—is the order of the day."

Containing the destruction will require other actors to step up, it says, "by significantly investing in their own power resources and pooling them through closer cooperation." In other words, Europe—with Germany in the lead—has to arm itself and defend its "interests."

Eighty years after the military victory of the anti-Hitler coalition over German fascism and the end of the war of annihilation against the peoples of Europe and especially the Soviet Union, this is the answer to the growing competition among the G7 imperialists, at least according to the leading thinkers of German great power ambitions.

In an interview with the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Ischinger, Germany's most prominent diplomat, recently explained the necessity of a "core Europe." Decisive action must be taken by that "core"—again, meaning Germany—even if unanimity cannot be achieved in the European Union, he said. This especially applies to "foreign policy issues and the development of a European arms industry"—a project that Canada, too, has joined.

"The time that Ukraine, with its fight for freedom against Russia, is buying us must not be wasted," Ischinger said, referring to the sense and senselessness of the dying on NATO's "eastern flank," as the front line running through the heart of Europe is now called.

However, the aspirations of those like Ischinger, who envision a militarized Europe headed by Germany, cannot be certain of the support of those they govern. People who still believe that government policies will improve their future are in the minority in the G7 countries. In Germany, it is only 13%, according to the Munich Security Report. The course toward a war economy within the European alliance will only accelerate this trend.

RAPID RESPONSE: No war with Iran!

By People's World

No war with Iran!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Representative and Senators to demand Congress assert its constitutional authority and stop Trump's unauthorized and illegal threats of military strikes against Iran.

Co-sponsor and vote YES on the newly introduced bi-partisan Kaine–Paul Iran War Powers Resolution in the U.S. Senate and the companion Khanna–Massie resolution in the House.

A 70% majority oppose military action against Iran and support explicit congressional approval before military action against another country. The urgency is heightened as the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists has moved the Doomsday Clock to 85 seconds before midnight.

Congress must act NOW to uphold its authority and choose diplomacy and spending on human needs over Trump's imperialist military aggressions.



No war with Iran!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your Senators and Representative! Click here to send them a letter.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Young unionists brave cold in march on Congress

By Press Associates

WASHINGTON—Frustrated and upset with an economy that leaves them poorer than their parents, hundreds of young workers—and some not so young—marched on Congress on February 7 to demand a living wage, worker rights, and an economy that works for all, not just the billionaires.

The marchers, organized and led by the Government Employees (AFGE), braved subfreezing cold—the high was 15 degrees—gale-force winds and ice-encrusted snow drifts that made marching slippery (or worse) to carry their message that it's time for a change.

"We marched in the freezing cold today because young workers refuse to accept a rigged economy," AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said in part. "Rent is out of control. Child care is unaffordable. Student debt is endless. Young workers with AFGE and all our unions are organizing for a future they can actually thrive in."

Besides the federation and AFGE, march contingents came from National Nurses United, the Machinists, and the Postal Workers, among other unions.

"We're facing an affordability crisis, a housing crisis, a healthcare crisis, a childcare crisis, and a growing student debt crisis—and we're done being ignored," the Machinists' contingent tweeted.

"Frustration. Exhaustion. And a system that doesn't show up for us," Machinists Local 1976 member Josh Charlier from Pittsburgh told the group when they were indoors. "America wasn't built by those at the top. It was built by workers. We're ready to build something better."

Marchers trekked to the U.S. Capitol's West Front, site of presidential inaugurations and also of the main force of the Jan. 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol attack and coup attempt. Marchers then returned to the nearby Hyatt Regency hotel for speeches and strategizing.

Their lead demand is "a living wage with inflation adjustments," followed by "health care and child care young workers can afford" and worker rights reforms, led by the right to organize without employer interference.

They also demand affordable housing, including a federally mandated cap on annual rent increases, and higher education without incurring a carload of student debt.

"This is the first Young Workers march in history," with that type of an agenda, Roberson added. "Young workers in America have been sold a raw deal.



"Health insurance costs, food costs, education costs, child care costs, and housing costs are all too high." Roberson, 34, says that even though he makes far more than his parents did combined, he would not be able to buy the house they live in.

That's because the median cost of housing nationwide is more than $400,000. In major metro areas, including San Francisco, New York, Boston, and D.C., it's approaching or over $1 million. The median is the point where half the houses cost more and the other half cost less.

"Everyone who has a stake in America" should be concerned.

Whether lawmakers will listen is debatable. Besides those priorities, Congress is tangled up in knots over yet another issue that worries the young workers—the repression by ICE—says Kendrick Roberson, director of AFGE's civil and human rights department.

He told Ed "Flash" Ferenc on America's Workforce Radio in a pre-march podcast that AFGE member Alex Jeffrey Pretti, a VA nurse in Minneapolis, was a young worker, aged 37, murdered there by Trump's federal agents.

Even worse, Roberson said, is that such a bleak future produces disgust and disillusionment, with young workers giving up on the American Dream. Opinion polls show the situation is even worse than that: They're giving up on democracy.

The march's other point is to counter that attitude, said Roberson. "We want younger workers to know they have an opportunity to make change. This is the system, and we don't like the system, but we can change it."

The whole theme of the march was summed up in the headline on its website, in all capital letters:

"WE DESERVE. MORE. THAN. THIS."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Argentina: Communist Party celebrates ousting of narco-capitalist congressman

By Callum Wilson

In Buenos Aires, José Luis Espert — former National Deputy and ally to the far right President Javier Milei — has been forced to resign in disgrace.

Reports and court documents from Texas showed he received more than $200,000 from a trust associated with a U.S.-based businessman who was charged with drug trafficking and money laundering.

Espert's replacement, Diego Santilli, is a beneficiary of offshore companies in tax havens. As Secretary of Security, he repressed teachers, nurses, and other workers.

The Communist Party of Argentina endorsed the candidates of Fuerza Patria, or Homeland Force, the main center-left opposition force in the country's most recent elections.

The party called for a program that raises the defense of sovereignty, the disregard of the foreign debt, the expansion of labor rights, the development of national industry and workers' management, and that imposes progressive taxes on large companies to expand and improve public education and health.

As well as the participation of workers in the profits of private companies, they call for the reduction of the working day without salary reduction, the re-nationalization of the Port of Quequén and the Atucha Nuclear Power Plant and the Paraná-Paraguay Trunk Waterway, among others.

Palabras del estado de Washington: "¡No al terrorismo de ICE, no al asesinato!"

By Tim Wheeler

SEATTLE—Los linieros defensivos de los Seahawks capturaron al mariscal de campo de los New England Patriots, Drake Maye, un récord de seis veces en el Super Bowl LX. En el espectáculo de medio tiempo, la estrella de rock puertorriqueña Bad Bunny encabezó a un centenar de artistas que ondeaban banderas de todos los países del hemisferio occidental, incluyendo Venezuela y Cuba, en el campo de juego del Levi's Stadium en California. Sobre los manifestantes se alzaba un enorme cartel: "Lo único más poderoso que el odio es el amor". Era un rotundo rechazo a la insistencia del presidente Donald Trump en incitar al odio y el miedo contra Latinoamérica y al asesinato de ciudadanos estadounidenses e inmigrantes por parte del ICE en Minneapolis y otras partes del país. También recordaba los recientes acontecimientos en el estado de Washington.

Esto incluye una huelga masiva el 5 de febrero por parte de estudiantes de preparatoria y secundaria en Seattle y condados aledaños en protesta contra el terrorismo en Minneapolis, donde hombres armados enmascarados del ICE asesinaron a Renee Nicole Good y agentes de Aduanas y Patrulla Fronteriza dispararon y mataron a Alex Pretti en días recientes. Los estudiantes marcharon hacia el Ayuntamiento de Seattle. Fred Podesta, director de operaciones de las Escuelas Públicas de Seattle, emitió un comunicado afirmando que el sistema escolar no promovió la huelga. Sin embargo, enfatizó que los estudiantes actuaban según la larga tradición de Seattle de "libertad de reunión".

Un profesor de Educación Física del condado de Kitsap, a un viaje en ferry de Seattle, le dijo a este reportero: "La huelga de los alumnos de mi escuela fue organizada por alumnos de séptimo grado, de 12 y 13 años". Informó que su propia hija, de 12 años, se encontraba entre quienes marcharon con su pancarta "¡FUERA ICE!".

Formaba parte de una "Huelga General" nacional patrocinada por Indivisible y otros defensores de la democracia y la Constitución para protestar contra lo que muchos consideran la guerra de Trump contra los inmigrantes y los ciudadanos estadounidenses.

La alcaldesa de Seattle, Katie Wilson, denunció los asesinatos cometidos por ICE en una conferencia de prensa el 29 de enero en el Ayuntamiento. Anunció que si algún agente federal ocupa Seattle, no se le permitirá usar ningún edificio o propiedad municipal, incluidas las cárceles.

Wilson, quien se describe como un socialista democrático al estilo del alcalde de la ciudad de Nueva York, Zohran Mamdani, dijo a la prensa: "Muchos de nosotros estamos conmocionados y desconsolados por las noticias de Minneapolis y compartimos la preocupación de que nuestra ciudad también podría ser atacada por el gobierno federal".

La indignación por las acciones de la administración Trump en Minnesota también estalló en Sequim y Port Angeles, en la Península Olímpica, con una vigilia con velas a la que asistieron cientos de personas. La congresista Emily Randall dirigió la vigilia en Sequim, el 29 de enero, y el 31 de enero se realizó un piquete en la sede de la Patrulla Fronteriza en Port Angeles, al que asistieron muchos jóvenes de secundaria y universidad. Muchos de esos jóvenes eran afroamericanos, latinos y asiático-americanos que exigían que el Congreso terminara toda financiación al Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE) y a la Patrulla Fronteriza.

People's World is a voice for progressive change and socialism in the United States. It provides news and analysis of, by, and for the labor and democratic movements to our readers across the country and around the world.
Visit the daily paper on the web at peoplesworld.org, or scan QR code.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
February 21, 2026

The Rev. Jesse Jackson dies at 84

By John Wojcik

The Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, a close ally and follower of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who led the Civil Rights movement for decades after King was assassinated, has died at the age of 84. Doctors confirmed he had a rare neurological disorder. The iconic leader died in his home in Chicago, where he was surrounded by his family.



As a longtime civil rights leader based in Chicago, Jackson openly wept tears of joy on national television as thousands gathered in the city's Grant Park to celebrate the election of Barack Obama as the first African-American president of the United States. It was a victory made possible in large part by the struggles led by Rev. Jackson throughout most of his life.

Not the least of those contributing factors was Jackson's own two runs for the presidency.

Joe Sims, national co-chair of the Communist Party USA, said that "Rev. Jackson was an outstanding freedom fighter and champion for independent politics generally and the election of the U.S.'s first Black president in particular. Jackson's legacy extends internationally from the fight for peace and against nuclear war to defeating apartheid in South Africa. We dip our flag in his honor."

Jackson was uniquely able to connect the struggle for civil rights and racial justice to the battles fought by working-class and poor people generally. Wherever workers or poor people of any race were being denied a voice, he was there advocating for them and sounding out the demands of the oppressed.

His leadership has particular relevance for today on so many fronts. In a nation led by a president trying to destroy free elections, Jackson's fight until almost the time of his death for voting rights will always be remembered. Much of the activity of voting rights advocates today reflects the continuation of the fights for voting rights that he led.

It is no accident that a ruling class and billionaires determined to take from working people and give to themselves are fighting to grab things Jackson fought for all his life. Those things include jobs that pay living wages, schools that really educate all children, and health care as a human right.

He took the fight for equality wherever he could. The movements he led became so powerful that even some corporate leaders were unable to ignore them.

Some even started boasting about how they were opening up their hiring processes to people whom they previously had locked out.

He fought hard to establish cultural norms that recognized the worth of all people, regardless of their economic circumstances. Typical of his support for people of all racial backgrounds and his special focus on youth was his frequent shouting out of his favorite slogans: "I am Somebody, I may be poor, but I am Somebody; I may be young; but I am Somebody; I may be on welfare, but I am Somebody."

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson dies at 84

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

"Our father was a servant leader—not only to our family, but to the oppressed, the voiceless, and the overlooked around the world," the Jackson family said in a statement posted online. "We shared him with the world, and in return, the world became part of our extended family."

Jackson was never afraid to extend his causes out all over the world. He was never afraid to join with people who were not favored by much of the political establishment: He worked extensively with the civil rights activist Harry Belafonte, who had been blacklisted in the McCarthy era. Their joint work resulted in the placement of a plaque in honor of Nelson Mandela in Yankee Stadium's Monument Park in 2014.

In 2021, he was active in the battles protesting police violence that resulted, among other things that year, in the death of George Floyd, who was murdered by a Minneapolis policeman in 2020.

Going back to his earlier life, we saw Jackson, in 1965, joining the voting rights march King led from Selma to Montgomery.

He then went to Chicago to launch Operation Breadbasket, a Southern Christian Leadership Conference effort to pressure companies to hire Black workers.

In 1971, Jackson launched Operation PUSH, based on Chicago's South Side, successfully getting companies to hire Black workers and registering massive amounts of voters not just in Chicago but all over the country.

In his presidential race in 1988, Jackson won in 13 primaries. Those victories were seen as critical to proving that Black people could run for high office in the United States, which, of course, Barack Obama proved later.

Jackson's presidential races were taken seriously abroad. The press in East Germany, the then German Democratic Republic, for example, wrote about his campaign and the issues he raised. Jackson himself said his campaign paved the way for much more open political activity, not just by Black people but for women, too.

The loss suffered because of his death may never be able to be fully measured.

People's World May Day Greetings Book 2026 – Reserve your ad now

By People's World

With civil rights, labor rights, and human rights under severe attack, the independent working class press is needed more than ever. People's World reports the news with a working class perspective. With a very small staff, the publication attracts between 150,000 to 200,000 readers every month. Every year, it reaches millions of people, without billionaire benefactors or corporate sponsors.

People's World writers have been on the ground covering not only the crimes of the administration, but also the people's resistance to it. From the Target Boycott to protest DEI rollbacks to the Minnesota General Strike in the wake of the murders of Renée Good and Alex Pretti by ICE, our publication has been committed to reporting the fightback against fascist policies.

To keep the socialist press online and available during this crucial time, we've launched the 2026 Fund Drive—and as part of the effort, we're bringing back the **People's World May Day Greetings Book.**

We have to raise substantial funds this year to keep PW going, and the May Day Greetings Book is a great way to support our daily publication while also broadcasting a message of your choice to readers across the country and around the world.



In each of the last three years, supporters have bought $10,000 worth of ads celebrating working-class heroes and historic wins for labor and democracy. As you prepare for your local International Worker's Day festivities, think about what you want to celebrate in this year's edition of the national People's World May Day Greetings Book.

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Or, if you prefer, mail a check payable to “Long View Publishing Co., Inc.” to:

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New York, NY 10011

If you need any assistance or have questions, email us: contact@peoplesworld.org.

Olympics in Los Angeles in 2028 should include Cuban players

By Paul Roberson

I remember when I was first introduced to the Olympic Games. It was a few years after the end of the Cold War. I was entering fifth grade—a Cub Scout, still innocent to the ways of the world—at a time when America stood as the world's remaining superpower, *T.G.I.F.* ruled television, and my understanding of the world was just beginning to take shape.

I remember watching the games with awe. I learned the meaning of sportsmanship, teamwork, camaraderie, and international solidarity.

I was introduced to a vast world beyond my own: different nations, languages, cultures, and traditions, all brought together in a spectacle of shared humanity. I witnessed the pageantry, the artistry, and the electric global stage where competition unfolded not through war or coercion, but through mutual respect and excellence.

Even at that young age, I understood that the Olympics mattered. They represented rivalry without hatred, competition without violence, and the culmination of lifetimes of sacrifice and preparation. They placed nations on the world stage—not to dominate, but to engage—allowing diplomacy, pride, and values to be tested peacefully on the field of play.

Today, that vision is being undermined.

The current policy of the United States government to deny visas to Cuban athletes, coaches, and officials—thereby preventing their participation in qualifying events for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic and Paralympic Games—runs directly counter to the spirit, history, and rules of the Olympic Movement. In practice, this policy amounts to a de facto ban on Cuba's participation in the Olympics, imposed not by the International Olympic Committee but by a host nation's immigration policy.



This approach contradicts decades of established U.S. practice and violates the principles enshrined in the Olympic Charter, which explicitly opposes discrimination based on nationality and affirms the right of all eligible athletes to compete without political interference.

Recent cases make this painfully clear: Cuban teams and officials denied visas for qualifying tournaments in Puerto Rico and the United States; youth teams barred from competition; athletes punished not for any violation of sporting rules, but for the passport they carry. These actions do not enhance security, strengthen diplomacy, or uphold Olympic values. They do the opposite.

The Olympic Games exist precisely to rise above political disputes—not to erase them, but to offer a different model of engagement. Historically, only the International Olympic Committee has barred nations from participation, and only when the global community of member states overwhelmingly agreed that such action was justified. Unilateral visa denials by a host country set a dangerous precedent that threatens the universality of the Games themselves.

Moreover, these denials do not only harm Cuban athletes. They also deny people living in the United States—regardless of their views on the Cuban government—the opportunity to witness world-class competition and to experience the very international exchange the Olympics promise. The Games belong to the world, not to any single administration or political agenda.

Los Angeles will host the 2028 Olympics as a representative of the Olympic ideal. That role carries responsibility.

The International Olympic Committee, the U.S. State Department, and the LA28 Organizing Committee must work together to ensure that all qualified athletes are granted visas to participate in qualifying events and the Games themselves.

To do otherwise is to hollow out the meaning of the Olympics—to reduce them from a global celebration of human excellence to a tool of exclusion and political signaling.

Unions laud Rev. Jesse Jackson's championship of worker rights

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—Union leaders, with the AFL-CIO in the vanguard, are lauding the Rev. Jesse Jackson for his leadership on civil rights and for his unique ability to connect those struggles with the day-to-day concerns of the U.S. working class. Jackson died of a rare neurological disease on February 17 at the age of 84. He was surrounded at home by his family.

Jackson became famous as a close aide to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the 1960s civil rights revolution. He was one of several civil rights leaders and aides talking with Dr. King when white supremacist James Earl Ray shot King to death in Memphis, Tenn.

King, with Jackson and the others, at the urging of AFSCME President Bill Lucy, was leading the famous "I am a man" marches for oppressed Black sanitation workers in Memphis who demanded recognition of their right to organize with Lucy's union.

After King's death, Jackson, who, at the direction of King, had directed Operation Breadbasket—designed to push firms into expanding job opportunities for Blacks—branched out into his own pro-civil rights, pro-worker, and pro-economic empowerment organization, Chicago-based People United to Save Humanity, which became known as Operation Push.

He also entered the political arena, running on strong campaigns twice for the Democratic presidential nomination, while exerting a heavy progressive—and pro-worker—influence on the party's platform.

Among the many in whom his legacy lives on is former President Barack Obama. Barack Obama, a Chicago South Sider like Jackson, says Jackson helped blaze the trail that eventually landed him (Obama) in the White House.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler and Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond, a Steelworker and the highest-ranking African-American in the labor movement, lauded Rev. Jackson as "a towering moral force whose lifelong commitment to justice reshaped both the labor and civil rights movements and left a lasting mark on the nation."

Operating for Dr. King, "Rev. Jackson led boycotts and campaigns that secured thousands of new jobs for Black workers. His two presidential campaigns would break barriers and expand the political imagination of our country. Through Operation PUSH and the later Rainbow PUSH Coalition, he brought communities together with a simple, powerful truth: Economic justice and civil rights are inseparable," the AFL-CIO leader said.

"Throughout his life, Rev. Jackson fought tirelessly for workers, both at home and around the world. He upheld the labor movement's highest ideals: Walking picket lines, supporting workers at the bargaining table, and insisting that women and people of color be fully included in union protections.



He stood with the AFL-CIO at major mobilizations and worker rallies, from the coalfields to campaigns for janitors and public-sector workers.

"In 2002, he joined the AFL-CIO and local unions in organizing laid-off Enron workers to secure fair severance pay. On the international stage, he confronted global corporations to defend the dignity and rights of workers... At every turn, he reminded us the fight for good jobs, living wages, and union rights is inseparable from the fight for justice and equality...We reaffirm his belief that 'The American worker is not asking for welfare, he's asking for a fair share—not for charity but for parity.'"

Excerpts from other union leaders' statements praising Rev. Jackson included:

Communications Workers President Claude Cummings Jr. focused on Rev. Jackson's fights for expanding the right to vote, another area very important to workers. Jackson was "a warrior for workers' rights and civil rights. CWA members have stood shoulder to shoulder with the Reverend as we fought to protect the vote in Alabama, or on picket lines and campaigns going back decades."

"Rev. Jackson understood that the fight for civil rights is also a fight for the right to organize, to bargain collectively, and to share in the prosperity that working people create. Jackson spoke out for the dignity of every working person who demanded a fair share—not welfare—for their labor. He called on the nation to see that racial justice and workers' rights are inseparable and that true freedom requires economic opportunity for all."

"We honor Jackson's legacy by recommitting ourselves to the work he championed: Building solidarity across all races, regions, and immigration status to ensure every worker is treated with dignity and respect; and defending the vote against any politician who would try to take power away from the American people."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR

National Education Association President Becky Pringle declared, "We celebrate the life and legacy of a pioneering giant who will be forever remembered as a pillar of justice for labor, education, and communities across this nation. Rev. Jackson lived a life committed to civil rights and economic justice for all people. His courage and compassion inspired millions. Thank you, Rev. Jackson, for your unwavering belief in the worth of every person. May we carry forward the hope you kept alive and remember—always—that justice is a collective responsibility."

Service Employees President April Verrett remembered seeing Jackson years ago, because she, too, grew up on Chicago's South Side, and saw him there, at churches, community meetings, and even at people's dinner tables. Jackson's ideals were "rooted in justice. He reminded us our differences are not our weakness—they are our strength when we choose to stand together," said Verrett.

"His historic runs for president changed the story of what leadership in America could look like. They widened the circle of who gets to be seen, who gets to be heard, and who gets to dream big enough to claim the highest offices in the land. Because of Reverend Jackson, generations of Black leaders found the courage to step forward—and in doing so, helped this country see itself more clearly."

"At a time when it feels easier to tear one another down than to stay in the work of building together, Reverend Jackson's life offers us a better way. He reminds us we are bound together. That none of us gets free alone. That the work of justice is not about who gets the credit, but about who gets lifted."

Teachers/AFT President Randi Weingarten, Vice President Evelyn DeJesus, and Secretary-Treasurer Fed Ingram put out a joint statement saying, "We mourn the loss of a titan of justice whose life was a testament to the belief that every voice matters and real change requires relentless moral courage. For decades, the AFT stood shoulder to shoulder with him. He walked our picket lines and lifted up our members, knowing labor rights and civil rights are inseparable. He fought tirelessly for education funding and justice, and he spoke out with urgency against the scourge of gun violence devastating our communities."

"His powerful affirmation—'I am somebody'—gave generations of young people a sense of dignity and possibility. Rev. Jackson was always dreaming, always fighting. He believed in the audacity of hope long before it was fashionable. He believed in multiracial coalitions, in the power of organized labor, and in the promise of democracy, and he never stopped pushing this country to be better."

"We are better because he walked with us. We are stronger because he believed in us. May we honor his life not only in words, but in continued action."

Chicago Teachers Union, AFT Local 1 President Stacy Davis Gates said, "The downtrodden, the dispossessed, and the marginalized lost our most fierce and brilliant champion, the revered Jesse Jackson. Our superhero. Our civil rights leader. Our moral compass. Our giant. Our American Patriot."

Davis Gates cited Rev. Jackson's extensive ties to her city, Chicago, which became his operating base via the Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization, Operation Breadbasket, Operation PUSH, and later the Rainbow PUSH Coalition. Through all, "Rev. Jackson understood justice required a multiracial coalition, organization, strategy, and an unshakable belief in the dignity of workers everywhere."

"He carried forward the vision of A. Phillip Randolph's Freedom Budget and bequeathed to Sen. Bernie Sanders the progressive presidential platform. He never wavered from the truth that democracy must work for all of us."

"Here in Chicago, that same unwavering commitment to justice and equity made Rev. Jackson a fierce champion for our city's public school communities and the students and workers that inhabit the four walls of its classrooms," Davis Gates, a social studies teacher, said.

Davis Gates recalled Rev. Jackson walking picket lines during four CTU strikes from 2012-19, fighting "for the schools our children deserve." Jackson gave "leadership and legitimacy to our struggle when wealthy, powerful interests tried to dismiss and dismantle it. He reminded us, again and again, the fight for public education is inseparable from the fight for racial and economic justice."

Davis Gates also said Rev. Jackson also inspired the late Chicago Mayor Harold Washington, then a state senator, to seek that post and become the city's first elected Black mayor. Jackson's 1984 and 1988 presidential campaigns "rewrote the rules of American politics and paved the pathway for the leadership of President Obama, Vice President Kamala Harris, and Mayor Brandon Johnson," the current Chicago mayor who is a former shop steward for Local 1.

Rev. Jackson "demonstrated to Black children, working families, and poor communities that we were not spectators in democracy, we are most central to it. He walked more picket lines than most leaders will ever see. He believed deeply in labor solidarity, multiracial coalitions, and the power of organized people to challenge organized wealthy interests."

"We must recommit ourselves to the work he modeled, to move, not mourn, to march, not mope, to choose service over sorrow and to pursue dignity even in the face of despair…His life reminds us hope is not a slogan, it is a discipline…built in church basements, union halls, educational communities, and chanted on picket lines and on the streets. It is sustained through coalition, struggle, and solidarity…We say what he taught us to say—Keep hope alive."

The Machinists issued a statement that said, "Jackson's solidarity with our members extended beyond words. During the historic Eastern Airlines strike, he walked arm-in-arm with striking IAM members, proudly wearing an 'On Strike' sign on the picket line. His presence offered courage, his voice provided hope, and his moral clarity affirmed the fight for economic justice is inseparable from the fight for human dignity."

"That moment remains one of the most powerful demonstrations of his unwavering commitment to workers' rights.

Throughout his life, Rev. Jackson established a vital link between the labor movement and the civil rights movement. He deeply understood the quest for racial justice cannot be separated from the struggle for fair wages, safe workplaces, and the right to organize. His leadership strengthened our movement, inspired our members, and broadened the coalition fighting for a more equitable society."

National Nurses United posted on social media, "In 1992, when 1,700 workers went on strike for seven weeks at Oakland's Summit Medical Center, Rev. Jesse Jackson walked the picket line with us. He stood shoulder to shoulder with five unions fighting for justice. Rest in power, Rev. Jackson, we'll keep fighting from here."

The Autoworkers recalled that three years ago, when he was over 80 and ailing, Rev. Jackson still walked on their picket lines in front of a Ford factory on the South Side during the union's historic and successful Stand Up! strike against the Detroit-based car companies, Ford, GM, and Stellantis.

"Rev. Jackson knew exactly which side he was on: that of the working class," UAW said. "He spoke out against the hollowing out of manufacturing...and the damage done to communities when jobs were shipped overseas, calling for fair trade deals that put workers first. He carried that conviction across the globe, traveling to South Africa to investigate the firing of 700 Black workers from a Ford plant in 1979 and helping to lead the international movement to end apartheid."

"In 2010, he joined UAW President Bob King on a multi-city tour calling for jobs, justice, and peace, a message he embraced across decades of work. He stood with workers in the streets from Detroit to cities nationwide, demanding industrial policies that create jobs, enforce workers' and civil rights, and put people before profit."

The union said Rev. Jackson's roots ran "deep in the intertwined traditions of civil rights, labor organizing, anti-apartheid activism, and the global peace movement—all grounded in the same belief: That dignity, fairness, and opportunity belong to all of humanity. May we honor him not only in memory, but in action."

Culinary Union Local 226, Unite HERE's largest local, issued a statement that read, "In 1990, when I was a bartender at the Horseshoe in Las Vegas," during a 9-month strike, "almost no one would stand with us, but Rev. Jackson did," said Executive Secretary-Treasurer Ted Pappageorge. "We were told we couldn't march in the street, and if we did, there would be arrests. Rev. Jackson came to Las Vegas, stood shoulder to shoulder, led us on that march, and not one worker was arrested."

"At a time when our fight felt uphill, he gave us courage and hope. And he kept showing up there," Pappageorge added. "His legacy lives on in every picket line, organizing drive, and contract fight where workers demand respect and a better future. We will honor him by...doing what he always told us: Keep hope alive."

'Suicide is one option,' seniors on Social Security told

By John Wojcik

Advocates for maintaining and improving Social Security and fighting cuts in the program by the Trump administration are horrified by news that some seniors and others calling about their benefits have been told by the person answering the phone that "suicide is one option."

That incredible news was shared online by Michael Phelan of Social Security Works, an organization which has long fought for better benefits and against cuts to the program. Phelan reports this is happening as a result of shifts in assignments: People whose usual work is payment processing are now answering phone calls from benefit recipients and people eligible for benefits. As part of the job switch, those reassigned to the phones receive a three-hour training program that apparently includes among its instructions the message about suicide.

He cites a report in the publication *Government Executive* that was released last Friday. The last day of the workweek has long been known as the "news dump," a time when bad news is released with the idea that it will fly under the radar since millions are shifting into thinking about what they have to do for the weekend.

"I always knew that we should expect anything from this administration," Phelan said in a statement. "But this is worse than anything I expected. I am horrified." He said his organization is reaching out to contacts in the Social Security Administration and getting the word out to the media and anyone else who can help put pressure on to stop the practice.

The original report in *Government Executive* notes that "swaths of employees have been transferred to the job of answering phone calls." Those workers, the report notes, are ones who normally process payments and do other work that does not require interaction with the public. They have received only a three-hour training session before starting phone duty.



Suicidal ideation is sometimes expressed by callers who, for one reason or another, are facing problems of daily life and now more frequently problems with their benefits. Rather than receiving the kind of training that would gently try to transfer such callers to competent mental health professionals who could help them with their problems, they were told to tell such callers that "suicide is only one option." They then go on to give them information about their benefits, which often does not address the problems they are calling about.

As part of their training, the report in *Government Executive* says, some callers may express suicidal ideation, and it gives examples using a theoretical employee named Fiona.

"It's important for Fiona to keep the caller engaged and to remind her that suicide is only one option," the trainer tells the workers in a video. The *Government Executive* has a copy of the video, it says. Workers receiving the training were shocked and asked for clarification.

According to *Government Executive*, Caitlin Thompson, who worked for the Veterans' Affairs Department, which runs hotlines for people in crisis, said, "No, it's not the thing to say to someone in crisis who might be suicidal.

It's not the normal thing to say, it's not the thing to say to someone who might be suicidal."

In addition to training phone answerers to properly refer potential problem cases, a major step in the right direction, advocates for maintaining good Social Security benefits say, would be beefing up, not cutting, the number of workers processing benefits and stopping attacks on the benefits people have earned from a lifetime of working.

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is a hotline for individuals in crisis or for those looking to help someone else. To speak with a trained listener, call or text 988. Visit 988lifeline.org for crisis chat services or for more information.

Peoria students walk out on ICE

By Noah Palm, Valorie Engholm and Mitch Mitchell

PEORIA, Ill.—Students of Richwoods High School (RHS) cut school short on Friday, Feb. 13, walking out in protest of violent and illegal enforcement raids by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

"I don't want my parents to get deported," said Elena, a student at RHS. "I don't know what to do. I'm scared."

Part of a growing nationwide movement of students protesting ICE, RHS students joined thousands of other high schoolers across the country in taking action. Primarily organized by an anonymous Instagram page, @rhs.against.ice, students left their 4th hour class without a plan to return. Instead, they held a protest outside the school and marched a mile down one of Peoria's main streets.

"We're protesting ICE because people are getting deported, even if they're legally here," said Adriana, an RHS student. "Everyone is deserving of America."

As they marched, students held signs saying "Immigrants Built America," "No Decent Person has a [heart] of ICE," "Fuck ICE," and more. Several students held a large full-sized Mexican flag. They shouted and chanted as numerous cars honked in support. One vehicle flew the Puerto Rican flag as well.

"I love how everybody's brave enough to come outside and show them our voices," Abri, an RHS student, told *People's World*. "We're not afraid to speak up."

Students are not the only ones in the nation's schools challenging ICE.

The National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the union that represents RHS teachers, are taking legal action to stop ICE from terrorizing communities in an Oregon federal court.

Last year, the unions filed a federal lawsuit for the restoration of protections for sensitive locations, such as schools, against ICE agents. Now, the unions are filing an emergency motion to demand immediate relief.

"ICE's mere presence near schools terrorizes students and disrupts educators' teaching," said Becky Pringle, president of the NEA. "Fear and cruelty have no place there."



Although increased ICE raids have not yet been conducted in Peoria, those in the area are concerned for the safety of their neighbors. Just last month, Peoria community leaders called on city council to prepare a plan to keep all residents safe.

Friday's student walk out adds additional pressure to leaders in the community. Several other Peoria organizations were also in attendance to show solidarity with the students, including 50501, the Peoria Club of the Communist Party USA, and the Universalist Unitarian (UU) Church.

Jennifer Innis, a minister with the UU Church and parent of a Richwoods student, showed her support for the action. "I'm out here as a supportive parent but also as an observer, to see how the leadership authorities manage the experience," Innis said.

"I think it's important that our students be encouraged to speak up to protest against injustice as they are understanding it," Innis said. "And they are about to be voters. They are engaged with the world, and we need to encourage their ability and choice to be able to do so."

Along with students in Peoria, schools from around the area are also getting involved. Dunlap High School students hosted a protest after their half-day of school on Friday, and Metamora Township High School students are planning to walk out on Feb. 27.

Following the RHS walk out, the anonymous student organizer posted this on the Instagram page: "Viva la Mexico, fuck ICE, and as Bad Bunny said 'the only thing more powerful than hate is love.'"

RAPID RESPONSE: No war with Iran!

By People's World

No to voter suppression!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators to demand they vote NO on the "SAVE America Act" and all escalating attempts at voter suppression to steal the election.

Fast-tracked through the Republican House, this modern day "poll tax" requires in-person voter registration with a birth certificate or passport. The names of 69 million women do not match their birth certificate. Half of all people do not have a passport.

In addition to the MEGA Act, the SAVE Act would end universal mail-in ballots and require government photo ID. Voters of color, young voters, low-income voters, and voters with disabilities will be most impacted. These bills are an assault on democracy and must be rejected.

To protect the fundamental right to vote, pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Enhancement Act (HR 14/S 2523) now!



No war with Iran!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative! Click here to send them a letter.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Unions, allies, move to stop Trump's voter suppression bill

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—Even as a House rollcall produced party-line passage this week of the Republicans' version of Jim Crow 3.0—the SAVE Act 2.0—progressives, the AFL-CIO, the Teachers/AFT and the Congressional Black Caucus were moving to kill it and save voting rights for millions of people nationwide—before the GOP can trash those rights in advance of this fall's election.

It would require anyone seeking to register to vote to not only present positive proof of identification that they're a U.S. citizen—such as a driver's license, its equivalent, or a passport—but the proof must be identical in name to the name the person used when first registering.

And if they don't have such proofs, they must go to extraordinary lengths to get them, or be barred from voting at all. And in cases of older voters, especially older voters of color, such proofs—like birth certificates—are unavailable. Women whose last names changed after marriage would be another group particularly hard hit.

And half of the U.S. people don't have passports—which are not cheap, and take a long time to procure from the State Department.

The result is that analysts project anywhere between 20 million and 71 million people nationwide would lose the right to vote. Most of them would be working-class, poor, minority, and women voters, the majority of whom have trended Democratic for several decades.

Women, in particular, may have originally registered and never changed their registration, from their "maiden" last name to their current last name, whatever it is.



Under the SAVE Act, people who miss elections for one reason or another would be automatically purged from voting rolls. That would hit voters of color more heavily.

Foes of the Republican *putsch* already picked up a valuable ally: Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, whose state has a higher proportion of Native Americans than any of the continental 48 states, says she'll oppose it. Native Americans would be very vulnerable to the bill.

The question now becomes if enough other Senate Republicans join her, all 45 Democrats, and both independents to try to deep-six the Senate version of the measure, S3752.

The point of the SAVE Act, a top goal of right-wing President Donald Trump, his white nationalist and nativist supporters, and the corporate campaign contributors who bankroll both, is to stifle and stop opposition to their agenda and to their control of the political process.

It's all of a piece with Trump's other efforts to rig the 2026 balloting and beyond.

Those goals point back to his continuing lie the 2020 election was "stolen"—a lie Trump tried to turn into "truth" via the Jan. 6, 2021, Trumpite invasion of the U.S Capitol to prevent an electoral vote count for Joe Biden.

The voter repression measure's lead congressional sponsors, Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, and Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, who fancies himself a constitutional scholar, justify their law by repeating Trump's lie that under Democrat Biden, 10 million people crossed illegally into the U.S. from Mexico and the Democrats planned to register them to vote.

"The SAVE America Act makes our original SAVE Act better," Roy and Lee said. President Trump rightly believes we should include Voter ID in this bill as we make a renewed push to secure our elections and protect the rights of American voters.

"By requiring Voter ID and proof-of-citizenship, the SAVE America Act will ensure that our federal elections are decided by U.S. citizens—and U.S. citizens alone." Multibillionaire Elon Musk, a Trump pal, calls it "absolutely necessary." Ironically, Musk, a pro-apartheid South African, first entered the U.S. by violating the terms of his student visa.

The retorts came fast from the AFL-CIO, the Teachers/AFT, the Brennan Center for Law and Justice, from Rep. Greg Landsman, D-Ohio, and from a meeting of top civil rights leaders with the Congressional Black Caucus.

"The SAVE America Act, a bill that would make it harder for working people who don't have a passport to vote, passed the House yesterday," the AFL-CIO tweeted. "This bill is an attack on our right to vote that the Senate must reject," the federation declared.

"Every person in America deserves a voice and representation in our democracy," tweeted AFT, whose union President, Randi Weingarten, is a New York City civics teacher with a law degree. "Republicans' SAVE 2.0 legislation would silence people's voices at the ballot box. Take action and tell Congress to reject Save 2.0.

"Don't be fooled by different names. All these voter suppression bills have the same goal: Block millions of eligible Americans from voting. It's a coordinated attack on our democracy while they ignore real problems," AFT's tweet adds.

The Black Caucus and civil rights leaders met on February 12 to start constructing a coordinated campaign to stop the SAVE Act and preserve voting rights, as well as to fight back against Trump's cancellations of other civil liberties and protections for people of color.

"Over the past year, we have seen a concerted effort to roll back civil rights underlying voting access, dismantle social programs, and concentrate power in the hands of the wealthy and well-connected, at the expense of our community," said caucus chair Rep. Yvette Clarke, D-N.Y.

But Clarke said the coalition has to sit down and build that effort. It hasn't yet.

"We condemn in the strongest terms any threats to usurp elections. The call to nationalize elections and any proposals that would strip authority from the states to administer free and fair elections is a threat," Maya Wiley, CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, said in a statement even before the House floor vote.

Democratic Ohio Rep. Landsman's critique was short and pointed. He called the Save 2.0 act "a terrible, un-American, undemocratic, honestly insane bill that the Senate should not take up."

"For months, we have warned of a drive by President Trump and his administration to undermine the 2026 election. It is unprecedented, outlandish," Brennan Center President Michael Waldman said. "It is a serious threat to voting rights.

"Now Trump himself is blaring his intent—and over the past week, the public issue has exploded. The fight for a free and fair vote is taking shape."

Alaskan GOP Sen. Murkowski also said enacting the GOP's measure "would threaten election integrity" as local officials, who run elections, wouldn't have enough time to adjust and reprogram everything.

"When Democrats attempted to advance sweeping election reform legislation in 2021, Republicans were unanimous in opposition because it would have federalized elections, something we have long opposed. Now, I'm seeing proposals such as the SAVE Act and MEGA that would effectively do just that," Murkowski posted on social media. "Once again, I do not support these efforts."

The threat of the SAVE Act led a Democratic Party group, Demcast, to post a sample letter to lawmakers, with a stark warning about the law's impact:

"This is our line in the sand moment. As a Democrat, we expect you to stand up for the fundamental right to vote that is the cornerstone of our democracy. The SAVE Act 2.0 is part of a coordinated effort to disenfranchise working-class Americans, older voters, women, and communities of color—groups that already face disproportionate barriers to voting.

"This legislation is not about election security. It's about voter suppression."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Brazil: 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of Brazil

By Callum Wilson

At the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB), a new Central Committee was elected which comprised an equal share of men and women, as well as indigenous people.

Luciana Santos, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation in the national government, was re-elected president of the party.

The party's Congress was joined by President Lula, government officials, and leaders of mass organizations, showcasing what Santos calls "a sign of the respect and admiration earned by the party."

The PCdoB was able to mobilize 42,000 cadre across the country to participate in the Congress. Key tasks include preparing for future elections in 2026, strengthening the bond between the party and the working class and youth movements, and offering a new program for the defense of democracy, national development, and sovereignty.

La Corte Suprema anula los aranceles de Trump

By John Wojcik

WASHINGTON—La Corte Suprema emitió un importante fallo que confirma la separación de poderes establecida en la Constitución de los Estados Unidos, la cual, según muchos, el presidente Donald Trump viola sistemáticamente.

El 20 de febrero, los jueces dictaminaron que Trump violó la Constitución al imponer aranceles contra países de todo el mundo, justificando las drásticas medidas invocando una ley que solo puede aplicarse en caso de emergencia nacional.

El fallo, con 6 votos a favor y 3 en contra, sostuvo que la Constitución no permite a un presidente imponer aranceles a las mercancías que ingresan a Estados Unidos desde el extranjero, en virtud de la Ley de Poderes de Emergencia Internacional (IEEPA) de 1977.

Un Trump preocupado ha declarado desafiante, incluso antes de que se emitiera el fallo, que encontrará otros medios para mantener los aranceles vigentes y que no los derogará incluso si la Corte Suprema falla en su contra. Queda por ver si esto profundizará la crisis constitucional en la que ya nos encontramos.

La primera decisión de la Corte Suprema, de mayoría conservadora, contra Trump fue redactada por el presidente del Tribunal Supremo, John Roberts, y respaldada por tres jueces liberales y dos conservadores, los jueces Neil Gorsuch y Amy Coney Barrett.

"El presidente se arroga la facultad extraordinaria de imponer unilateralmente aranceles de monto, duración y alcance ilimitados", declaró Roberts. "Sin embargo, la administración no señala ninguna ley en la que el Congreso haya establecido previamente que el lenguaje de la IEEPA pudiera aplicarse a los aranceles. Por lo tanto, sostenemos que la IEEPA no autoriza al presidente a imponer aranceles".

Los jueces Clarence Thomas, Brett Kavanaugh y Samuel Alito discreparon.

Neil Katyal, ex Procurador General Interino, lideró el equipo legal que presentó los argumentos ante la Corte Suprema para una coalición de estados, liderada por Oregón, y las empresas que presentaron la demanda para anular los aranceles. Más allá de los detalles del caso, describió la decisión como "una gran victoria para el estado de derecho. Solo el Congreso puede imponer impuestos a los trabajadores estadounidenses", dijo, "y el fallo de la Corte Suprema fue correcto porque los aranceles impuestos por Trump son impuestos al pueblo".
Aunque el fallo no elimina todos los aranceles de Trump, dejando en pie los del aluminio y el acero, sí elimina la mayoría de los demás aranceles que impuso.

Elimina sus aranceles contra naciones enteras, incluyendo sus aranceles de ojo por ojo y los llamados aranceles recíprocos. Se eliminan los aranceles del 34% a China y los del 10% a casi todos los países del resto del mundo. También se eliminan los aranceles que impuso a Canadá, China y México por su supuesta incapacidad para frenar el flujo de drogas.

Se cree que las empresas y los estados que ya pagaron aranceles tienen derecho a demandar para obtener un reembolso, pero el fallo no menciona cómo podría suceder. Las asociaciones de consumidores y millones de estadounidenses esperan que la desgravación de los aranceles de Trump ayude a frenar el aumento de precios de los productos básicos.

Los jueces conservadores, en minoría, expresaron su preocupación por el posible impacto negativo del fallo en el Departamento del Tesoro, pero no mencionaron el impacto negativo de las políticas de Trump en la población estadounidense.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

February 28, 2026

Resistance is Black history

By Eric Brooks

While Trump and MAGA work to erase the rich contributions of Black folks to the U.S. economy, arts, sciences, and culture, the people are resisting. While Trump attempts to become a petty fascistic racist dictator with no restraints on his power, the people are resisting. This Black History Month is a time to celebrate the centuries of resistance that Black people have sustained, with their working class allies, against racist violence and pervasive injustice. The people resist!

The capitalist class of this country has never willingly granted freedom, equality, or dignity to Black people, or indeed to any working people. Every victory advancing the needs or civic participation in this society of Black and working people has been wrung from the hands of the powerful through militant, collective, organized struggle, and every victory has been subjected to counterrevolutionary sabotage by the forces of capital and white supremacy. Today, with the KKK in the White House, the struggle is intense for democracy, working class power, and to protect Black people, working and oppressed communities and women from state violence.

The post-Civil War Reconstruction era saw much of the same white supremacist violence, and stands as a sharp lesson in struggle: paper rights, without the organized power of working people to enforce them, became hollow legal shells with no enforcement mechanism. Or they were reinterpreted in the capitalists' favor by the courts.

Today, a sweeping, fascistic, counterrevolution is effectively gutting the wins of the second Reconstruction, the Civil Rights Movement, destroying enforcement capabilities or reinterpreting the laws. This is an assault on Black, Brown, and working class voting rights, and on labor organizations and legal protections with an initial focus on those federal unions with disproportionally high percentages of Black members and on those cities with Black elected leadership. Black history, and Black citizenship, are being erased and attacked.

Trump and MAGA are using attacks on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) as a curtain behind which they are implementing outright fascism, threatening every working person regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender. The country has seen this playbook before during the first Reconstruction. Black folks, working people, migrant, LGBTQ+ communities, and women and youth must unite to resist and to refuse to let the Trump/MAGA supporters move forward with implementing their Project 2025 fascist, inhumane, playbook.



The first Reconstruction, from 1865 to 1877, was nothing less than a revolution. Black men voted, held office, and shaped the laws of the states that had enslaved them. Black legislators drafted constitutions establishing public education, abolishing imprisonment for debt, and expanding democratic participation for poor whites as well. This was multiracial, working-class democracy, and it was seen as a threat by the planter aristocracy and Northern industrial capitalists alike. And the capitalist class did not sit idle. The Klan, extending the Slave Catchers that existed prior to the Civil War, waged organized terror, and when that was not enough, the Supreme Court stepped in.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Resistance is Black history

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

In the Slaughter-House Cases, Cruikshank, and the Civil Rights Cases, the Court gutted the Fourteenth Amendment, which established that all persons born or naturalized in the United States are citizens, and prohibited states from depriving any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, or denying any person equal protection of the laws. The Court declared that the federal government would not protect Black freedom. This was a class decision. The Northern bourgeoisie had gotten what it needed and abandoned Black liberation. The Compromise of 1877 sealed the deal, and what followed was a counter-revolution — decades of Jim Crow, convict leasing, and lynch law. Rights without enforcement are decorations on a cage.

Now look around. Since Shelby County v. Holder gutted the Voting Rights Act in 2013, state after state has erected new barriers to Black political participation — voter ID laws, voter registration list purges, polling place closures, gerrymandering. These are the new literacy tests. But these attacks do not stop at the color line. Every restriction on the franchise lands on all working people — on Latino communities, on women, on young people, on Indigenous nations, on every worker whose voice the ruling class wants silenced.

The current Supreme Court has flung open the gates to fascism. By granting imperial powers to the presidency — near-total immunity from prosecution — and gutting voting rights, overturning affirmative action, facilitating the dismantling of the enforcement mechanisms in the state, this Court has laid the groundwork for fascist rule — a blueprint that Donald Trump and the MAGA movement have seized with both hands.

And as was argued in "Can labor stop the civil rights counter revolution," Trump's return to power on January 20, 2025, marked the beginning of a systematic dismantling of the civil rights and worker protections established during what the movement calls the "Second Reconstruction" — the political, legal, and legislative victories won between 1950 and 1970. Through the implementation of Project 2025, the MAGA right has imposed a legal counter-revolution, dismantling the entire civil rights enforcement infrastructure of the federal government with the collusion of the Republican controlled House and Senate, and of the fascist dominated Supreme Court.

The attack on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was the smokescreen behind which this broader assault unfolded. On his first day, Trump signed an executive order labeling DEI programs as "illegal and immoral discrimination," framing the destruction of civil rights protections as "colorblind equality" and "meritocracy." The next day, he repealed President Johnson's 1965 Executive Order 11246, which had prohibited employment discrimination by federal contractors — protections progressively strengthened over decades to include sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Since then, every federal DEI office has been shuttered. Federal websites were purged of content about African American and Latino contributions to history. The Defense Intelligence Agency canceled all events related to Martin Luther King Day, Black History Month, Juneteenth, and Holocaust Remembrance Day. Harriet Tubman was erased from official White House website pages.

Military websites removed references to the Tuskegee Airmen and the Navajo Code Talkers. As journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones observed, this represented a "blitzkrieg" of erasure.

And the assault extended to material attacks on workers: a March 2025 executive order stripped collective bargaining rights from approximately one million federal workers — eighty-four percent of the unionized federal workforce, and disproportionately Black and Brown people — while some 317,000 federal employees were driven from government service through layoffs, firings, and forced buyouts. The Department of Education was shuttered. The Justice Department's Civil Rights Division moved to dismiss voting rights cases. The civil rights laws remain on the books, but their enforcement has been gutted — just as the Reconstruction amendments were left as dead letters after 1877.

Today's betrayal of the Second Reconstruction, the wins of the Civil Rights era, has caused the people to fight back on a scale not seen in generations. The 50501 movement — fifty protests in fifty states on one day, born from a Reddit thread — has expanded into successive days of action mobilizing millions. The Hands Off protests of April 2025 drew over one hundred thousand to Washington, backed by more than one hundred fifty organizations. The No Kings mobilization of October 18, 2025, saw over seven million people rise up at twenty-seven hundred events — the largest day of protest in United States history.

In Minnesota, a statewide shutdown saw unions and community organizations mobilize tens of thousands against the federal ICE occupation. The May Day Strong coalition is building toward May Day 2026, and a third No Kings action is set for March 28. High school students are marching against ICE. The Communist Party USA has helped to build and has participated in these events.

The Target boycott deserves particular attention, both for the scale of corporate betrayal it represents and for the breadth of the resistance it has provoked. In January 2025, just one day after Trump's speech targeting DEI, Target Corporation announced it was hypocritically ending its Racial Equity Action and Change (REACH) program, terminating its $2 billion commitment to support Black-owned businesses, ceasing participation in the Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index and other external diversity surveys, rebranding its "Supplier Diversity" program as "Supplier Engagement," and abandoning its minority hiring goals. This was a company that, in the wake of George Floyd's murder in its own hometown of Minneapolis, had pledged to increase Black employment by twenty percent, had funded HBCU scholarships, and had been honored by the Executive Leadership Council for its commitment to diversity.

Target's abrupt reversal — announced just before Black History Month — amounted to a public capitulation to the MAGA assault on racial equity. The daughters of one of the company's co-founders publicly called the decision "a betrayal" of the company's founding values. Civil rights leaders, including Rev. Jamal Bryant, launched a forty-day boycott, and Rev. Al Sharpton warned of taking it national if the company did not reaffirm its commitments to the Black community.

The boycott has been massive and effective: Target's stock dropped sharply, its market value fell by over $12 billion, store foot traffic declined for consecutive weeks, and class-action lawsuits were filed by shareholders alleging the company had misled investors.

The Target situation also exposes the entanglement between corporate capitulation and state repression. In January 2026, federal immigration agents violently detained two Target employees — both U.S. citizens — at the Richfield, Minnesota, store, tackling them to the ground in full view of customers while one man shouted that he was a citizen with his passport in his pocket. ICE and Border Patrol agents have been staging operations in Target parking lots and patrolling store entrances across the Twin Cities, part of the broader federal occupation of Minnesota that has seen armed agents roam neighborhoods, tear-gas high school students, detain a five-year-old child, and kill two Minneapolis residents.

Target's response has been one of corporate silence and evasion. The company donated $1 million to Trump's inauguration fund, and its leadership has refused to publicly oppose ICE's actions or bar agents from its properties without judicial warrants. Nearly three hundred Target employees signed a letter demanding urgent action, calling the company's continued inaction "a moral failure." Protesters have staged sit-ins at Target stores across the country, with dozens arrested at the Richfield location. The Target boycott thus stands at the intersection of the anti-DEI fight and the anti-ICE resistance, demonstrating how corporate collaboration with fascism — whether through gutting diversity programs or enabling immigration raids on workers — harms the entire working class. The boycott continues, massive and effective.

Yet the movement confronts a critical challenge. Reports from demonstrations across the country — from the Hands Off protests to the 50501 actions — consistently describe crowds that are overwhelmingly white and older, a stark contrast to the multiracial, Black-led protests that defined the 2020 uprising after George Floyd's murder. In Chicago, Atlanta, and other cities with large Black populations, observers and participants alike have noted the relative absence of Black people from the marches.

This gap does not reflect apathy. Black activists point out that resistance takes many forms: boycotts, faith-based protests, mutual aid networks, community defense organizing, voter outreach, education, economic self-sufficiency initiatives, and local political engagement are all flourishing in Black communities. Some Black Americans, after turning out overwhelmingly for Kamala Harris only to see Trump return to power, have expressed exhaustion and frustration, a sense that their part was done and it is now others' turn to carry the weight. Others cite well-founded fears of targeted state violence — fears that have been validated by ICE's racial profiling and the killing of civilians in Minneapolis. Still others have noted that many of the protest events were initiated by predominantly white organizations, without deep roots in Black communities, and that the demands have not always centered the specific concerns of Black workers and families.

This reality makes organized labor's active, visible involvement in the anti-MAGA struggle not just important but essential.

The labor movement has the organizational infrastructure and the diversity of membership to bridge racial and community divides that spontaneous protest alone cannot. Unions represent one of the most racially integrated institutions in American life, and when labor enters the fight, it brings Black, Latino, immigrant, and white workers together around shared material interests — wages, benefits, job security, and dignity on the job. Union involvement can draw Black workers into the movement not through abstract appeals but through the concrete defense of their livelihoods — the same principle that brought hundreds of thousands to the March on Washington in 1963, which was, at its core, a march for jobs and freedom.

The Minnesota shutdown demonstrated what becomes possible when unions and community organizations act in concert: tens of thousands mobilized, workplaces closed, and roughly one in four Minnesota voters participated or had a loved one who did. That is the kind of power that can transform a protest movement into a force capable of stopping fascism. Without labor's full participation, the movement risks remaining too narrow, too white, and too disconnected from the Black and Brown working-class communities that are bearing the brunt of the MAGA assault.

This movement has drawn in organizations across every line of race, nationality, and gender. The AFL-CIO says "Sadly, the attacks on diversity we are witnessing stand to not only halt that progress, but take us backward to a time when discrimination prevented so many of us from accessing opportunities afforded to others." The NAACP declared the rollback of DEI a direct attack on Black economic progress. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus condemned it as an attempt to undo decades of progress. Lambda Legal vowed legal action against the pointed attacks on LGBTQ+ communities. Asian Americans Advancing Justice condemned the rescission of equity protections as a direct denial of their communities. The ACLU charged the administration with weaponizing civil rights laws to bully entities into abandoning equity. And critically, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists has called on the AFL-CIO to organize a national day of union solidarity, insisting that DEI must be cemented into union contracts — because when the far right wages war on equity, workers need enforceable protections, not corporate promises.

As CBTU leader Lew Moye argued, there is a reason the civil rights movement and the labor movement came together in the 1960s: being divided does not serve working people. The Communist Party USA Program comments that the CPUSA fought for and implemented the slogan "Black and white, unite and fight!" as well as demands for full inclusion and equality for women in the labor movement. The party has always understood that the fight for Black liberation is inseparable from the fight against capitalism, and that the defense of democracy against fascism requires the unity of the entire working class. The same class forces that crushed Reconstruction are at work today.

The Communist Party is in this fight as an organizer and builder of the broadest possible coalition to defend and expand working-class democracy and collective power, and to demand peace with justice at home and abroad.

The Program says "The Communist Party upholds both the immediate and long-range interests of the multiracial, multinational, multigender, and multigenerational working class and people of our country and builds unity of the entire working class with its allies." The party fights for the full restoration of the Voting Rights Act, for Black history in every classroom, for the defense and strengthening of DEI protections in law and in union contracts, for an end to gerrymandering, for affordable jobs, housing, healthcare, for peace, and for socialism.

The Trump administration's escalating assault on Cuba must be understood in this same context of counterrevolutionary aggression against Black liberation and international solidarity. On January 29, 2026, Trump signed an executive order declaring a national emergency with respect to Cuba and establishing a tariff system to punish any country that sells or provides oil to the island — a move aimed primarily at Mexico, which had served as Cuba's oil lifeline after the U.S.-backed ouster of Venezuela's government cut off that source. This came on top of a series of measures taken since January 2025: Trump immediately rescinded Biden's removal of Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list, reimposed and tightened travel restrictions, restricted remittances that Cuban American families depend on to survive, and issued a National Security Presidential Memorandum in June 2025 designed to choke off every remaining economic lifeline to the island.

Cuba, already suffering under more than six decades of the U.S. blockade, now faces fuel shortages so severe that the country reportedly has only days of oil remaining. The administration's stated goal is regime change — Trump has openly told Cuba to "make a deal" before it is "too late" — and the human cost falls entirely on the Cuban people, who endure food shortages, daily power blackouts, and a deepening economic crisis while their government provides free healthcare and education to its citizens and continues to send medical brigades to nations across the Global South.

The ferocity of Trump's attack on Cuba is inseparable from Cuba's historic role in the struggle for Black liberation — a role that the U.S. ruling class has never forgiven. From the earliest days of the Revolution, Cuba stood as a beacon of anti-racist internationalism. The revolutionary government immediately outlawed racial discrimination and committed itself to supporting anti-colonial liberation movements across Africa and the Americas.

In 1961, Robert F. Williams and his wife Mabel, leaders of armed self-defense in the civil rights struggle in Monroe, North Carolina, were granted refuge in Cuba after being driven out of the United States by racist persecution and government repression. Williams broadcast Radio Free Dixie from Havana, transmitting messages of Black resistance deep into the U.S. South. Cuba hosted the seminal Tricontinental Conference of 1966, forging bonds of solidarity among revolutionary movements across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. And in 1984, Assata Shakur — a Black Panther and political prisoner who escaped from a U.S. prison after a conviction widely regarded as unjust — was granted political asylum by Fidel Castro's government, where she lived until her death in September 2025 at the age of seventy-eight.

Shakur's words, "It is our duty to fight for our freedom; it is our duty to win," became a rallying cry for the Black Lives Matter movement and for a new generation of activists. Hundreds of students from African American and Latin American communities in the United States have studied medicine in Cuba at the Latin American School of Medicine on full scholarships provided by the Cuban government — a concrete expression of solidarity that no U.S. administration has matched.

Cuba's most consequential contribution to Black liberation, however, was its military intervention in southern Africa. In November 1975, in response to an invasion by apartheid South Africa — backed by the United States and the CIA — Cuba launched Operation Carlota, named after an enslaved African woman who led a revolt in Cuba in 1843.

Over the next fifteen years, more than four hundred thousand Cuban soldiers, doctors, teachers, and engineers served in Angola, defending the newly independent government of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola against the apartheid military machine. Cuba trained fighters of the African National Congress's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, at the Novo Katengue camp in Angola, providing the infrastructure and military expertise that sustained the South African liberation struggle in exile.

The struggle culminated in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1987–88, where combined Cuban and Angolan forces inflicted a decisive defeat on the South African military — the largest military confrontation in Africa since World War II. That defeat shattered the myth of white military invincibility, forced South Africa to withdraw from Angola and Namibia, and hastened the collapse of the apartheid regime. Nelson Mandela, upon visiting Cuba in 1991, declared: "Without the defeat of Cuito Cuanavale our organizations would not have been legalized." More than two thousand Cubans gave their lives in this struggle — a sacrifice made by a small, blockaded island nation that understood, as the Cuban leadership put it, that the fight against apartheid was "the most beautiful cause."

Trump's campaign to strangle Cuba economically is therefore not merely an act of imperial bullying against a small Caribbean nation. It is an attack on one of the most powerful examples of international solidarity with Black liberation in modern history. The same U.S. ruling class that crushed Reconstruction, that maintained Jim Crow for nearly a century, that assassinated Black Panther leaders and imprisoned Black revolutionaries, has for over sixty years sought to destroy the Cuban Revolution precisely because Cuba dared to stand with the oppressed — in Africa, in Latin America, and in the United States itself.

The defense of Cuba against Trump's escalating aggression is inseparable from the defense of Black history, Black liberation, and the right of all peoples to self-determination and sovereignty. The demand to end the blockade, to normalize relations with Cuba, and to respect Cuba's sovereignty must be central to the anti-MAGA, pro-democracy movement. As Assata Shakur wrote, "We have nothing to lose but our chains."

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Today, reaction has a name: Trump, MAGA, fascism. The anti-MAGA struggle is at an inflection point, and the direction of that struggle depends on the level of unity that can be achieved — a pro-DEI, pro-democracy, labor-led united front of workers, oppressed peoples, and women that can fundamentally change the balance of forces is needed. Every working and oppressed person — Black, white, Latino, Asian, Indigenous, immigrant, native-born, of every gender — has reason to join this fight.

Together, the labor led working class can build the collective, organized, militant movement that implements the united power of working and oppressed people. The fascists are at the gates. Workers, oppressed peoples, and women are joining in united resistance. Together, they can stop MAGA and build a society in which regular working people, rather than just billionaires, can survive and thrive. Resist!

Congress failure to extend ACA tax credits is attack on working-class Black families

By Kyle K. Moore and Breyon Williams

At a time when working-class families are already facing a weakened job market, high prices, and general economic uncertainty due to erratic federal policy, Republicans in Congress seem committed to worsening their economic anxieties. The enhanced ACA premium tax credits, instituted with the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) and extended through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), were not extended through the Republican-led reconciliation budget. These credits have led to the largest increase in health insurance coverage since the ACA's Medicaid expansion, and saved enrollees on average $705 annually in 2024.

Working-class families across the country will feel the implications of this policy failure as health insurance premiums rise. However, Black families, who face higher rates of poverty and uninsurance even under "normal" circumstances, are positioned to be hit especially hard by the loss of the enhanced subsidies. The loss of the premium tax credits is also set to economically drain the cities where lots of Black families live, especially those cities in states that neglected to expand health coverage through the ACA.

This analysis will focus on 10 major metro areas: Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.

Impact on Black families across 10 major metro areas

The Affordable Care Act, largely through its Medicaid expansion in 2014, set in motion a decade-long trend of falling rates of uninsurance throughout the country. However, some states, particularly those throughout the South where the majority of Black Americans live and work, refused to expand Medicaid through the ACA. Southern states' refusal to expand access to Medicaid has meant lower coverage rates in those states and that a large share of Black Americans fall into what is known as the health insurance "coverage gap"; that is, they qualify for neither Medicaid nor traditional ACA subsidies. Even outside the coverage gap, many individuals who do qualify for ACA subsidies remain uninsured due to cost and enrollment difficulties.

The enhanced ACA premium tax credits do not eliminate racial disparities in health insurance coverage, nor do they close the coverage gap faced by Black Americans. However, the tax credits do make insurance more affordable, and thus practically more accessible, for those individuals who qualify. This increase in accessibility has led to the largest increase in Marketplace enrollment since the Medicaid expansion, with outsized increases among low-income individuals and in states that did not expand Medicaid. The loss of the tax credits would reverse hard-won progress made in reducing racial disparities in uninsurance rates.

Younger and healthier individuals are more likely to forgo coverage when faced with a sharp increase in the price of insurance compared with those who are less healthy and for whom coverage is less optional.



The expiration of the tax credits will therefore likely bring a knock-on increase in premiums as younger enrollees forgo coverage, since insurance premiums are cheaper for everyone when there is a large pool of healthier enrollees.

The remaining enrollees in the insurance pool of each metro area will also see premiums, and thus their health care spending, increase. Given that the states where larger shares of the Black population live are those set to be hit hardest by increased rates of uninsurance, we anticipate that the impact on consumption in metro areas in those states will be more severe.

Access to health care in the United States is largely mediated by health insurance coverage. As a result, losing coverage in most cases means losing access to adequate and necessary care. Indeed, though access to health insurance does not guarantee affordability, uninsured adults are nearly twice as likely to report some difficulty in affording health care compared with those with insurance, with three-quarters either skipping or postponing needed care due to cost (Sparks et al. 2025).

Over time, a lack of access to adequate health care contributes to excess mortality. Black Americans are more likely to be uninsured, more likely to face difficulties in affording health care, and are thus more likely to postpone or skip care due to cost. To the extent that the expiration of the enhanced premium tax credits does lead to reduced health care access, it will likely also lead to excess mortality

The loss of the enhanced premium tax credits will have knock-on economic costs, in addition to the public health costs resulting from excess mortality and increased health care costs for remaining marketplace enrollees. We assume a multiplier of 1.8 for health care spending, meaning that every lost dollar in premium tax credits reduces economic activity in a given metro area by $1.80 (estimates range from a multiplier of 1.5 to 2; see methodology section). Metro areas with large Black populations in states that lack Medicaid expansion will face significant losses in economic activity from this reduction in federal spending.

Metro areas with large Black populations will also suffer significant productivity losses due to diminished worker health, assuming a productivity loss of $1,650 per newly uninsured Black worker. Finally, we assume employers in these metro areas will pay an additional $4,000 annually due to increased costs associated with each newly uninsured Black worker. Each of these impacts is felt most acutely in places where losing the enhanced premium tax credits is most costly—that is, those MSAs with the largest Black populations facing precarity in their coverage status.

Why is this happening?
The Republican reconciliation bill passed last summer gives a clear distillation of conservative priorities: They prioritize the well-being of the wealthiest households and corporations over that of working-class families. As such, the new budget contains several provisions that provide disproportionate tax relief to the wealthiest households, at the expense of social programs designed to benefit working- and middle-class families.

Allowing the premium tax credits to expire also repeats an unfortunate pattern associated with pandemic-era expansionary policy aimed at easing economic conditions for American families. Through several provisions in the American Rescue Plan Act (namely the expansion of the Child Tax Credit), the scourges of poverty, child poverty, and child hunger were all drastically reduced in 2021. When those expansionary provisions were allowed to expire in 2022, these measures snapped back to their previously higher levels, erasing the progress that was made. The ARPA and IRA policies provide clear evidence that policy can be used to effectively reduce poverty, hunger, and uninsurance rates in ways that close racial disparities; it is a matter of prioritization, not practicality.

Why does this matter for public health?
The loss of the premium subsidies will almost certainly lead to a reduction in insurance rates, concentrated amongst those with the least ability to pay. Even for those with more income, having to face increasing health care costs amid a broader affordability crisis will also likely lead those families to go uninsured at the margin. This reduction in insurance will lead to a reduction in families' access to adequate and timely care. Writ large, reduced access to preventative, adequate, and timely care leads to a less healthy population overall. Moreover, when more individuals and families access health care on an emergency rather than preventative basis, it puts greater strain on the entire health care system, contributing to overcrowding in emergency departments and longer wait times, and reducing the quality of care possible for a broader population.

Whether health care is a necessary or luxury good within an economy is partially shaped by the extent to which health care is publicly subsidized. This is because the income elasticity of demand for health care changes with income. With public support, many more individuals and families can purchase health services as they become necessary than would otherwise. In the absence of public support, and at lower income levels, many view health care much more as an optional purchase when weighed against other pressing costs like shelter and food. Structural changes to the social provision of health care, like allowing subsidies to expire, lead to direct changes in consumption of health services by families, and much more so by working- and middle-class families.

Why does this matter for racial health disparities?
Even among the working class, Black families are more likely to be uninsured compared with white families. Black families are more likely to live in states that did not accept the ACA's Medicaid expansion, and they are less likely to work for employers that provide insurance coverage.

Black families will therefore be impacted more heavily by policies that reduce access to insurance at the margin. This matters because, again, Black families are more likely than their white counterparts to forgo or delay access to adequate health care for financial reasons. Losing access to the enhanced tax credits will result in increased health costs, loss of coverage, diminished health, and excess deaths, concentrated amongst the most disadvantaged. This is in keeping with the Trump administration's stance that racial equity is not a policy goal worth pursuing.

What will this mean economically for workers and their families?
Families facing economic precarity—those for whom even a relatively small negative economic shock could lead to a crisis—stand to lose the most from the expiration of the ACA premium tax credits. More families are in a precarious financial position than live below the poverty line, and the ongoing affordability crisis being exacerbated by erratic and harmful economic policy decisions increases that number. Black and brown families are more likely to be in the position in which losing the subsidies would be impactful because they are more likely to lack financial assets, even after earning a college degree and escaping income poverty.

The cities where Black workers and families reside will also face a negative shock due to the loss of the subsidies, resulting from lost worker productivity and a drop in revenue, as those families shift more of their spending toward maintaining health insurance and less on other locally purchased consumer goods. Reduced economic activity from Black workers and families will have a broader impact on economic growth and activity throughout these cities.

What should we do about it?
The enhanced ACA premium tax credits are a prime example of a policy used to address the income side of the affordability crisis. The credits work as an income transfer from the federal government to families, making purchasing health insurance more affordable; enhancing the credits allowed more families to access timely and adequate health care. Allowing those enhanced credits to expire imposes a major cost on American families and their local economies, especially those in states where Medicaid was not expanded through the ACA.

But temporary tax credits are weak policy tools for addressing structural affordability crises. When the credits inevitably expire and those federal dollars are taken away, families will face the same issues of affordability; only now their consumption will have adjusted around having the credits. The new "increase" in the cost of health insurance means families must decide whether to risk going without coverage or reduce spending elsewhere— a tough choice with no good outcomes for local economies.

A better policy strategy for addressing an affordability or accessibility problem with health insurance is to make structural changes to the program (i.e., permanent changes that expand affordability and accessibility). In this case, extending the premium subsidies to become standard policy would be the strategy that creates the least harm for workers and their families.

Extending the tax credit subsidies would still leave millions of Americans and their families without access to health insurance, and thus facing diminished access to timely and affordable health care. The ACA, even in the expanded form adopted by many states throughout the country, is an imperfect system for achieving the goals of health equity.

Moving our health care system in the direction of single-payer health insurance in which access to affordable and high-quality health care is given as a right not contingent on wealth, income, or employment is the strategy most consistent with reducing economic and health disparities across race and improving our overall economic and public health.

Allowing the ACA premium tax credits to expire would make it harder for American families to access health care, worsen an ongoing affordability crisis, and have a knock-on negative impact on local economies. Black workers and their families would feel these shocks most acutely because even under normal circumstances, Black families are less likely to live in states with expanded access to Medicaid, less likely to work in jobs that provide access to health insurance, and more likely to forgo or delay health care due to financial challenges.

The Trump administration has continually shown its disdain for the pursuit of equity as a policy goal through dismantling institutions committed to reducing disparities, rescinding executive orders and federal commitments to set higher standards for equity, and failing to maintain policies that brought us closer to those goals. The pursuit of equity in this moment requires us to hold fast to the progress we have made thus far, both so that we limit the suffering of as many American workers and families as possible, and so that when we do have the opportunity to build toward further progress, those families will be in the best position to help us do so.

There's nothing Christian about "Christian" nationalism

By Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove

When CBS' *Late Show* host Stephen Colbert invited Texas Senate candidate James Talarico to be a guest this week, attorneys for the network advised that Donald Trump appointee Brendan Carr would likely consider Talarico's appearance a violation of FCC rules. Colbert decided to host Talarico anyway, post the interview to YouTube and skewer the network that has already canceled his show for capitulating to the Trump administration's intimidation tactics.

To date, the interview has had more than 8 million views on YouTube. The segment is titled, "Rep. James Talarico On Confronting Christian Nationalism, And Strange Days In The Texas State Legislature."

Colbert and Talarico had good reason to highlight the problem of religious nationalism. For half a century in American public life, a political force has attempted to use Christian faith and "traditional values" to turn back the gains of the 20th century's civil and human rights movements. Donald Trump came to power by successfully joining this so-called "Christian nationalism" with the reactionary fears of the Tea Party insurgency and the greed of emerging techno-feudalists. The MAGA coalition that made Donald Trump president would never have gained power without the religious nationalist movement that markets the GOP as "God's Own Party."

In the Democratic primary in Texas right now, both leading candidates have decided to call the Republicans' bluff on their claim to Christian values. Talarico and his opponent in that race, Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett, are both Christians who can speak clearly about how faith informs their work for policies that lift up poor people, welcome immigrants, protect the vulnerable and ensure equal justice under law.

But they share a much more basic message that Trump's regime is desperate to silence. Along with many Democrats, Republicans and Independents, they share a conviction that the agenda the Trump regime is pursuing in God's name is antithetical to Christian values and our country's Constitutional commitments.



MAGA's madness is not an alternative interpretation of Christianity. It is anti-Christ.

As preachers and teachers in the church, we have vowed to warn fellow Christians when our faith is distorted to misguide the faithful. This is why we joined more than 400 church leaders this week to begin the Christian season of Lent by challenging the distortion of Christianity that is used to justify policy violence in America today. With our fellow church leaders from dozens of Christian traditions, "we call on Christians to remember that we serve a mighty and awesome God, who is sovereign over nations and rulers."

When it comes to the practice of public theology, there are certainly many issues of policy and governance on which Christians can and have disagreed. God is not a Republican or a Democrat. A wise public theology will always seek to conserve what is best in any society and, at the same time, liberally share it with as many people as possible. But Scripture is clear that nations will be judged by how we treat the most vulnerable—the poor, the immigrant and the sick. This is not a matter of individual charity, but public justice.

Love for our neighbors and for justice demands that we challenge authorities who claim that might makes right and that there is no greater power than their decrees.

When they claim that the Constitution does not constrain them from knocking a door down and raiding someone's home without a judicial warrant, they cannot claim God's blessing. When they shoot someone down in the street and then lie to justify the murder, they cannot pretend to serve the divine law that says, "Thou shall not kill." When they pretend that international law does not prevent them from taking over another sovereign nation and managing its resources as they see fit, they cannot pretend to be serving some higher law. When they abdicate their moral responsibility to care for the poor and vulnerable by spreading lies about "waste, fraud and abuse" and dramatically cutting essential government services, they cannot do so in Jesus' name.

No, this is an attack on Christian faith and all of the children of God our faith calls us to love.

At a press availability on Capitol Hill, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-La.) recently cited a string of biblical quotations in response to a reporter who asked him a simple question about how he squares Jesus' command to "welcome the stranger" with ICE practices that have profiled non-white people, terrorized communities, warehoused thousands of people and resulted in dozens of unnecessary deaths.

Johnson admitted that he did not have time to flesh out a full theological argument, but said he would be happy to have that debate anytime and anywhere.

We extended an invitation to Speaker Johnson to have that very debate at our national public theology conference at Yale University, April 12-14. Speaker Johnson's office says he is unavailable those dates, so we have offered to host him at a time that works for his schedule. But we suspect we will not hear from him for the same reason the FCC has tried to silence James Talarico's message on both *The Late Show* and *The View*. Without the unchallenged claim that they are operating with God's blessing, the unpopular policy agenda of the Trump regime doesn't have a chance.

To preach the gospel in this moral moment is to make sure every Christian believer knows that our faith doesn't obligate them to support this extremism, but to oppose it by building a movement that guarantees freedom and justice for all.

RAPID RESPONSE: No war with Iran!

By People's World

Let Cuba live!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Representative and Senators to demand immediate intervention by Congress to stop the Trump administration's full-scale oil blockade against Cuba and the cruel humanitarian crisis it is creating.

Co-sponsor and vote for H.R.7521 introduced by Rep. Jim McGovern and S.136 introduced by Sen. Ron Wyden and Sen. Jeff Merkley to end restrictions on trade, exchange, telecommunications, and travel with Cuba, for our mutual benefit!

The blockade of Cuba is endangering the lives of ordinary Cuban people and is designed to threaten their sovereign right to decide their own future.

End the Monroe Doctrine policy of aggression and military domination. Support and co-sponsor H.Res.1056, introduced by Rep. Nydia Velázquez, for a "New Good Neighbor" policy of cooperation with our Latin American and Caribbean neighbors.



Let Cuba Live!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative! Click here to send them a letter.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Make Smog Great Again: Trump puts pollution profits over people

By Rob Warzyniak

In 1976, the film Network premiered, featuring one of the most iconic scenes in film history. Howard Beale, played by Peter Finch, unleashes a rant that would be right at home in the present day:

"We know things are bad—worse than bad. They're crazy. It's like everything everywhere is going crazy, so we don't go out anymore.

We sit in the house, and slowly the world we are living in is getting smaller, and all we say is, 'Please, at least leave us alone in our living rooms.'"

He was right, then and now. And while Beale was raving against the media's pursuit of sensationalism over journalistic integrity, we see the same thing happening today.

Things are indeed bad, to put it mildly, and we do not have the luxury of hiding away in our living rooms.

In early January of this year, a New York Times headline read, "The EPA will stop considering lives saved when setting pollution limits and instead calculate only the cost to businesses." The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) is openly letting the American people know that it does not care about us. Dead people are just the cost of doing business, and boy, business is booming.

In yet another glaring example of the business owners and the ruling class placing profits over people, the EPA under the current Republican administration is shifting its policy from environmental protection to the economic costs of regulations. The EPA will no longer track the health impacts of air pollution or quantify the financial impacts of health improvements; instead, it will focus on the financial impact of regulations on businesses. The return of the days when smog was a staple in large metro areas is looking to make a comeback, and it's only a matter of time before the Cuyahoga River catches fire again.

The shift at the EPA is at odds with the Make America Healthy Again movement, but then again, so is nearly everything else in this administration. While the MAHA movement continues to wage a war against vaccines, thereby ensuring a victory for preventable diseases, the American people will soon be dealing with a rise in air pollution. Clean air and water, once considered a human right, are an impediment to big business shareholders, and the Trump administration sided with big business.

At the same time, the EPA under the Trump administration revoked all scientific findings that greenhouse gases endanger public health. This revocation comes on the heels of the past three years being the hottest years on record. While states and cities grapple with the escalating costs of dealing with extreme weather, the federal government has not only effectively abandoned them but also removed years of climate research and findings.

"President Trump will be taking the most significant deregulatory actions in history to further unleash American energy dominance and drive down costs," said White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt. Lower costs are not only a plus, but they will also be necessary, as we will need more money to offset the rising healthcare costs associated with polluted air.

Michelle Roos, executive director of the Environmental Protection Network, a group of former EPA employees, said, "Communities across the country will bear the brunt of this decision–through dirtier air, higher health costs, and increased climate harm. The Trump EPA is surrendering its responsibility, turning its back on families and communities already facing the highest pollution and health risks, and dismantling decades of science and progress."

It comes as no surprise, then, that Big Oil spent almost half a billion dollars on the last election.



Oil company CEOs and shareholders need allies in powerful places, and it doesn't get any higher than Congress and the President. And no one spends that much money without expecting large dividends.

A panel of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) recently released a statement reading, in part, "The evidence for current and future harm to human health and welfare created by human-caused greenhouse gases is beyond scientific dispute." The current argument against this is "nuh uh," often used by the dumbest people you went to high school with, making it very difficult to know who to believe.

The most recent National Climate Assessment, released in 2023, reported that temperatures in the contiguous U.S. have increased by 1.4 °C since 1970. The frequency of annual heat waves has tripled since the 1960s, while storms are producing heavier rainfall, and wildfires have become more severe. Since the Earth is on track to reach 2-3 °C, we are rapidly approaching the point of no return, where climate scientists say that no matter what we do to mitigate climate change, it will be too little, too late.

Recent scientific findings point to tipping points that, in turn, lead to feedback loops. The destruction of the Amazon rainforest releases carbon into the air that would otherwise not have been released, thereby amplifying global warming. Capitalists are actively killing the planet in the name of profit, and since money is all they care about, there is no incentive for them to stop. It also doesn't help that most of them are sociopaths. And because there is a lack of class consciousness in the U.S., this Steinbeck quote is all the more relevant: "I guess the trouble was that we didn't have any self-admitted proletarians. Everyone was a temporarily embarrassed capitalist."

The ruling class loves to place the blame on the working class, insisting that we carpool and recycle our cardboard boxes and plastic bottles. And while we should do these things, that alone will not solve our problem, and it ignores the fact that over 70% of emissions come from 100 corporations. They want us to carpool so they don't have to pay for public transportation, and they want us to recycle our cardboard so we feel like we're saving the planet from the comfort of our living room. We do not have that luxury, which means Howard Beale was right.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India: Communist led state Kerala ends extreme poverty

By Callum Wilson

The Communist Party of India (Marxist)–led state of Kerala has become the first in India to eliminate extreme poverty.

The World Bank defines extreme poverty as living on less than $3 per day.

John Brittas, member of India's parliament from the Communist Party of India (Marxist) said, "Kerala has etched a new chapter in history — erasing extreme poverty to become the first place in India and the second in the world to achieve this milestone."

China: The east is red and green

The Chinese 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30) is a blueprint for modernization, pivoting from manufacturing to innovation-driven development, pioneering what President Xi Jinping has called "new productive forces." This refers to the development of advanced technology such as AI, high tech chips, batteries, electric cars, and green energy.

By the start of the 15th Five-Year Plan and the start of the 16th, in 2035, China will aim to reduce economy-wide net greenhouse gas emissions by 7% to 10%.

Already this year, non-fossil-fuel energy accounted for more than 60% of China's total power generation capacity. China's supply chain and ability to produce over 80% of the world's solar panels, 60% of wind turbines, and 75% of electric vehicles has dramatically lowered the cost of these technologies.

Condenamos el asesinato policial de Da-quain Johnson

Por: Distrito De Michigan, CPUSA

El Partido Comunista de EE. UU. condena el brutal asesinato policial de Da-quain Johnson, ocurrido el miércoles 18 de febrero en Grand Rapids, Michigan. Familiares y miembros de la comunidad declararon que la policía engañó al público sobre el tiroteo.

Videos de cámaras corporales y teléfonos celulares de testigos, junto con testimonios de testigos presenciales, revelaron que el Sr. Johnson recibió un disparo en la nuca después de haber sido sometido por varios agentes y un perro policía. El portavoz policial afirmó inicialmente que el disparo de Johnson fue en el pecho. Su madre, Angelica Johnson, describió el asesinato como una ejecución. También indicó que las heridas en el cuello de su hijo indicaban la brutalidad con la que los agentes permitieron que el perro lo atacara.

Familiares y miembros de la comunidad expresaron su indignación por las mentiras y el asesinato. Los miembros de la comunidad también señalaron que el uso excesivo de perros contra ciudadanos negros es común entre la policía de Grand Rapids.

En 2025, el jurado no llegó a un acuerdo sobre los cargos de asesinato presentados contra el expolicía de Grand Rapids, Christopher Schurr, tras disparar fatalmente a Patrick Lyoya en la nuca durante una parada de tráfico en 2022. La fiscalía acusó a Schurr de asesinato por el uso irrazonable de la fuerza que le quitó la vida a Lyoya.

El Partido Comunista de EE. UU. lamenta la muerte de Da-quain Johnson y exige que los responsables rindan cuentas. Exigimos justicia para Da-quain Johnson y su familia.

Las personas negras, morenas y asiáticas, las mujeres, los migrantes y todos los trabajadores deben estar seguros en nuestras comunidades, independientemente de su color de piel o estatus de ciudadanía. Estados Unidos no puede seguir siendo un bastión de la supremacía blanca para la explotación capitalista. El asesinato de jóvenes negros y morenos es un componente de la cruel negación de la humanidad en la esencia del capitalismo. Podemos organizarnos y tomar el control de la policía en nuestras comunidades y poner fin a los asesinatos ahora.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
March 7, 2026

Trump launches unconstitutional war on Iran

By John Wojcik

The bombs started falling on Tehran and 14 other Iranian cities on Saturday, February 28, as President Donald Trump launched an unconstitutional war on Iran. Administration posturing about wanting to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, which experts say the country was far from being able to do, has been replaced with a variety of other explanations, including a desire to give the Iranian people the chance to establish a new democratic government.

The people of the U.S. and people around the world ask, "Why this war now?" Some argue the answer is that Iran is the last force standing in the way of U.S imperialist control of the resources of the Middle East. For years, Iran has thrown obstacles in the way of the goals of the U.S. and its allies in the region, including its support for Hamas, Hezbollah, and other militant forces.

The war can also be seen as a new major distraction from what many see as Trump's failed economic policies in the United States.

Some experts fear that the war now lays the groundwork for claiming a national emergency to use as an excuse to interfere with and even cancel the coming elections.

But when it comes to the main strategic aim of pushing Iran out of the way of the advances of U.S. imperialism, it is important to keep in mind that the U.S. has had to watch as Iran sells oil to China, its long-term strategic adversary. Until the recent attacks on Venezuela and the stepped-up U.S. embargo of Cuba, Iran was a supplier of goods to those countries too. The destruction of Iran would serve to allow the U.S. to put a political and economic chokehold not just on its much bigger adversary, China, but on many other countries around the world.

And for Trump, there are perks he gets from the war. He and his family are making money, hand over fist, from deals with Middle East enemies of Iran, including Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Qatar.

The *Wall Street Journal,* the *New York Times,* the *Washington Post*, NBC News, and others have reported, for example, that Trump has pocketed as much as $500 million from cryptocurrency deals with Abu Dhabi. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, $187 million of that has already gone into Trump's pockets.



There are multiple deals with the Saudis, including $2 billion in capital commitments to Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law. The Saudis have agreed to turn their city of Jeddah into a major commercial center for Trump, complete with another skyscraper named after him.

There are commitments of $500 million to Trump from the United Arab Emirates. In a sense, it can be argued that Trump may be paying them back by destroying Iran, their long-time enemy.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Trump launches unconstitutional war on Iran

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Unelected billionaires who care little about democracy or free elections in Iran or here at home were behind the planning of this war. Billionaires met for months with Trump over dinners at Mar-a-Lago. Even the "negotiations" in Geneva to ostensibly hammer out a deal with Iran on the development of nuclear materials were handled by real estate moguls, Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, not by Secretary of State Marco Rubio and his teams.

Trump has said he won't rule out ground troops and that American soldiers would be killed—something he had said would never happen when he campaigned for office. That death count has already begun, with three said to be killed. The Iranian death toll has reached over 500 and counting.

In order to avoid the constitutional requirement that Congress approve any war, Trump is falsely claiming Iran was close to producing a nuclear weapon to attack U.S. assets or personnel in the Middle East, if not the U.S. itself. That, he says, left no time to go first to Congress.

Even if Congress approves a war powers resolution limiting his power, he is expected to veto any such measure.

The Communist Party USA is among many U.S. organizations calling for mobilization against Trump's war on Iran and has urged everyone to call or write senators and demand that they support S.I, Res. 59, which directs the removal of U.S. Armed Forces from Iran "that have not been authorized by Congress." Senators can be reached by calling 202-224-3121.

"U.S. and Israeli governments, over multiple decades, have charged, without material evidence and contrary to their own intelligence services, that Iran seeks a nuclear weapon. This repeated lie tries to justify the aggression," the party said in its statement.

"Strikes have been reported across Iran, including Tehran, Isfahan (a major nuclear site), the holy city of Qom, Karaj, and Kermanshah. Lorestan and Tabriz.....An Israeli site on a girl's elementary school in Minab, in southern Iran, killed between 41 and 50 people."

The party statement also said, "The U.S. working class does not benefit from forever wars being waged in our name by the U.S. government of billionaires."

The party also aimed its demands squarely at the U.S. Congress: "We demand our congressional representatives immediately exercise their constitutional authority to stop this latest atrocity, stop funding the war, and stop the president from violating his oath to the Constitution."

On the war front itself, Iran has continued to launch retaliatory strikes against the countries from which U.S. bases are attacking Iran, including Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, as well as Israel itself.

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps also claimed to have fired four ballistic missiles at the U.S. aircraft carrier the USS Abraham Lincoln, though it was unclear if these struck their target.

It is the first anti-ship missile attack on a U.S. aircraft carrier, according to the Socialist newspaper *Morning Star*, by any country in history.

Intense and presumably deadly bombing of Iranian cities continued all day on March 1. Trump declared on social media that the bombing would continue "all week."

The attacks by the U.S., and specifically the killing of the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, have been condemned around the world as violations of international law. China accused Trump of "trampling on the purposes and principles of the UN charter and basic norms of international relations."

Leaders of the British, German, and French governments condemned Iran, instead of the U.S., for retaliating and called for it to return to negotiations. How that request makes sense given Iran was at the negotiating table when the U.S. began its attacks is, of course, far from clear.

Communists in Iran and Israel have joined in condemnation of the attacks on Iran:

The Foreign Secretary of Iran's Tudeh Party told the *Peoples World* by phone that "the Tudeh Party of Iran condemns the blatant aggression of extensive missile and air strikes by the racist Israeli government and the United States."

The party, in its official statement, declared: "This aggression against Iranian soil, which will undoubtedly result in the loss of lives by our compatriots, and the destruction of the country has been welcomed by forces such as pretender to the throne Reza Pahlavi and the Iranian dissident group Mujahedin-e Khalq, which is undoubtedly condemned by all the freedom seeking forces of our country."

"The military aggression of U.S. imperialism and the Israeli government is not a harbinger of Iran's freedom from the yoke of the current tyranny and dictatorship but is an attempt to destroy Iran as a capable regional country and replace the current government with a dependent and despotic regime."

The Communist Party of Israel (CPI) and the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Hadash) denounced what it called "the war of aggression launched by Israel against Iran," and warned that "it may ignite a large-scale regional or global war."

Israel is not only an instrument of global American imperialism, but also a partner in its efforts to impose American imperialist hegemony over the world and its natural and economic resources, the CPI warned.

The CPI also said that the Israeli government might use the war as cover to "intensify massacres and crimes of ethnic cleansing in Gaza and in the West Bank, and to expand fascist onslaught and the rise of racism in Israel."

Women's work is the work of resistance

By Women's Commission, CPUSA

Presented by Lisa Armstrong on behalf of the CPUSA Women's Commission to the National Committee meeting, January 31, 2026.

The national women's movement formations in this country, including the Women's March coalition and CODEPINK, continue to militate against imperialist wars and fight the illegal murders, abductions and carceral policies of the Trump administration.

Public demonstrations have been held around the country against the abduction of the Maduros that contravenes international law and the strangling of the Cuban people through ever more inhumane policies of starvation by embargo.

The open targeting of Black women in public positions of leadership has not ebbed since the beginning days of the Trump administration. Activists such as Nekima Levy Armstrong, a leader in the Target Boycott campaign has been arrested for drawing attention to the collusion between the corporate billionaires, ICE raids, and sham pastors as integral to the movement to dismantle vital civil rights gains of the last seventy-five years.

What these highly public harassment campaigns reveal is a wider attack that targets Black women in the workforce who are a key constituency in public service, health, and teachers' unions leading the working-class refusal of the Trump administration's anti-people agenda.

The Women's Commission takes seriously the need to increase the party's membership among women and its own leadership of women inside the party. To this end, we believe our party's attention to issues that affect multi-generational and multi-national working-class women — Black, Brown and white — is an essential component. We are continuing to write articles for the CPUSA website and for the People's World.

Most recently, a Women's Commission member completed an article on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and their changing policies that detrimentally affect contaminants in infant formula. We have created a list of potential articles for the People's World for women's history month in March. We have developed a panel for the Marxist School in May on the history of LGBTQ+ Communist women in the U.S. movement. We plan to write book reviews of two new edited volumes being released by International Publishers in March, one that gathers together Claudia Jones' extensive writings in the Communist press, and the other on the CPUSA's working class women's journals. In time for women's history month, we are also finalizing a pamphlet about women's and queer struggles in the United States.



The Women's Commission is also paying attention to the form of struggles that emerged in the fight against ICE's combat-level assault against residents of Minneapolis.

As a party that builds neighborhood and workplace clubs, the neighborhood-led work across Minnesota during these last violent months to protect schools, hospitals, and religious buildings strengthens social network bonds in working class neighborhoods and communities. Alongside the more public and deadly demonstrations to demand ICE out now, powerful networks of women and men, young and old, Black, Latino/a and Asian have drawn together all community members who share the goal of a safe, dignified, and healthy social fabric.

Many people do not feel protected by basic institutions, like the courts, our laws, the police, mainstream political parties and nation-level leaders. To combat widespread social instability and violence, we are drawing on the strength of our unions, our local school committees and the community ties we have forged with each other.

We know that historically movements like the "ICE out now" movement in Minneapolis bring women who are still the primary caregivers for children and elderly family members into the heart of meaningful organizing. As the pandemic revealed in the difficult years beginning in 2020, the most truly 'essential workers' are often performing unpaid labor of daily care work. These same women must also work for pay, often in the service jobs that capitalism allots the smallest pay and benefits to, in an attempt to minimize our shared respect for the valuable repair work of caring for the sick, teaching the young, hauling the trash, day in and day out.

We believe the party can grow and in many areas of the country has grown its membership as well as its community connections through taking an active part of this work in Minnesota and the many cities and regions where immigrants and people of color challenge MAGA-led violence across the country. As we build the resistance, we build the alternatives to lives of fear and division!

Thousands pay respect to Rev. Jesse Jackson in Chicago

By Brandon Chew

CHICAGO—Thousands paid their respects to the late Rev. Jesse Jackson as his body lay in repose in Chicago, in what served as a testament to the impact his progressive activism had on generations of people.

People from across Chicago and the United States gathered at the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition's headquarters on February 26 and 27 to celebrate the civil rights icon before his body was moved to the South Carolina State House. Jackson's body is set to then travel to Washington, D.C., for continued celebrations of his life, before returning to Chicago for a public service at the House of Hope, a 10,000-seat Baptist church, on March 6.

"You take a look outside, you can see the impact," said Spencer Leak, Jr., the vice president of Leak and Sons Funeral Home, which has been tasked with planning Jackson's funeral services. His grandfather, Andrew Leak, welcomed Jesse Jackson and his family into their South Shore home after the family moved from South Carolina in 1964.

"When I'm standing at the casket, you see people in there that don't know Rev.Jackson, but they're crying because they are thinking about 30, 40 years ago. 'Keep Hope Alive,' 'I am somebody,' that just resonates in your mind. And since he passed away, I can't stop thinking about 'I am somebody,'" Leak said, in reference to Jackson's oft-quoted poem.

Jackson, a protege of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., who twice ran for president in the 1980s, died last month at the age of 84. Through his activism, Jackson was able to connect the struggles for civil rights and racial justice with the everyday struggles of working-class people and the poor.

Jackson participated in sit-in protests, took part in the Selma to Montgomery marches of 1965, and was tasked in 1966 with leading the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's Operation Breadbasket. He founded what today is the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, a civil rights organization that pressured companies to hire Black workers and registered massive amounts of voters in Chicago and across the country.

Jackson's political impact on African-Americans can hardly be overstated, including his 1988 presidential run in which he received 7 million votes and won seven state primaries and four caucuses, all in the face of racist talking points about his campaign and cold shoulders from those in his own party. Despite his advocacy for the poor and marginalized of all backgrounds, he was labeled as being a self-promoter, with then-Vice President George H. W. Bush referring to him as a "hustler from Chicago." Many of those who visited Rainbow/PUSH to pay their respects credited Jackson's 1988 campaign with helping to pave the way toward Barack Obama's election as the first African-American president two decades later.

"He meant a lot back then in the '80s when he first ran for president," said Cher Phillips, a Chicago resident who visited Rainbow/PUSH on Friday.



"He impacted my neighborhood, empowered us, made us feel proud of being Black, made you think that you can achieve more."

"He was able to collectively work with both sides. There wasn't this fine divide of 'I can only talk to Black people.' I mean, he was for everybody, but he was our Jesse Jackson," Phillips said. "I really think he's one of the last greats, like we don't have that leadership that we used to have."

As people lined the sidewalks and waited to be let inside Rainbow/PUSH, a large video screen played a documentary on Jackson's life as well as excerpts from his speeches. The screen was provided by Thomas Finch, the president of Finch and Associates Video Productions and a long-time friend of Jackson's, who also helped to provide live-streamed video of the services.

Finch told People's World he helped provide video production services for several Rainbow/PUSH events over the decades, as well as at events like the Million Man March in 1995 and Obama's election night rally in Chicago's Grant Park in 2008.

Finch said when he first moved to Chicago from New Jersey, it was "very difficult for African-Americans to get into the Hilton, the Hyatt, McCormick Place Convention Center" because "they couldn't use people that looked like me." Finch credited Jackson's activism that he's now "welcomed into these places" for his business.

"Rev. Jackson did so much and came so far. I grew up looking up to him. He went through some areas that we were afraid to go through," Finch said. "He's gotten threats, his family's been threatened, there's a lot of things that he's gone through that we don't see. I'm so proud of him, and that's why I'm here to support the family."

Jackson's activism also extended to international issues as well, from protesting against apartheid South Africa in the 1980s to supporting resolutions in 2024 calling for a ceasefire and an end to Israel's military attacks on Gaza. Jackson went so far as to act as an unofficial diplomat for the United States on several occasions and negotiated the release of hostages and prisoners in multiple countries.

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"Rev. Jackson has a footprint that covers the globe," said Robin Robinson, a Chicago journalist and former WFLD news anchor who knew Jackson personally. "You have leaders of countries all over the world [who] have asked for his advice. You had conflicts that he has stepped in and resolved all over the world. He defined a new role of unofficial diplomacy. Where an elected person couldn't fully go in because of protocol, he could."

Robinson also credited Jackson for popularizing the term "African-American" in the U.S.

Robinson told how Jackson once entered an editorial news meeting and said, "'We as Black people don't want to be described as a color. We would like for you in the future to refer to us as African-American. Chinese-American for Chinese-Americans, Italian-American for Italian-Americans, nobody calls them by their color.'"

"Over the years, the term African-American became embedded in the language, and language matters," Robinson said. "It matters when you say out loud to yourself and others that 'I am somebody.' Sounds kind of silly, but for people who've been treated as nobodies for generations, it's pretty powerful. So I'm an African-American somebody."

Those who spoke with People's World also talked about the example Jackson's activism leaves in light of the current Trump administration's policies, especially with regard to voting rights. While Jackson's body was lying in repose, the Washington Post reported that President Donald Trump had reviewed a draft executive order that seeks to mandate voter ID and ban mail ballots in November's midterm elections.

"I'd like to turn to the young people, because I think they need the message that he taught and talked over the decades," said Arnette Hubbard, a former Cook County Circuit Court judge who also served as the first woman president of the National Bar Association.

Hubbard said she knew Jackson was going "back to [Operation] Breadbasket, when we were meeting in church basements and wherever else we could," and said she worked alongside Jackson on the campaign trail.

"Everywhere he went, all across the country, he was able to ignite energy and young people to make them want to do something. 'Where you are now, you can make a difference,' he always said, and they could," Hubbard said.

"He made people engaged, made them believe that democracy can be made real, and I mean that because it has its issues," Hubbard said. "Everybody can enjoy the fruits of democracy, that was his message."

Mass movement mobilizes against Trump's war on Iran

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—As Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu launched an all-out war on Iran on February 28, progressive anti-war groups sprang into action against it, starting that afternoon.

They staged mass mobilizations in the streets and demanded people flood the phones to Capitol Hill, opposing the carnage of Trump's "Operation Epic Fury."

Epic fury hit Iran, starting at 1:15 a.m. Eastern Time. U.S. and Israeli warplanes launched massive assaults at the orders of President Trump and his rightist ally, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu.

Droves of U.S. protesters responded, as grass-roots organizations mobilized thousands of people from Maine to Hawaii to campaign against the carnage and demand Congress halt it.

Demonstrations began around noon local time on February 28, with organizers planning further rallies through March 2.

Prime march sites on that first day ranged from Bangor, Maine, and New York City to Federal Plaza in Chicago, plus in front of the White House and in Miami, Los Angeles, San Diego, Seattle, the Twin Cities, St. Louis, and Kapolei, Hawaii, among others.

Demonstrations were planned for Springfield, Mo., and six other cities on March 1 and Anchorage and Cleveland, plus others, including a second protest in Chicago—at Ida B. Wells Drive and Michigan Avenue—on March 2.

The U.S. and Israeli military said their combined forces hit more than 500 targets in 28 of Iran's 31 provinces, including airfields, Islamic Revolutionary Guard command and control centers, ballistic missile and drone launch sites, military airfields, and Iranian air defense systems.

But they also hit a girls' elementary school in Minab in southern Iran. At least 50 girls died, and even more were injured. The Iranian Red Crescent said the nationwide death toll was at least 270 and counting, with double that number injured. The deaths of U.S. troops number at least four.

Trump has dropped his claims of concerns about control of nuclear capabilities, replacing them with calls for regime change in Iran. He bragged that the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ali Khamenei, and top government officials have been killed in his attacks. Iran's official Fars News Agency confirmed that Khamenei, his daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter were killed.

The launch of the war and the mass casualties catapulted many groups, including unions, the Democratic Socialists of America, the Progressive Democrats of America, J Street, MoveOn, and the Friends Committee on National Legislation, among others, into the streets.

Progressives denounced the war as a manifestation of U.S. and Israeli imperialism, and worse. Besides protests, the Progressive Democrats posted Congress's switchboard number, 202-224-3121, for connections to lawmakers

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani spoke out strongly against the war.

"Today's military strikes by the United States and Israel mark a catastrophic escalation in an illegal act of war of aggression," Mamdani said. "Bombing cities, killing civilians, opening up a new theater of war–Americans do not want this. Americans do not want another war in pursuit of regime change. We want an answer to the affordability crisis. We want peace."

Jeremy Ben-Ami, president of the pro-peace Jewish group J Street, added: "The president is starting this war with no clear plan for achieving his goal, without a comprehensive discussion with the American public about the risks and alternatives; and illegally, without first seeking authorization from Congress or a mandate from the international community."



J Street is the growing counterweight to the notorious American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), a longtime lobbying heavyweight and staunch supporter of Netanyahu and the Israeli far-right. It's a key piece of the GOP's right-wing lobbying complex.

While calling Iran "a real security challenge" to both Israel and the U.S., "Iran does not present an imminent threat that requires launching a 'preventive' war," added Ben-Ami.

But Trump and Netanyahu bombed Iran for 12 days last July, drawing a strong denunciation then from the independent United Electrical Workers. That still stands.

"Threats or use of military force are still a regular feature of U.S. foreign policy, under presidents of both major parties," UE President Carl Rosen and other union officers said then in part. "All of this is done at the expense of the needs of working people in the U.S. and throughout the world."

UE called Netanyahu's warnings about Iran's nuclear potential "a line" the Israeli chief "trots out every time" he wants U.S. support for his aggression. Netanyahu repeated that reason for this bombing, too.

And a decade ago, in a convention resolution, the AFL-CIO publicly repudiated its prior unconditional support of U.S. wars.

"It is vital that the workers and our unions promote a foreign policy independent of the political interests and foreign policy of Wall Street and corporate America," the resolution said in part.

"Therefore, be it resolved, the AFL-CIO promotes and advocates for a foreign policy based on international solidarity of all workers, mutual respect of all nations and national sovereignty, and calls upon the president and Congress to make war truly the last resort in our country's foreign relations, and that we seek peace and reconciliation wherever possible."

Congressional foes were also outraged and demanded an immediate vote on curbing Trump, even if he vetoes a successful anti-war resolution.

They demanded the war stop, and that Congress halt it by passing a bipartisan War Powers resolution sponsored by Sens. Tim Kaine, D-Va., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., and Rand Paul, R-Ky., and Reps. Thomas Massie, R-Ky., and Ro Khanna, D-Calif.

And the progressives and congressional sponsors demanded lawmakers return to D.C. immediately for votes on the measures. "This is not 'America First,'" libertarian Massie, a frequent Trump foe, tweeted on X.

Sen. Andy Kim, D-N.J., called on senators to "vote immediately" on Kaine's version of a war powers resolution.

"Trump once again started a cycle of violence that has already escalated and could spiral out of control," Kim tweeted on X. "This is unacceptable."

Anti-invasion Rep. Warren Davidson, R-Ohio, an Army veteran, tweeted: "Surely Congress can be troubled with a vote? Surely any administration can define the mission?

Or, more of the same, 'as much as it takes, as long as it takes' in another place?" The "as long as it takes" quote was from Trump.

But proponents of the curbs do not yet have enough votes on Capitol Hill to pass the measures, which is where the public pressure would come to the fore.

Initially, as usual, the overwhelming majority of congressional Republicans—and their leaders—cheered the war on. So did renegade Sen. John Fetterman, D-Pa., and, reportedly, three congressional Democrats who always agree with Netanyahu.

And any War Powers resolution would still leave Trump's troops in the region poised for more attacks and atrocities for 60-90 days, if lawmakers passed that resolution and he signed it, which he won't.

The other 'lizard people': Why the Epstein files are shattering global theory

By Ramzy Baroud

When British author David Icke wrote his seminal work, *The Biggest Secret: The Book That Will Change the World*, published in 1999, he was not speaking metaphorically. When he detailed the "reptilian genetic streams" of "elite" families—human-reptile hybrids allegedly engineering global events—he meant it literally. To Icke, the world is not run by mere men, but by an interdimensional species operating just outside the visible light spectrum.

While many scoff at this as the ultimate apex of human gullibility, millions have found a dark comfort in Icke's "wisdom." According to a landmark 2013 poll by Public Policy Polling (PPP), roughly 4% of American adults—between 12 and 13 million people—believed that shape-shifting lizard people control our world.

Conspiracy theories in the United States occupy a wide spectrum of beliefs. While the 'Reptilian' theory sits at the fringe, other theories command mainstream traction. According to that same study, 51% of Americans believed a larger conspiracy was behind the JFK assassination, 37% viewed global warming as a hoax, and 29% were certain that aliens exist.

Recently, these fringe ideas have drifted toward official discourse. In 2021, former President Barack Obama told NBC News James Corden that "there's footage and records of objects in the skies, that we don't know exactly what they are," and later stated in 2026 that aliens are "real." This was followed by a statement by U.S. President Donald Trump, who declared that he will begin "the process of identifying and releasing government files related to alien and extraterrestrial life." This rhetorical tug-of-war has effectively moved the "extraterrestrial" conversation from the realm of the tabloid to the halls of mainstream politics.

However, the most significant shift in public skepticism didn't come from space, but from a private island. The Epstein Files—the documented evidence of a shadow network operated by Jeffrey Epstein—unveiled a web of influential statesmen, corporate titans, and intelligence assets. To those who believed in a "New World Order" conspiracy back in 2013 (then 28% of the population), the millions of documents released through the U.S. Department of Justice proceedings provided a grim validation.



They pointed to a shadow government operating entirely outside the confines of democratic accountability.

The specific crimes of Jeffrey Epstein are now a matter of public record, thanks to the tireless efforts of survivors and investigative journalists. But for political science, the Epstein saga represents a "Galileo moment." It is the realization that our institutions are not the center of the political universe, but are often satellites orbiting private elite interests.

Historically, we have been taught to view the world through a few primary lenses: Realism, which focuses on state-on-state power and national security; Liberalism, which champions international institutions and the "rule of law"; and Dependency Theory, which highlights the economic exploitation of the "Periphery," the developing nations, by the "Core," the wealthy nations.

Under these frameworks, we analyzed the Nixon era through Realpolitik, the Clinton years through Liberal Internationalism, and the Bush years through Neoconservatism. But the Epstein network challenges all of them. This is no longer about Core vs. Periphery or "containment" vs. "preemptive war."

Traditional theory assumes leaders act on behalf of their citizens. The Epstein files suggest a different reality: a secretive social contract bound by mutual vulnerability and blackmail. In this system, shared secrets are a more stable currency than gold or votes.

We are witnessing the rise of the Transnational Elite Theory. This framework suggests the true "state" is a borderless network of high-net-worth individuals who share more in common with each other than with the citizens of their own countries.

These "sovereign individuals" fly above national laws in private jets, moving assets through jurisdictional gaps that the average citizen cannot see. They don't just influence the law; they exist in the gray zones in between. For decades, victims spoke out, but mainstream institutions marginalized them. In the chessboard of power, they were too insignificant to matter. The failure of oversight bodies wasn't a glitch—it was evidence of a system repurposed to function as a support system for the elite.

The implications for our future understanding of power are profound. If the primary driver of high-level policy is no longer the ballot box or national interest, but rather the preservation of opaque, transnational networks, then our current democratic models are essentially obsolete. We are forced to admit that the political theater we witness daily—the debates, the elections, and the legislative battles—may merely be a superficial layer designed to distract from the deeper, darker mechanics of the global hierarchy.

Furthermore, this paradigm shift suggests that the "marginalized" of the world are not just those in impoverished nations, but anyone excluded from this high-networked social contract. The divide is no longer strictly between the Core and the Periphery of nation-states, but between the networked elite and the disconnected public.

Now that the public sees the liberal world order as a system that applies rules only to the un-networked, it has lost its moral authority. While the old theories remain useful for understanding the history of politics, they cannot explain its current state. The elites are a powerful network capable of acting against their own governments' national interests to achieve political power, private leverage, and wealth.

Perhaps the literal lizard people have yet to be revealed in the sense that Icke tirelessly promotes. But as the Epstein saga proves, a predatory, cold-blooded, and non-accountable elite is no longer a theory—it is a documented reality.

Trump anti-migrant agenda costs bus, subway drivers and truckers jobs

By Mark Gruenberg

NEW YORK—For nine months last year, Yunakiel Mora drove buses in New York City for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Now, because of Donald Trump, Sean Duffy, and Kathy Hochul, she can't.

The GOP president's continued political attacks on migrants—especially from Latin America—transmitted through Duffy, his Transportation Secretary, produced an agency edict that anyone without proper papers can't obtain or hold a Commercial Driver's License, or CDL.

Red states accepted Trump's edict, issued a year ago and implemented by Duffy against what he calls "foreign drivers." States that refused could lose federal transportation grants, Duffy threatened. For New York, that's $73 million.

Many blue-state governors are defying Trump and Duffy, daring them to deny the money. New York Democratic Gov. Kathy Hochul isn't. Her Department of Motor Vehicles yanked Mora's CDL, even though it knows the Transport Workers Local 252 member awaits renewal of her green card.

The result for Yunakiel Mora and an estimated 200,000 other CDL-holders in states that kowtow to Duffy's edict is "no job." And that has Transport Workers Union President John Samuelsen, among others, pissed off and not just on Mora's behalf.

He condemns the prejudice that deprives thousands of people—MTA bus drivers like Mora, subway drivers, truckers, private bus company drivers, and especially school bus drivers—of good family-supporting union jobs.

"This is another case of Kathy Hochul sticking it to working people," Samuelsen told *The Gothamist*. "She wants her rich donors to think she's fighting while dumping working people into the wood chipper. This is about whether hardworking drivers can earn a fair wage, and Hochul doesn't give a s— about that."



Hochul blames Duffy and, by implication, Trump for the mess. Meanwhile, Mora can't drive buses.

But it's not just individual drivers such as Mora who suffer from Trump's edict and Duffy's threat to pull federal cash from state and local transportation agencies that don't obey Trump's edict.

It's union locals, their members, all the drivers they represent, and the firms and agencies—public and private—whom the locals' contracts cover.

And it angers Debra Hagan, president of TWU Local 252, too. All of a sudden, dozens of bus drivers at four private firms, whose workers her local represents, will be out of jobs. Their CDLs were yanked, and they can't work. Her clients and her union are scrambling, leaving customers in the lurch.

Yunakiel Mora, a native of the Dominican Republic, has been in the U.S. for almost a decade.

Hochul's Department of Motor Vehicles took Mora's Commercial Driver's License (CDL) away, even though she awaits green-card recertification as a lawful permanent resident. And that's left her scrambling for work to help feed her family. Her husband is a chef.

"They [DMV] sent a letter," Mora told *People's World* in a telephone interview. The agency is "saying they would take a little while to review my status."

In the meantime, her CDL was pulled. She could apply for a regular driver's license, but without a CDL, she can't drive a city bus, a school bus, a private company bus, or a truck. So without a car, she's going from storefront to storefront in New York, seeking any work she can find.

And she's not alone.

State officials nationally who are obeying the Trump edict, handed down through Duffy, are banning anyone without "proper" papers from holding CDLs. A whole long page of legalese, on the federal Transportation Department website, details the ban.

One way to throw migrants out is to make sure they either have to toil in the "underground economy" and be exploited, or not hold jobs at all.

That's what Hagan, president of TWU Local 252 for the last 12 years and holder of a CDL license herself, anticipates. What makes it doubly hard is that a CDL license is tough to win and tough to hold.

To get that CDL, drivers who are part of her local must pass 36 hours of rigorous road tests and a physical performance test, read and write fluent English, pass a drug test and pass a test showing how quickly they can turn a bus or truck on or off and—in the case of school buses—how fast they can evacuate passengers in an emergency, Hagan said in a telephone interview.

They also must re-qualify every six months if the "cargo" they're going to carry is children going to schools or day care centers. And even after a CDL-holder passes all that, she's often trailed on the road by a company supervisor, scrutinizing her performance.

So when a client calls up for a CDL driver, and Hagan finds her union is short thanks to Trump's edict, everyone from the union to the driver to the kids suffers.

"By the end of June, we'll have about 160 CDLs pulled from drivers, for just one of our companies," she says. "That's out of 2,500 drivers, total."

Many of the victim drivers are migrants, again from what Trump calls "s—hole" countries. Many, like Mora, have green cards that they must periodically renew, too.

Others, like Smart-TD member Kilmar Abrego Garcia, have lived in the U.S. for years if not decades, on Temporary Protected Status, after fleeing natural catastrophes or civil or gang wars at home.

Trump's ICE agents grabbed the Laurel, Md., resident in Tennessee, falsely charged him with being an MS-13 gang member, and shipped him off to a notorious prison in El Salvador. It took U.S. Supreme Court intervention, literally, to get him out. He's still under ICE suspicion.

"There's no reason given" for pulling drivers' CDLs, if they're here under Temporary Protected Status or have a green card, Hagan adds. "But to have a CDL removed is disastrous."

She suspects there's an ulterior motive behind the sudden withdrawal of CDL licenses from the migrants.

"Our local, and the international, has been looking into the grounds of people with certain visas being singled out" for having their CDLs withdrawn, Hagan says.

Hagan has been able to convince the employers whose union members lost their CDL licenses to transfer some of the workers to "temporary assignment" jobs—desk work, except in emergencies. As Driver Assistants, they can sub on a suddenly vacant route trip, but must drive very carefully.

"And there's a $15 an hour [less] difference" between what the drivers earned under the union contracts when they had CDLs and what they earn in those desk work posts, Hagan adds. "And that's only if the companies can place them."

One of her drivers, Hagan said, has worked for the same transport firm for 18-1/2 years. Like Mora, after training, she too drove buses for 16-1/2 years with the CDL. Then it was yanked. Now she's a driver assistant.

Not only does a lack of a CDL cut pay for the hurting worker, but it also cuts her hours, too, Hagan said. The worker was guaranteed six hours of daily driving at the higher CDL rate. Now she's guaranteed 4-1/2.

Removing drivers from the road by yanking their CDLs "will especially impact the school bus industry," whose drivers Hagan's local represents. She calculates schools will lose 7% of their bus drivers, with the big hit coming not in New York City but on more-rural bus routes upstate and on Long Island.

But the real big hit, Hagan says, will be to the families of the drivers, and it won't be just financial, either. Many parents—men and women—hold CDLs and work part-time driving the buses, taking special care because they transport kids.

And their driving hours coincided with the need for the buses before and after school. That lets the parents with the CDLs arrive home with or just after their own children, a boon to family ties.

Hagan knows other governors have stood up to Trump and Duffy. "Why Hochul didn't baffles the mind," she says.

"They're not even offering an extension" of a driver's CDL license "until the visa is renewed—especially for drivers who have worked a long time" driving trucks and school buses.

Those drivers are at the top of pay scales, she adds, and have first pick of routes. For the school bus drivers, that includes picking routes, by driver seniority, every summer for the upcoming school year. Now all the drivers face a financial squeeze and employment uncertainty.

Mora knows "how really hard it is, but it's not something under my control," she says. "I'm looking for work, applying to supermarkets and other stuff. But it's really hard to get around because I cannot be driving."

The one saving grace: When she gets her papers, she'll be able to return to driving her MTA bus. She was nine months through her mandatory one-year probationary period and had an outstanding record. The MTA has promised she won't have to start all over again.

"They said when I reapply, they've saved [up] my probation time."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

HAVANA—Trump's recent escalation against Cuba, threatening to tariff nations that trade oil with Cuba, is compounding hardships in the island nation and motivating the international solidarity community to help.

Since the kidnapping of Venezuela's sitting President, Nicolás Maduro, on January 3rd, the MAGA administration has set its sights more intensely on Cuba, with Marco Rubio leading an all-out siege on the sovereignty of not only the Caribbean island nation, but all of Latin America.

While Cuba has endured a blockade for over 60 years, in recent years it has had to withstand redoubled pressure from the colossus to its north, from being placed on the spurious State Sponsors of Terrorism List to the now virtual oil blockade. The effects of this pressure are palpable on the island: long gas lines, severe power outages, delays in trash collection, and scarcity of necessary medical equipment and supplies.

Yet, tuning in to the U.S. media gives the impression that Cuba is facing such challenges with crossed arms, waiting for the final blow to bring it to its knees. Corporate journalists spin the narrative with seemingly no evidence that the Cuban population is on the verge of mass starvation, all public services have ceased to function, and the nation awaits an external hero to relieve them of their suffering.

part 2 of this article will appear in next week's edition

Nueva coalición sindical de Oregón impulsará "empleos climáticos"

Por Don McIntosh

PORTLAND, Oregón—Una coalición recién formada de sindicatos de Oregón abogará por una transición hacia la energía limpia impulsada por los sindicatos. Y cuenta con una gran ventaja para lograrlo: un conjunto de recomendaciones de políticas, en formato de libro, del Climate Jobs Institute, parte de la Facultad de Relaciones Industriales y Laborales de la Universidad de Cornell.

El grupo, Climate Jobs Oregon, realizó su lanzamiento público el 23 de enero en el salón de IBEW Local 48 en Portland, seguido de visitas a cuatro centros de capacitación sindical de la construcción. La fiesta de lanzamiento estuvo repleta de funcionarios electos estatales, del condado y de la ciudad, y sus equipos, y los asistentes aplaudieron el compromiso de los sindicatos patrocinadores para promover empleos verdes que también son buenos empleos.

Entre los primeros patrocinadores se incluyen la AFL-CIO de Oregón, los sindicatos de la construcción de Oregón, los sindicatos IBEW Locales 48, 125 y 932, el sindicato Operating Engineers Local 701, el sindicato Ironworkers Local 29, el sindicato Laborers Local 737, el Consejo de trabajadores del distrito de Oregón y el sur de Idaho, el sindicato Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 y la Asociación Unida de Plomeros y Instaladores de Vapor Local 290.

Legalmente, la coalición está compuesta por dos organizaciones sin fines de lucro exentas de impuestos: un grupo educativo llamado Climate Jobs Oregon y un brazo de incidencia política llamado Climate Jobs Oregon Action Fund.

Ambas organizaciones incluyen a Graham Trainor, presidente de la AFL-CIO de Oregon, como presidente en los documentos fundacionales presentados ante el Secretario de Estado de Oregon. La creación del grupo fue aprobada por los delegados de la convención en la convención de la AFL-CIO de Oregon de 2025.

Climate Jobs Oregon se basa en grupos similares formados en otros estados: Colorado, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nueva Jersey, Nueva York, Pensilvania, Rhode Island, Texas y el estado de Washington. Cada grupo lleva "Climate Jobs" en su nombre, y los empleos sindicalizados son su núcleo: el grupo de Nueva York ayudó a lograr un requisito para los Acuerdos Laborales de Proyecto en la construcción de nuevas plantas de generación de energía renovable.

Climate Jobs Oregon se encuentra en la fase final de contratación de un empleado a tiempo completo que probablemente comenzará en marzo. Sea quien sea, tendrá mucho que hacer, incluyendo reformar los procesos de ubicación y permisos para acelerar el desarrollo energético, promover nuevas instalaciones de generación, almacenamiento y transmisión de energía, y defender la vivienda pública ecológica construida por los sindicatos.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
March 14, 2026

Bloody Sunday remembered in Selma march

By Luke Rojas Nogueira

SELMA, Ala.—On Sunday, thousands from all over the country made their way here to participate in the commemoration of the 1965 Bloody Sunday attack. They assembled around the historic Brown Chapel AME Church within Selma's George Washington Carver housing projects.

Marchers said the event, which was both a remembrance and a launching of renewed struggle, is necessary to preserve the voting rights and economic gains that have been won since the 1960s. A leading role in organizing the weekend gathering was played by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the organization co-founded by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., himself.

At the peak of the Civil Rights Movement, Selma became the epicenter of the struggle against Black disenfranchisement. While the 15th Amendment to the Constitution granted voting rights to Black men on paper in 1870, Jim Crow state governments across the South spent decades utilizing a plethora of legal loopholes and reactionary tricks to make it nearly impossible for Black people to register to vote.

The registrar's office within the Dallas County Courthouse became notorious for its extreme voter suppression of Selma's Black community, while the organized resistance to these practices became legendary.

In 1965, the struggle in Selma came to a crescendo when unarmed civil rights marchers, led by Hosea Williams and the then-young late Democratic Rep. John Lewis, were brutally attacked by a gang of Alabama State Troopers while crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge. They had intended to march all the way to the state capital, Montgomery.

The attack became a watershed moment for the Civil Rights Movement as footage of the violence was broadcast on television across the nation, garnering support for its goals among millions of Americans.

Now, 61 years later, Selma commemorated the legacy of the attack with a week-long jubilee, culminating in Sunday's memorial march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. The march was preceded by a rally in Foot Soldier Park, where Jeremy Ponds, the field director of the SCLC, acted as the master of ceremonies.

Bullhorn in hand, Mr. Ponds called on the crowd to march non-violently and in an orderly fashion.



"We're not going to bum-rush the bridge. We're gonna bum-rush the ballot box," he said to the crowd before introducing the first speaker, Armani Eady of the American Civil Liberties Association (ACLU).

In her speech, Eady drew comparisons between the Civil Rights struggle of the '60s and the current struggle to resist the agenda of the Trump administration.

"How much more do we have to go? And are we going to get there?" she asked the audience.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Bloody Sunday remembered in Selma march

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

"These are the questions my foremothers and forefathers had while they were sitting at lunch counters and marching across bridges."

Following Eady, the bullhorn was passed to formerly incarcerated community organizer Kenneth Glasgow, who opened his speech by yelling "Mustard!" as a sort of battle cry, a reference to rapper Kendrick Lamar's hit record "TV Off."

Following that, Glasgow's wife and executive director of The Ordinary People Society, Rodreisha Russaw-Glasgow, as well as former SCLC President and current member of the New National Christian Leadership Conference, Rev. Dr. Byron Clay, delivered their own speeches.

After a short call to prayer, Ponds took back the bullhorn and announced that the march was beginning. The paraders moved down Martin Luther King Street before turning onto Alabama Avenue and then Broad Street, the road that terminates at the Edmund Pettus Bridge. SCLC members were in the vanguard of the march bearing a banner and a U.S. flag, leading the crowd with contemporary chants originating within the 21st-century Black Lives Matter movement.

Once the march reached the foot of the bridge, it stopped in front of another rally organized by the Black Voters Matter organization alongside a handful of other groups. Speakers there included BVM co-founders LaTosha Brown and Cliff Albright, the Rev. Al Sharpton, Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker, Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raul, former Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, and Selma Mayor Johnny "Skip" Moss III, among others.

While the speakers touched on a variety of topics, the legacy of the recently deceased Rev. Jesse Jackson was a consistent and dominating theme. This was the first edition of the annual commemoration for which Jackson was not present.

Martin Luther King III, son of Dr. King, concluded the list of speakers. Following his remarks, the sea of marchers slowly climbed the uphill portion of the arch-shaped bridge under the Alabama sun, as segments of the crowd broke out into impromptu renditions of Black spirituals and African American hymns. Once the peak of the arch was reached, the crowd was able to look out and see the other side of the Alabama River.

In 1965, this was the spot in which Lewis and Williams would have first seen the army of gas mask-clad state troopers waiting for them on the other side. Instead, Sunday's crowd gazed out onto a collection of food trucks, souvenir vendors, and informational booths set up by a variety of organizations.



While Alabama State Police were present, they did not engage in any acts of violence against the marchers.

At the southern foot of the bridge, the march-goers mingled amongst themselves, taking photos in front of the many plaques honoring the original victims of the infamous attack. People from all over the country had made the journey for Selma to engage in this very moment.

"I'm down here in Selma with college students from the Bridgewater State University up in Massachusetts," said educator Jazzmyn Red. "They have elected to take an alternative spring break to learn about different social justice issues across the nation." Red was one of many educators in attendance with their students, providing an example of hands-on history education.

An elderly couple, dressed in their Sunday best, drove all the way down from their home in New Jersey. Selma is their original hometown, and both of their respective sets of parents were on the bridge in 1965. The couple comes to Selma every year to honor the legacy of their parents.

Memphis resident Terryl Buford, armed with a sign bearing the iconic Civil Rights-era slogan "I Am a Man," felt the need to attend "to celebrate the lives that came before us."

"Martin Luther King Jr. died in Memphis," he pointed out, calling attention to the connection his city has with the history of the movement. Buford is a member of Call 2 Men, a Tennessee-based organization that focuses on "re-establishing the foundation of African-American men...to show love and unity to our communities, to build our community, and to support all other organizations that are fighting for the rights of mankind."

Also in attendance was a sizable contingent from Alabama's Democratic Socialists of America, hailing from both the Birmingham and Mobile chapters, who hoped to offer their anti-capitalist message to the people.

Sunday's march reflected the determination of those there and millions not there to ensure that both the memories and lessons of the Civil Rights movement will not be lost to time. The struggles for Black liberation, voting rights, and economic justice in this country saw many of their biggest successes during the '60s, but those struggles, people here said, are far from over.

Selma's jubilee march was thus not simply an exercise in historical recollection but a call to action, urging the new generation of not just Black Americans but the entire multi-racial, multi-national working class and its allies to keep the flame of struggle alive as people resist the fascist agenda of President Donald Trump's administration.



A battle for truth in the age of authoritarianism and lies

By Chauncey K. Robinson

These were the words penned in 1892 by journalist and civil rights activist Ida B. Wells. Wells was a Black woman who, at the time, saw the violence and oppression being done to Black people in the United States and knew she needed to get the information to the public. She understood that knowledge had the power to inspire people to act and push back against terror. Her work documented the brutality of lynchings of Black Americans in the post-Civil War era. Wells used her skills of investigation, research, and writing to put a spotlight on the lynchings of Black Americans, choosing to push back against the silence and narrative that the racial terror was not happening.

It is when looking at the history of groundbreaking journalism, such as Wells's, that we can understand how the press—in holding those in power accountable and keeping their readers informed—goes hand in hand with progress and social change. **This is why it is necessary to have a free press that is protected from the intimidation and censorship that often comes about from those in power who wish to keep working people uninformed.** There have been times throughout history and around the world where this freedom of the press has been under grave attack, putting in peril one of the pillars of society that holds those in power to account.

We are currently in those times.

In recent years, there have been growing attacks on press freedom to dissuade journalists from carrying out their work. There has been a rise in authoritarianism threatening free speech and the future of the news industry. It has included FBI raids into reporters' homes and journalists being assaulted by government agents while covering the growing demonstrations calling for an end to ICE raids.

These attacks have gone hand in hand with the agenda of the current White House administration under President Donald Trump, which is determined to rewrite history as they see fit. A history that ignores the atrocities of the enslavement of Black people in this country, the existence of members of the LGBTQ community, science, and other topics that help give the full, vivid, and complex picture of our nation.

The press stands as one of the major obstacles to tyranny, which is the reason why it is often one of the first to be attacked as fascism grows. Especially independent media that is not beholden to corporate interests.

In its over 100-year history, the *People's World* has amplified the voices of working people on the front lines of resistance and struggle. We've also made it a priority to report on and analyze the moves by capitalists—and the government officials in their pockets—when it comes to exploiting the working class. **We cut through the so-called "objective" corporate media noise that is often used to sow fear and apathy in their audiences.** And we do this through presenting the facts, the truth, **because there's no reason to spin anything when the reality of working people speaks for itself.**

We've covered the growing movement to get ICE agents off the streets.



We're on the ground, highlighting the voices of residents speaking out against the onslaught of big tech trying to impose dangerous AI data centers in the community. We've covered topics dealing with the still very real threat of nuclear war and the climate crisis**. There are many topics that those in power would like to keep in the background and have workers ignore. *People's World* makes it a priority to cover them all.**

But we need your help to continue to do so.

The *People's World* 2026 fund drive is underway, and we need your help to raise $140,000 by May 1.

People's World is a daily news publication with a small staff and the support of contributors across the globe. We're not beholden to corporate interests, which means we—with pride—appeal to our readership that has helped to keep us going for decades.

The financial support you give keeps our journalists in the streets, covering the town halls, protests, and public hearings. **It makes it so we can continue to report the truth in the face of a regime that would rather feed you lies.** That's no small task, but it's one we champion and want to continue to do.

There are many ways you can take ownership of the fight for truth and independent media with *People's World.*

Donate today or become a **monthly sustainer.** We've also brought back the *People's World* May Day Greetings Book, celebrating working-class heroes and historic wins for labor and democracy. **Supporters can even host events in their areas to raise funds for the publication while building community.**

We can't do this alone, but with your continued support, thankfully, we've never had to. The success of our publication has been made possible by the support of our readership and allies, because we all know just how high the stakes are, and in this moment of political turmoil, we can't afford to be unprepared.

Onward!

Sincerely,

Chauncey K. Robinson

Associate Editor of People's World

Tell Congress: Re-introduce War Powers Resolution on Iran

By People's World

Call, write, and visit your U.S. Representative and Senators to demand Congress uphold its constitutional authority and stop Trump's escalating war on Iran.

Congress can and must refuse all funding for this illegal war that is opposed by 70% of people in our country. Call publicly for an end to this war and re-introduce and support new War Powers Resolutions.

If the Trump administration is allowed to ignore Congressional authority in Iran, continual unauthorized military actions could follow against Cuba or other nations.

Congress must assert its authority now. Choose diplomacy and spending on human needs for working people, not Trump's billionaire-backed imperialist aggressions.



Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

'White with Fear': Scary movie

By Michael Berkowitz

The scariest movie of the year so far has little to do with zombies, werewolves, haunted houses, space invaders, or even serial killers. Veteran Emmy Award-winning producer, writer, and director Andrew Goldberg's excellent new film *White with Fear* inspires more terror than any of the usual shock genre films! Sadly, it is a true story!

Goldberg has created the year's most horrific film by revisiting the highlights of the last 60 years of United States political history, a history that threatens the existence of the U.S. and, by extension, the entire world.

White with Fear chronicles the rise of racial and class fears in American politics, beginning with Presidential candidate Richard Nixon. Nixon's very conscious, cynical political calculus helped him develop the template that has dominated the Republican Party for over half a century. To win in politics, you must scare white voters without seeming to be racist. Nixon figured, "You have to face the fact the whole problem is really the Blacks! The key is that you had to devise a system that recognizes this problem without being explicitly racist."

Because our national credo is based on economic opportunity for all, the fear of "the other" has to be expressed as potential crime and violence. The racialize understanding of crime projects whites as victims. Only by embracing the programs of right-wing politicians will white people be safe. The success of this strategy, of course, relies on making sure that whites are in the majority. Immigration must be minimized, and people of color need to be controlled.



Two key Nixon operatives developed these principles of his program. Kevin Philips advocated the deployment of fear to manipulate the electorate. Fellow Nixon advisor Pat Buchanan used fear to divide the voters along racial rather than class lines. As Buchanan propounded, Republicans needed to divide the country to consolidate their control. Nixon skillfully used the fear of people of color, communists, and even change itself to win two unsettlingly corrupt presidencies.

This policy was fostered not only by Republican Presidents. Media mogul Rupert Murdoch built his Fox News Network spreading such fear. His network helped relocate many of the threats to whites as coming from muslim terrorists. Murdoch employed former Nixon operative Roger Ailes to commodify the dumbed-down, fast and loose, right-wing *Fox News* propaganda machine. Fox hardly explained why muslims violently reacted to American encroachments in the Middle East.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR

It was enough to identify these people of color as a threatening enemy, not just of the corporations that ruled the U.S. economy, but of all Americans.

Vicious anti-Black rhetoric continued to have a special place lining Murdoch's pocketbook and airwaves. But Fox TV branched out to fan Islamophobic hysteria, keeping topical and widening the fear he helped instill into his audiences. This fear blocked congressional attempts at immigration reform and fueled the Tea Party's rise against President Barack Obama.

White with Fear does an especially good job tracing the rise of avid right-winger Donald Trump through the Fox channels to the Presidency. Trump has even dropped Nixon's earlier attempt to soft pedal his racism. Trump regime fear-mongering has ranged from the petty lies challenging Obama's birthplace, family, citizenship, and religion to publishing pictures depicting the Obamas as apes. Books by and about Black people have been pulled out of libraries, and Black officials in much of public service have been threatened and driven out.

News clips show rabidly right-wing Fox commentators like Tucker Carlson and Rush Limbaugh spewing incessant anti-Black vitriol, as Trump himself repeatedly claims that Obama created America's racial divide. We even see "moderate" Republican Presidential Mitt Romney feeding this frenzy, telling crowds that "No one has ever asked to see my birth certificate. They know where I was raised and who I am."

In stark contrast, news analyst Brian Stelter, former RNC Spokesperson Tim Miller, and Princeton Professor Eddie Gaude attempt to assuage fears using data, actual history, logic, and rational dialogue.

Goldberg's *White with Fear* does well to deploy all these resources to chronicle the sweep of our times. Still growth and consolidation of the right-wing fear machine is unrelenting. Because it is so visceral, it remains a toxic impediment to good government and civil peace itself. For some, White with Fear is a good education; for others, it may serve as a call to action.

White with Fear premieres on PBS March 24, 2026

Joint Statement of the Communist Parties of Iran (TUDEH), Israel (CPI) and the U.S. (CPUSA)

By Tudeh Party of Iran, Communist Party of Israel and Communist Party USA



The war of aggression launched by the criminal Netanyahu government and United States imperialism in the early hours of Saturday morning against Iran has ignited a full-scale war and dragged the region and its peoples towards more disasters and civilian casualties – all in the service of imperialist interests, against the interests of peoples, their independence and their right to self-determination, in an effort to dominate and control the region and the world.

The Trump Administration's declaration of its intention to impose "regime change" in a sovereign country in the region and elsewhere in Latin American is a gross trampling on the sovereignty and dignity of peoples, and a dismantling of international law and all previously established norms, important even if they are not often used for the benefit of the peoples. Imperialism is a danger that grows with every war and aggression of the United States and Israel.

The experiences of the peoples in Palestine, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Sudan, Lebanon and in every country in the southern half of the globe facing colonialism and imperialism cannot be overlooked – true liberation and salvation from reactionary and authoritarian regimes and their change can only come with the action of the people and patriotic leadership – not from Washington or Tel Aviv.

We reiterate that this attack on Iran and the Iranian people is the prelude to total domination over the rest of the countries of the region, a plan that the Israeli government and the U.S. administration do not hesitate to disclose.

We also affirm that this U.S.-Israeli imperialist military aggression not only does not herald Iran's liberation from the yoke of tyranny and the current dictatorship, but is also an attempt to destroy Iran as a capable regional state, and to replace the current government with a subordinate and authoritarian regime that has previously announced its program to bloodily suppress its opponents.

As internationalist communist parties, we call upon all forces seeking true liberation from the regimes of exploitation and oppression in each of our countries, as well as the peace-loving and progress-loving forces in the world, to unite their efforts with all their force in these critical and decisive moments in order to struggle against the governments of war and aggression.

Strategic retreat or strategic pivot? The state of the Target boycott

By Dante O'Hara and G. Seb

On Wednesday, March 11, the national leaders of the Target boycott—former Ohio State Sen. Nina Turner, Tamika Mallory, and Rev. Jamal Bryant, also known as the "Mothership Three"—held a press conference alongside the Boycott Target D.C. Coalition at the National Press Club in Washington to give the community and country an update on the state of the year-long Target boycott.

Over 400 days ago, Turner and her organization, We Are Somebody, called for a nationwide boycott of the retailer after an internal memo leaked on Jan. 24, 2025, saying the company would be rolling back its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals and initiatives. Target had instituted the policies in the wake of the 2020 police murder of George Floyd a few blocks away from its headquarters in Minneapolis, Minn.

Turner later contacted Mallory, who heads the group Until Freedom, to jointly call for a boycott to begin on Feb. 1, 2025. Rev. Bryant of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church later called for a 40-day "Target Fast" during lent that lasted through Easter Sunday, transitioning to a full-fledged boycott supported by the Black church.

The campaign has now surpassed the longest and most successful previous Black-led boycott, the 381-day Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-56.

Despite a 27% drop in stock value, mass declines in both in-person and online foot traffic, three quarters of plunging sales, a 45% pay cut for its top executive, and the resignation of CEO Brian Cornell, Target remained silent for an entire year as to why it had rolled back its DEI initiatives and did not fulfill its pledge to invest $2 billion in Black-owned businesses.

Beginning in the fall of 2025, at the initiative of new CEO Brian Fiddelke, Target representatives finally began meeting with different groups of stakeholders around the country to begin a "dialogue" with the national boycott movement. Among those included were labor leaders, boycott leaders (including the coalition in D.C.), immigrant rights leaders, etc.—all under the guise of a sort of "apology tour" admitting to consumers and supporters of the brand that Target needs to do "a lot of work to repair its relationship with the Black community."

At the Wednesday press conference, Rev. Bryant touted the accomplishments of the boycott while Turner and Mallory framed the conversation around how the movement came to be and thanked its tens of thousands of supporters who have participated. Bryant stated that meetings with the Target CEO and representatives have been productive and that concessions have been made from the corporation on three of the demands that were presented by the campaign one year ago:

- Target rebranded its DEI efforts as "Belonging," while engaging in the same previous policies;
- Target has fulfilled 97% of its $2 billion investment commitment from 2020 and will be adding $100 million in addition; and
- Target has partnered with over a dozen HBCUs. $10 million was recently given to the Pensole Lewis College's Business School in Detroit, for instance.



The fourth and final demand is that Target invest $250 million into Black banks. Rev. Bryant said Target is in conversation with the Black Bankers Association concerning investment into three Black-owned financial institutions. He noted, "Our generation needs to see victory, our generation has only seen settlements." He continued by saying that this is the first step in the "new civil rights movement."

At the closing of his remarks, Bryant responded to a question from a local reporter saying that this phase of the movement is coming to a close. He formally declared that the "Target Fast" portion of the boycott is effectively ending, specifying that the Target Fast is his entity and that Turner's We Are Somebody and Mallory's Until Freedom are separate organizations and will choose how they want to proceed.

Turner, standing alongside, stated that she would personally never step foot into a Target store again and demanded the company issue a public apology to the Black community.

Local D.C. leaders like Rev. Patricia Fears and Rev. Lewis Tait, Jr., claimed that the achievements outlined at Wednesday's event represented a partial victory for the national boycott campaign, but they stood firm in their stance that Target still needs to meet local demands.

Those include investment into D.C.'s HBCUs, Howard University and the University of the District of Columbia (including its community college), and D.C.'s Black bank, Industrial Bank. They also disclosed that in a private meeting Target representatives admitted it had never invested into the D.C. community even though it has four stores in the District.

The local coalition plans to continue its boycott until Target pledges some investment into D.C. and comes out with a public apology, in line with Turner's demand. Mallory noted that the energy, momentum, and success behind the boycott of Target needs to be directed toward more corporate targets.

She also said that there is still a lot more work to do to keep Target accountable to the community—including ICE staging in its parking lots and raiding its stores and having community oversight to ensure it stays committed to its pledges to the community.

At the conclusion of the press conference, headlines began popping up across different mass media outlets stating that the "Target Boycott Has Ended" and that Target made no concessions on DEI.

As activists who have been involved in the boots-on-the-ground effort of the boycott in Washington, D.C., and worked alongside the "Mothership Three," we believe these headlines are misguided and meant to stir confusion and division among our community, Black people in particular.

Bryant specifically noted that he was "satisfied" with Target's response and said that his component of the boycott movement (the Target Fast) will end effective immediately. It was clear that he was believed Target made key commitments and promises during meetings he had with their leadership.

In Bryant's defense, movement leaders have historically had to determine when it's the right time to make a strategic retreat. It's not an easy call. One might reasonably argue that the movement is at its peak and that it is time to shift, but others see it differently—like local organizer Nekima Levy Armstrong in Minneapolis.

And Turner and Mallory have made it clear that they will both continue to boycott Target and still encourage people to do so until the retailer publicly acknowledges the harm it inflicted on the Black community. No stakeholder meetings will solve this problem. Target needs to publicly state why it was silent for a year, why it donated $1 million to Trump's inauguration fund, and why it will not take a stronger public position against ICE and become a model 4th Amendment business.

Target has done real harm to the community, which was outlined most clearly in the commentary by other leaders following Bryant's announcement.

If Target truly believed in "belonging" in the workplace, it would actively take an affirmative action approach by setting quotas for how many Black and brown executives it should have in its C-suite. It would take an active stance against ICE/CBP raids in its parking lots and stores.

Now, the question is, where does the movement go from here? Should pickets, protests, and occupations of stores continue? Or should there be a general retreat of the entire movement? Has Target learned its lesson? At this moment, the boycott movement is partially fractured by Bryant's retreat and the media's exploitation of that announcement.

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Until all of the demands are met, including D.C.'s, the boycott of Target stores should continue. The movement should also expand to include the demands of ICE out of Minnesota, led by Unidos MN and other organizations. Maybe Target will learn a lesson once it sees a consistent two-year drop in sales and stock price. Maybe Target will learn a lesson when its workers begin union organizing due to their silence when it comes to ICE and DEI.

Jobs? What jobs? Number of jobless up 203,000 in February

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON —Did you notice on March 6 that Donald Trump didn't brag about his so-called great economy? The reason: The number of jobless people jumped by 203,000 in February to 7.571 million. That's also 467,000 more than in February 2025, the first full month of Trump's second term.

Businesses claimed to shed a net of 92,000 jobs in February—when the economy really needed to create at least 93,000 new jobs that month, outside analyst Jed Kolko posted on the Economic Policy Institute's website. It didn't.



The unemployment rate rose slightly, too, from 4.3% this January to 4.4% this February, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. And that wasn't the only piece of bad economic news in the numbers.

What BLS didn't say, Kolko did; The economy must create an average of 120,000 new jobs monthly just to keep up with growth of new people entering the labor force. In February this year it needed to create 93,000.

Add the 203,000 more unemployed in February to the 93,000 new jobs needed that month to keep the jobless rate from rising, and you come up with a gap of 296,000 jobs. And the big reason it isn't wider isn't the Trump slump. It's his mass jailings and deportations of workers, who otherwise would be seeking work, Kolko calculated.

That monthly number has varied over 15 years, hitting a low of 40,000 new jobs monthly at the depths of the coronavirus-caused depression—when actual job losses were in the millions every month—and a high of more than 167,000 jobs monthly in early 2024, at the peak of the jobs climb as people resumed seeking work after remaining businesses emerged from that crash.

By contrast during Democratic President Joe Biden's administration, those monthly "new entrant" requirements were filled, with two or three exceptions, another of Kolko's charts shows. Donald Trump won't tell you that, either. Instead, he lies about Biden's economic record.

Beside that jobs creation gap, other bad numbers kept coming in the BLS report.

BLS said 25.7% of the nation's unemployed have been out of work for at least 25 weeks, meaning that in almost all cases they've exhausted their jobless benefits.

"Manufacturing jobs fell again, down 12,000 between January and February 2026," tweeted Elise Gould, senior analyst at the Economic Policy Institute. "Since January 2025, the manufacturing sector has lost 100,000 jobs. I repeat: The manufacturing sector lost 100K jobs since Trump took office."

And even health care, usually a growing sector, shed 28,000 jobs in February, the data show, though BLS said that was due to a since-settled strike.

Trump's "attacks on the federal workforce continue," Gould added. "Federal employment has shrunk an alarming 327,000 jobs since January 2025. The vital services federal employees provide cannot be done without these essential workers. The cost of these losses are only beginning to be felt."

They may be felt even more in coming month. The day before BLS issued its jobs report, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco allowed Trump and his worker-hating Office of Management and Budget Director, Russell Vought, to resume their destruction of 21 federal union contracts. Another 16 pacts are tied up in a similar case in federal court in D.C.

Trump, Vought and Trump Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent promptly trashed the pacts covering workers at Treasury's Bureau of Fiscal Affairs and at the IRS. The Treasury Employees (NTEU) represents those workers (see separate story).

The jobs report shows "This is an economy built for the billionaire bosses, not working people," AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said in a statement.

Trump's "big ugly bill"–the $4.5 trillion 10-year tax cut for the rich and the 1%–"is coming home to roost. Jobs are down in nearly every sector, and more cuts are coming as funding that industries need dries up. For months, the only growing area has been health care, and those jobs are being ripped away, too, which disproportionately affects women workers, especially women of color.

"At the same time, energy prices are spiking and the cost of living overall is crushing working people.

"No matter how the Trump administration tries to spin these awful numbers today, it's clear working people need union contracts to support and protect them."

Workers need jobs, not war

By Eric Brooks

May Day Strong, in The Real Affordability Agenda, identifies an affordability crisis impacting working families across the United States. It finds "the basics of a good life — an affordable home, quality healthcare, nutritious food, a dignified job, and beyond — are increasingly out of reach for millions of Americans."

Against this backdrop, reality-challenged would-be dictator Donald Trump has been describing the U.S. economy as "roaring," including in his State of the Union address where he said the "roaring economy is roaring like never before." He's also pointed to the Dow Jones hitting 50,000 as a major achievement. The question that must be asked of Trump's assessment of the economy is: For whom is it roaring? Not for working people, but definitely for Trump and his family and billionaire backers, enriching themselves from workers' tax dollars.



Trump's war against Iran and Lebanon has driven oil prices up, which raises gas prices and the price of goods that require trucking for distribution, which is almost everything working people use in daily life.

Prices for everyday needs are all going higher as this war, based on false claims by Trump, continues its murderous destruction.

May Day Strong's Real Affordability Agenda finds "wage stagnation and declining worker power are on the rise despite surging corporate profits." They demand "structural reforms to secure dignified employment; mandated living wages aligned with productivity growth; and a jobs guarantee program to put displaced and unemployed workers in good jobs."

The Trump economy is unable to create jobs, despite what the President says. As reported by the New York Times, "Employers cut 92,000 jobs in February, the Labor Department reported on Friday, and the unemployment rate rose to 4.4 percent."

Roughly 150,000 to 165,000 people enter the U.S. labor force every month on net. This is often cited as the number of jobs needed just to keep up with population growth and keep the unemployment rate stable. Job losses indicate that the job market is not keeping up with new entrants, including youth looking for first-time jobs.

Overall (adult) unemployment is 4.4% — up from 4.3% in January. Youth unemployment (ages 16–24) is 9.5% — up from 8.9% in January, meaning youth unemployment is more than double the overall unemployment rate. This roughly 2-to-1 ratio between youth and adult unemployment is a pretty consistent historical pattern in the U.S., reflecting the capitalist need for a reserve force of unemployed potential scabs, and for people to push into working in the ever-expanding prison-industrial complex and into joining the military. Capitalists care nothing for the dreams and aspirations of the U.S. (or any other) youth, whom they see as disposable commodities, similar to bombs and toilet paper.

May Day Strong's demand for structural reforms reflects an imperative today as AI and other forms of automation continue eroding the number of workers needed for better paying industrial jobs. Further, the U.S. focus on trillion-dollar military budgets does nothing to help increase the number of jobs; military contracts have been proven to require fewer workers than peacetime industrial projects.

Several studies, including work from the Political Economy Research Institute (PERI) at UMass Amherst, have compared job creation across different types of government spending. The findings consistently show that $1 billion spent on education creates roughly 26,000+ jobs, healthcare around 17,000, and clean energy/infrastructure in a similar range — while the same amount spent on the military creates closer to 11,000–13,000 jobs.

The military budget is best seen as welfare for the billionaire class; bombs and bullets, like human soldiers themselves, are seen as disposable commodities that must be continuously replenished and upgraded, guaranteeing a steady flow of workers' tax money into the pockets of the super-rich few who reap billions for their private coffers from the financial-military-industrial complex.

The American Prospect article, Killing Kids in Iran While Kids in the U.S. Go Hungry, quotes a worker, Brenda, who is concerned. She said that while so many people are struggling to eat and staring down major cuts to federal nutrition assistance, the Trump administration is spending billions of dollars on a war with Iran. "What I see every day in my community," Brenda said, is there are hard-working people "struggling to afford basics, just like I am. Groceries are costing more. Rent costs more. A lot of people are having to choose between paying their electric bill or buying medication or keeping a roof over their head ... Our own people are dying because of a lack of necessities."

At the Communist Party USA's 2025 Peace Conference 2.0, the Party's Labor Commission said "We know the war economy is a racket. It's a system that rewards corporations for waste with weapons costing more than their weight in gold. This system has hollowed out our country's productive capacity. We are the world's top weapons dealer, yet we cannot build our own subway cars at scale. This system steals our best engineers and machinists to produce instruments of death while our bridges and railways crumble."

What is the solution? "Genuine peace," the Labor Commission continued, "is more than the absence of war, as Martin Luther King Jr. said. It is the presence of justice and a secure future for the entire U.S. working class. For too long, industrial workers have been told they must choose between a paycheck and their morals — that their survival depends on building weapons of war for transnational corporations."

The concept of a Just Transition means that workers can unite and reshape the economy, moving from one focused on the destructive military to one focused on productive industry, keeping the working class protected through the transition so no worker is left behind. It prioritizes the interests of the working class to the benefit of the whole society.

The struggle to move toward a more just economy even within the confines of capitalist exploitation and warmongering continues. Three major unions in California — the Teamsters, the Service Employees, and the United Health Care Workers West, an SEIU affiliate — are all now pushing to put a 5% billionaires' tax referendum on the state's November ballot.

Further, on March 2, Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Ro Khanna introduced S.2845 and H.R.5427 in Congress to implement a 5% annual surtax on the net worth of anyone with $1 billion or more. While the bills can't realistically pass in the current electoral configuration of the Congress and with the current billionaire president, these bills illustrate one action workers can support in the struggle for the necessary redistribution of wealth needed to meet the needs of the vast majority of people living in the U.S. and the world — the working class.

The program of the Communist Party USA envisions the military "budget slashed to a fraction of current spending with funding transferred to social programs."

The unjust and illegal U.S. war on Iran and Lebanon must be stopped; it is destroying the lives of working people across the country and the world. Along with that, the U.S. must urgently transition from a war economy to a peace economy, including developing green industry and protecting the environment.

Resist!

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

What is Cuba doing?

Dependence on imported petroleum makes Cuba vulnerable to attacks of the kind Trump, egged on by Rubio, is waging. This is why the national focus is on building an autonomous energy grid sustained by renewable energy and nationally produced oil.

With cooperation from both Russia and China, Cuba is building out its solar and wind energy capacities, as well as renovating its thermoelectric plants. Not only is the government developing large solar parks to supply the national grid, but it is also installing panels to electrify homes in remote rural areas, aiming to achieve full electrical access for the whole population. Additionally, the government is offering favorable financing options for individuals in critical sectors such as health and education to acquire solar panels for their homes.

While the expertise and solar panels themselves are supplied by China, Cuba is also developing an expert workforce trained in various aspects of renewable energy development. This is a further step toward energy sovereignty and constitutes an investment in human resources that will one day allow Cuba to aid other nations in developing their renewable energy sectors.

part 4 of this article will appear in next week's edition

El grupo reformista impulsa la lucha por el contrato de los carteros

Por Gene Lantz

DALLAS—Jon Morris encabeza el Caucus Reformista de Texas en el sindicato National American Letter Carriers (NALC). Las negociaciones contractuales con la gerencia de Correos están en marcha, y el grupo de Morris tiene muchas ideas para ayudar. Antes de su entrevista del 8 de marzo con People's World, había estado hablando con otros presidentes de reforma en todo el país.

Presionan para participar en los eventos del Primero de Mayo si no se llega a un acuerdo contractual aceptable. El 22 de mayo, prevén piquetes informativos a nivel nacional.

El movimiento reformista espera ir más allá de la membresía sindical y motivar a muchos otros grupos e individuos a ayudar a los 295,000 carteros, tanto activos como jubilados, en Estados Unidos y sus territorios. Esperan especialmente colaborar estrechamente con otros empleados postales, como el Sindicato Americano de Trabajadores Postales (APWU) y la Asociación Nacional de Carteros Rurales (NRLCA). Los jubilados y el público en general están incluidos en sus planes. Morris cree que las personas con los mismos jefes, que se benefician o pierden con los éxitos y fracasos de los demás, han estado divididas durante demasiado tiempo.

El movimiento reformista busca más que aumentos salariales. Entre otras cosas, busca acabar con la rotación de nuevos empleados. Morris estima que aproximadamente el 54% de los nuevos empleados no completan su primer año. El problema radica en cómo se les paga y cómo se les trata. Durante sus dos primeros años, se les trata como becarios o empleados temporales, según Morris.

Como siempre en las negociaciones contractuales, la gerencia de Correos alega pobreza. Pero Morris cree que la gerencia es el problema. Afirmó que Correos está "saturado de gerentes, y están intentando que los carteros paguen por ello, pero es su mala gestión la que causa sus problemas financieros".

Morris señaló que el Caucus Reformista originó la idea del día nacional de acción del 22 de febrero antes de que la dirigencia sindical la retomara. En su propia zona del norte de Texas, se celebraron tres manifestaciones independientes. La manifestación de Dallas contó con el apoyo del presidente de la AFL-CIO de Texas y de los principales líderes carteros.

Como siempre, cuando los sindicatos de Dallas organizan eventos, los Jóvenes Líderes Laborales Activos (YALL) y la Alianza de Texas para Jubilados Estadounidenses se unieron al apoyo. Sin duda, el grupo de solidaridad más numeroso provino de la organización de personas mayores.

El evento atrajo a reporteros de medios impresos y televisivos comerciales. El lema "Lucha con uñas y dientes" tuvo gran repercusión en la cobertura. Quienes estudian la historia laboral recuerdan 1970, cuando los carteros se declararon en huelga salvaje en oposición directa a las leyes restrictivas. El dicho "la única huelga ilegal es la que no gana" se cumplió, y los carteros se consolidaron como uno de los sindicatos más militantes y progresistas de la época.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
March 21, 2026

MAGA's Civil Rights counter revolution

By Joe Sims

Mister Backlash, Mister Backlash,
Just who do you think I am?
Tell me, Mister Backlash,
Who do you think I am?
You raise my taxes, freeze my wages,
Send my son to Vietnam.

You give me second-class houses,
Give me second-class schools,
Second-class houses
And second-class schools.
You must think us colored folks
Are second-class fools.

When I try to find a job
To earn a little cash,
Try to find myself a job
To earn a little cash,
All you got to offer
Is a white backlash ...

— Langston Hughes

As the story goes, *The Backlash Blues* by the great African American poet Langston Hughes was penned at the request of singer Nina Simone in response to the racist backlash against the freedom movement of the 1960s. After the March on Washington led by Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963, the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, followed by the Voting Rights Act in 1965. Hughes wrote *The Backlash Blues* in 1966, and Simone recorded it in 1967—the year Hughes died. A year later, in 1968, King was assassinated and rebellions occurred in 113 cities. What followed was Richard Nixon's election, his "law and order" presidency, COINTELPRO, the destruction of the Black Panther Party, and the suppression of the movement against the Vietnam War.

Backlash Blues, indeed. And perhaps a foreshadowing—if we're not careful—of what is to come with today's MAGA movement. This is not the first time they have come after our hard-won civil rights. For that context, one must look back to Radical Reconstruction and the democratic rights won after the Civil War. Those rights included the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery; the 14th, which granted birthright citizenship and equal protection; and the 15th, which provided voting rights to Black men. Women won the right to vote decades later.



A counter-revolution suppressed those rights: Reconstruction governments were overthrown beginning in 1877 after the withdrawal of Union troops from the South. Then ensued a century-long reign of terror replete with an estimated 6,500 lynchings between 1865 and 1950. This era was only overcome in the 1950s and 60s through the battle to defeat legal segregation.

It was precisely the victory over Jim Crow and the subsequent backlash that laid the basis for the rise of the MAGA right.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

MAGA's Civil Rights counter revolution

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

They, in turn, have launched today's civil rights counter-revolution. The Christian nationalists and others dominating the current administration are the ideological—and perhaps even biological—descendants of those who planted bombs in Black churches, murdering four children at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham.

The history went like this: With the Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision and the passing of the Civil Rights Acts, white supremacy suffered a historic defeat equal to—at least in their minds—the Confederacy's defeat on the battlefield. Segregationists and their corporate backers were at a loss as to how to respond; after Bull Connor, police dogs, and fire-hosing protesters, Jim Crow wasn't exactly marketable.

Flailing, their initial response was to withdraw white children from public schools and establish segregated Christian private schools. They reasoned that Brown v. Board applied specifically to public institutions. By labeling their schools "Christian" or "private," they argued the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause did not apply. Additionally, because these schools were religious institutions, they enjoyed 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. The federal government was essentially subsidizing Jim Crow. This lasted until Black families in Mississippi successfully challenged that tax-exempt status in the 1960s.

The removal of tax exemptions was a major blow to the "evangelical confederates." It was both a financial and political setback. In response, Paul Weyrich, a founder of the Heritage Foundation, looked for a strategy to regroup. He first tried advocating for school prayer, but it lacked momentum. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) looked promising but failed to generate enough fervor. Finally, Weyrich and his colleagues landed on abortion. Unlike previous attempts, abortion resonated across various denominations. The Protestant right then formed an alliance with Catholics, and the "Religious Right" was born.

With the rise of the Moral Majority, followed by the Tea Party and now the MAGA movement, American politics has followed an increasingly far-right trajectory. This trajectory arises from a debate over how to define democratic rights: collective civil rights versus individual property rights; federal authority versus states' rights; a woman's bodily autonomy versus the "rights of the unborn."

These tensions are not new. The struggle for democracy runs like a "red thread" throughout U.S. history. Marx put it in class terms: "Labor in the white skin cannot be free so long as labor in the black is branded." Frederick Douglass, advocating for both African American and women's rights, wrote on the masthead of the North Star in 1847: "Right is of no sex — Truth is of no color — God is the Father of us all, and we are all Brethren."

From the beginning, democratic rights — the right to vote, to education, to abortion, to collective bargaining, and to equal pay — have been intimately tied together. Because these struggles occur within the framework of monopoly capitalism's racist and gender-based social division of labor, they are used as wedge issues to maximize political advantage and profit.

The MAGA movement understands this. At the start of the current term, the administration issued dozens of Executive Orders restricting rights regarding DEI, voting, the census, reproductive healthcare, disability, and labor. The country was subjected to a "blitzkrieg": everything, everywhere, all at once.

Using the elimination of DEI as a pretext, MAGA launched a frontal assault on civil rights as a whole. One of their first acts was to cancel a 1965 Executive Order (EO 11246) issued by LBJ, which prohibited discrimination by federal contractors. This order required businesses receiving federal money to provide equal opportunity—a foundational, albeit mild, form of affirmative action.

The new administration's Executive Order not only ends that practice but challenges the very definition of civil rights. It suggests that the primary victims of discrimination in the U.S. are now white citizens. According to this logic, any attempt at equal opportunity for people of color is inherently racist. Government agencies are now tasked with prosecuting these "racist" practices; equal opportunity is being treated as a criminal offense.

As Nikole Hannah-Jones has pointed out, this legal assault has a specific anti-labor and anti-Black edge. For example, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) recently helped Black workers at a Texas hospital recover $900,000 in back wages and assisted workers at Caterpillar in Illinois in gaining $800,000. This administration cancelled that office. In a parallel move, the White House cancelled collective bargaining rights for 1.3 million federal workers, a high percentage of whom are Black women.

The administration then proceeded to lay off or severely reduce personnel in civil rights offices across the federal government. Presently, federal civil rights enforcement is virtually non-existent. Remaining officials were ordered to "pause" all proceedings. The Department of Justice has since dismissed four major voting rights cases (two in Georgia, one in Arizona, and one in Virginia). Police misconduct cases in Minneapolis and Louisville have similarly been sidelined. Conversely, approximately 45 cases of "reverse discrimination" have been initiated at colleges nationwide. Notably, 90% of 9,000 pending discrimination cases were resolved through dismissal rather than investigation.

Furthermore, the administration has jettisoned the chief legal principle of "disparate impact." This 50-year-old rule, established by a unanimous Supreme Court, allows a policy to be considered discriminatory if it negatively affects a specific group, regardless of "intent." For example, if a company requires a high school diploma for a job that doesn't actually need one, and in that town 90% of whites have diplomas compared to 60% of African Americans and Latinos, if the hiring is 80% white then the policy has a disparate impact which must be addressed. That "disparate impact" policy is now on the "slaughterhouse floor" of the MAGA counter-revolution.

This attack concerns everyone, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or class. In Marxist theory, this is an "all-class" or "all-people" issue. Environmental rights, for instance, affect everyone.

Yet, cases like the "Cancer Alley" litigation in Louisiana and the sewage crisis in Lowndes County, Alabama, have been dismissed or settlements cancelled. Disability rights are also under siege; with the dismantling of the Department of Education, the protections for disabled children to receive a quality education are being savaged. If your children need transportation to school, a disabled bathroom, a special ed teacher, and the local school doesn't provide it, there's not much you can do. Sadly, they closed that office too.

Politically, all civil rights gains achieved over the last century now lie fallow. From MAGA's standpoint, the U.S ruling class has revived Chief Justice Taney's infamous dictum in the Dred Scott case that a "Black man has no rights a white man is bound to respect." The same can be said for civil rights for all people of color, women, LGBTQ and workers.

But all is not lost. A pitched battle is occurring across the country. We saw it in the January general strikes and marches in the Twin Cities. Struggles in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Cleveland, and Detroit over the last months bear witness to this truth. It was present in the mass walkouts of high school students and will be seen again in the "No Kings" protests on March 28th.

Marching is vital, but it is not enough. We must use every tool in the toolbox: occupy, sit-in, write letters, canvas door-to-door, register, and vote. It is an uphill battle, but we have been "downhill" before. As the old spiritual says, "We are climbing Jacob's ladder... higher and higher." We will not stop on this last day of Black History Month; we will not stop until we reach the promised land.

Safety meltdown: Trump's weakening of nuclear reactor regulations sparks opposition

By Chauncey K. Robinson

On March 4, attorneys general from several states across the country announced they've formed a coalition to oppose the Trump administration's new rules slashing security and environmental requirements for experimental nuclear reactors. The coalition asserts that the new rules incentivize the creation of "much more nuclear waste." They argue that the fundamental nature of nuclear fission technology entails risks to the environment and public health, which the federal government is downplaying.

In January, exclusive reporting from National Public Radio revealed that President Donald Trump's Department of Energy (DOE) quietly overhauled a set of safety directives related to nuclear power plants. The changes were shared with the companies the administration is charged with regulating, but not with the public, according to documents obtained by NPR.

As reported by the news outlet, the orders eliminate hundreds of pages of security requirements for reactors. The updated rules loosen protections for groundwater and the environment, cut back on record-keeping requirements, and raise the amount of radiation a worker can be exposed to before an official accident investigation is triggered.

The public announcement of this move didn't come until early February, when the DOE finally disclosed the fact that it was establishing a categorical exclusion (CatEx) for the application of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedures on the authorization, construction, operation, reauthorization, and decommissioning of advanced nuclear reactors.

The DOE defended the change, claiming that it is "based on the experience of DOE and other federal agencies, current technologies, regulatory requirements, and accepted industry practice." In a statement sent to NPR after it broke the initial story, the DOE asserted that the "reduction of unnecessary regulations will increase innovation in the industry without jeopardizing safety."

Yet the announcement, and the Trump administration's rationale for it, have drawn immediate backlash from critics who say the move is dangerous and irresponsible.



Edwin Lyman, director of nuclear power safety for the Union of Concerned Scientists, asserted that the experimental reactors have insufficient operating experience "to justify a claim that you can just turn them on and they're going to be safe and that you don't have to worry."

The scientist said that the administration was taking a "wrecking ball to the system of nuclear safety and security regulation oversight that has kept the U.S. from having another Three Mile Island accident," referencing the historic 1979 nuclear meltdown in Pennsylvania.

The overhaul of the reactor rules came about after the president signed an executive order in May last year titled "Reforming Nuclear Reactor Testing at the Department of Energy," which called for three or more experimental reactors to come online in time for the 250th anniversary of U.S. independence on July 4, 2026. The new rules seem to be intended to help the administration meet the unprecedentedly tight deadline, despite warnings of danger.

According to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)—which has usually been in charge of regulating commercial nuclear reactors —"advanced reactors" are defined as next-generation nuclear fission systems that "differ from today's reactors primarily by their use of inert gases, molten salt mixtures, or liquid metals to cool the reactor core. Advanced reactors can also consider fuel materials and designs that differ radically from today's enriched uranium-dioxide pellets within zirconium cladding."

While the DOE touts these new reactors as being designed for improved safety, economics, and environmental impact, scientific reports paint a different picture. In 2021, a report by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) found that "they ['advanced' non-light-water nuclear reactors] are no better—and in some respects significantly worse—than the light-water reactors in operation today."

According to a 2022 report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), a peer-reviewed journal of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), the new generation of reactors can produce up to 30 times more waste than their predecessors and leak more neutrons.

Critics also note that Trump's push for more nuclear reactors by July 4 may have less to do with "advancement" or celebrating our nation's birthday than with the demands of AI and the tech billionaires connected to it.

Billions of dollars in private equity, venture capital, and public investments are reported to be backing the reactors. This includes tech giants Amazon, Google, and Meta. According to the organization Food and Water Watch, some of Trump's largest Big Tech donors "aim to make a fortune from expanding artificial intelligence (AI), which requires massive amounts of power for AI data centers." Instead of looking into renewable energy, the group said, these CEOs are investing in nuclear.

Last year, when numerous nuclear power industry executives visited the Oval Office, Trump called the industry "hot" and "brilliant." This sentiment seems to align with his aggressive public rejection of renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power.

Yet, the coalition of attorneys general—from Washington, California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Nevada, Oregon, Vermont, and the District of Columbia—is sounding an alarm that the administration's actions will be detrimental to the environment and communities.

"The words 'exemptions,' 'exclusions,' and 'nuclear safety regulations' should never be put together. When it comes to nuclear energy and public safety, there should be more safety regulations and environmental protections, not less," said coalition participant California Attorney General Rob Bonta.

"With this new exemption, the Trump administration is trying to run before it can walk by accelerating the development of certain experimental and largely unproven advanced nuclear reactors—just like the president himself acknowledged," Bonta said in a statement.

"This is an attempt to weaken essential safeguards in the present and create additional regulatory loopholes that can be exploited in the future. I urge this administration to halt unlawful NEPA cutbacks and go back to work defending and protecting public safety and the environment."

Bonta noted that advanced nuclear reactors lack a proven track record of safety.

The coalition's comment letter makes a number of key assertions. It states that the DOE failed to adequately consider the potential environmental impacts of advanced nuclear reactors and that the department provided no concrete data demonstrating the reactors do not have the potential to "create significant environmental impacts." The letter also accuses the DOE of exceeding its authority to regulate nuclear reactors.

The recent expansion and deregulation of nuclear power around the globe, particularly in the United States, has been a cause of concern for many environmental and safety advocates who warn that the world is sliding further down a "slippery nuclear slope."

China Chokehold: Long-term goal of the U.S. war on Iran

By C.J. Atkins

There's an angle to the Iran War that the cable news anchors, retired generals-turned-commentators, and corporate-owned newspapers are barely talking about, if at all. They report on the shifting justifications proffered by Pete Hegseth, Marco Rubio, or Donald Trump, but few in the press are doing anything to illuminate the bigger picture.



The United States isn't attacking Iran simply because of Tehran's nuclear program, or out of concern for the welfare of the Iranian people, or even purely for Israel's security. The Trump administration's decision to launch its war was motivated by a goal that goes well beyond nuclear non-proliferation.

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Nor is the war a case of Tel Aviv telling Washington what to do, regardless of what some of Netanyahu's most intense critics want to believe.

It has fallen to the far-right, anti-communist outlet The Epoch Times—the newspaper associated with the Falun Gong cult—to offer the truth about what the U.S. is up to. "A key strategic dimension of the Iran conflict," wrote James Gorrie, a regular columnist for the pro-Trump paper in its March 13 issue, "involves Washington's efforts to control and even restrict Iranian oil flows to China."

In another article, Gordon Chang, author of the book The Coming Collapse of China, said the U.S.-Israel strikes on Iran, "like the operation in Venezuela, have cut down the Chinese Communist Party's global power." Chang told The Epoch Times' editors that Trump is "going after the Chinese, and he's not doing it directly, but he is doing it indirectly, and he's cutting off their sources of support."

Finally, an admission: Iran is a critical link in China's energy supply chain—and breaking that link is part of a long game to put U.S. capitalism's biggest competitor in a very uncomfortable position. The attack on Venezuela in January and the subsequent takeover of that country's oil sales was another piece in this same puzzle of U.S. foreign policy.

Call it the "China Chokehold." The Trump administration doesn't give its strategy such a catchy name, but the logic isn't hard to see, especially when you take a look at some of the numbers.

Last year, Iranian oil accounted for 13.4% of China's seaborne energy imports. Venezuelan oil added another 4.5% of the total. That's nearly a fifth of the 11.6 million barrels that arrived daily in Chinese ports. The centrality of these trade relationships for the exporters can't be exaggerated, either; Iran sold 87% of its oil to China, Venezuela 55%.

Now, add in another Chinese economic partner, Russia. Combining its oil sales to China together with those of Iran and Venezuela makes up 33% of China's crude import mix in 2024—one third of the fuel powering the world's second-largest economy, all sourced from countries under U.S. sanctions. Brazil, a country not yet sanctioned by the U.S. but whose progressive government is also under pressure from Washington, chips in another 6%.

So, that's now 40% of China's energy imports—all being targeted in one way or another by the U.S.

China, of course, knows what's up. As Epoch Times commentator Gorrie puts it: "Beijing is quite aware that U.S. foreign policy is designed to influence and reduce energy flows to China."

That means the country has had to be creative about how it sources and records Iranian and Venezuelan oil purchases, relying on a system that operated parallel to but separate from the regular international oil markets.

It involves ship-to-ship transfers at sea, intermediary sales arrangements, the bypassing of U.S.-controlled banking institutions, infrastructure-in-exchange-for-oil partnerships, and more. It's a sanctions-busting transaction system that provided China discounted oil and gave an economic lifeline outside of the dollar-dominated financial system for countries on the U.S.' blacklist.

But the Trump administration has decided the arrangement must now come to an end, not because it's illegal under international law, but rather because it's inconvenient for the shifting strategy of U.S. imperialism. Increasingly, the latter is premised on consolidating a U.S.-dominated economic bloc in the Western Hemisphere and limiting China's resource and market access around the globe.

Despite the incoherence that spews forth from the White House press office on a daily basis, the administration has actually been very consistent in pursuing this agenda. First, Venezuela: The U.S. moved to redirect Venezuelan exports after kidnapping Nicolás Maduro, cutting into the roughly 389,000 barrels per day China had been importing from that country in 2025.

Then came the escalating pressure campaign against Iran. The sequence isn't coincidental. Venezuela and Iran are a matched set—two sanctioned producers who together made up a substantial chunk of China's affordable energy supply. Knock out or restrict their relationship with China, and the U.S. begins to have a real source of economic leverage.

That's because the real prize is the Strait of Hormuz.

The Strait handles roughly 20% of global petroleum trade, with nearly 90% of those flows headed to Asian economies. China alone purchases 37.7% of total crude flows through the Strait—more than any other country. The United States, with its own domestic production, receives a negligible 2.5%. A serious disruption in the Strait is, at least initially, primarily somebody else's problem—specifically China's, India's, South Korea's, Thailand's, and Japan's.

Iran sits alongside that chokepoint and, as recent days have made abundantly clear, is capable of threatening access to it. It is the one independent actor in the region that can seriously complicate shipping through the whole corridor. That's a power the U.S. government would prefer to have in its own hands.

Neutralizing Iran—not just sanctioning it, but genuinely subordinating it, whether through regime change or forced compliance—would remove the only hand on that particular valve that U.S. imperialism doesn't already control. From a Cold War 2.0 strategic standpoint, that's enormously valuable.

Israel, meanwhile, is hoping to get from this war what its current government has long sought: a region with no state-level adversary capable of projecting meaningful force. The Gulf monarchies have cut their deals. Egypt is, for the most part, managed. Jordan is quiet, and Syria has been fragmented. Lebanese sovereignty is effectively meaningless, as the Israeli military operates there at will.

With Iran's government either overthrown or brought into subservience in a manner akin to what's been done to Venezuela, the map of the Middle East looks remarkably more manageable from the perspective of the ruling class in Tel Aviv and Washington.

The ideological packaging for the Iran War changes depending on the audience. For the national security establishment, the rationale is nuclear weapons. For the MAGA base, it's biblical prophecy. For the D.C. think-tank bubble, it's democracy promotion. For the defense industry, it's a revenue opportunity. But underneath the packaging is a coherent strategic vision: Build the capability to complicate China's access to energy and secure for U.S. capitalism the ability to hold real leverage over its competitor's economic future.

China has been stockpiling oil at a notable pace in anticipation—averaging 430,000 barrels per day in reserve-building in 2025, compared to just 84,000 the prior year. And it's not for environmental concerns alone that energy alternatives like wind, solar, hydrogen, and nuclear are major components of the government's planning. China's leaders see what's coming, and they're making preparations.

Unlike the bombs raining down on the people of Iran, this isn't traditional warfare. There are no direct sanctions on China, no formal embargo or blockade as in the case of Cuba. There are just rising costs, narrowing discounts, and fewer suppliers. It is the assertion of U.S. military and economic power against China but without open confrontation.

So, this war is not just about—or even primarily about—Iran's nuclear ambitions. It is a blatant attempt to inflict damage on the Chinese economy in the immediate period and position U.S. imperialism to place China in a chokehold in the long term. This war is a campaign in which Israel has its local goals, but the U.S. has regional and global objectives.

What gets lost in all this strategic maneuvering, almost entirely, is any serious reckoning with who's actually bearing the costs: Iranian workers and families who are losing loved ones while absorbing the economic fallout, soldiers on multiple sides filling the body bags, the U.S. working class watching desperately-needed public money wasted on weapons, and Global South populations suffering from oil price shocks.

The China Chokehold doctrine is logical when viewed from the boardrooms of American tech firms fearing Chinese competition. And the destruction of Iran makes sense if one is a U.S. oil or defense executive eyeing a profit bonanza or an ideologue dreaming of a "Greater Israel."

The question the rest of us ought to be asking, though, is whose interests this logic actually serves, because it certainly isn't ours.

Celebrating Women's History Month: Fannie Lou Hamer

By Sylvia J. Ramos and Coalition Of Labor Union Women

Fannie Lou Townsend Hamer rose from humble beginnings in the Mississippi Delta to become one of the most important, passionate, and powerful voices of the civil and voting rights movements and a leader in the efforts for greater economic opportunities for African Americans.

Hamer was born on October 6, 1917, in Montgomery County, Mississippi, the 20th and last child of sharecroppers Lou Ella and James Townsend. She grew up in poverty, and at age six Hamer joined her family picking cotton. By age 12, she left school to work. In 1944, she married Perry Hamer and the couple toiled on the Mississippi plantation owned by W.D. Marlow until 1962. Because Hamer was the only worker who could read and write, she also served as plantation timekeeper.

Hamer and her husband wanted very much to start a family, but in 1961, a white doctor subjected Hamer to a hysterectomy without her consent while she was undergoing surgery to remove a uterine tumor. Forced sterilization was a common method of population control in Mississippi that targeted poor, African-American women. Members of the Black community called the procedure a "Mississippi appendectomy". The Hamers later raised two girls they adopted, eventually adopting two more. One, Dorothy Jean, died at age 22 of internal hemorrhaging after she was denied admission to the local hospital because of her mother's activism.



On June 9, 1963, Hamer was returning from a voter registration workshop by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in Charleston, South Carolina. Traveling by bus with co-activists, they stopped for a break in Winona, Mississippi. Some of the activists went inside a local cafe, but were refused service by the waitress. Shortly after, a Mississippi State highway patrolman took out his billy club and intimidated the activists into leaving. One of the group decided to take down the officer's license plate number; while doing so the patrolman and a police chief entered the cafe and arrested the party. Hamer left the bus and inquired if they could continue their journey back to Greenwood, Mississippi. At that point the officers arrested her as well.

Once in county jail, Hamer's colleagues were beaten by the police in the booking room (including 15-year-old June Johnson, for not addressing officers as "sir"). Hamer was then taken to a cell where two inmates were ordered, by the state trooper, to beat her using a baton. The police ensured she was held down during the almost fatal beating, and when she started to scream, beat her further. Hamer was also groped repeatedly by officers during the assault. When she attempted to resist, she stated an officer, "walked over, took my dress, pulled it up over my shoulders, leaving my body exposed to five men". Another in her group was beaten until she was unable to talk; a third, a teenager, was beaten, stomped on, and stripped. An activist from SNCC came the next day to see if he could help but was beaten until his eyes were swollen shut when he did not address an officer in the expected deferential manner.

Hamer was released on June 12, 1963. She needed more than a month to recuperate from the beatings and never fully recovered. Though the incident left profound physical and psychological effects, including a blood clot over her left eye and permanent damage of one of her kidneys, Hamer returned to Mississippi to organize voter registration drives, including the 1963 Freedom Ballot, a mock election, and the Freedom Summer initiative the following year.

Freedom Summer brought hundreds of college students, Black and white, to help with African American voter registration in the segregated South.

In 1964, Hamer announced her candidacy for the Mississippi House of Representatives but was barred from the ballot. A year later, Hamer, Victoria Gray, and Annie Devine became the first Black women to stand in the U.S. Congress when they unsuccessfully protested the Mississippi House election of 1964. Hamer also traveled extensively, giving powerful speeches on behalf of civil rights. In 1971, she helped to found the National Women's Political Caucus.

In 1968, she began a "pig bank" to provide free pigs for Black farmers to breed, raise, and slaughter. A year later she launched the Freedom Farm Cooperative (FFC), buying up land that Blacks could own and farm collectively. With the assistance of donors (including famed singer Harry Belafonte), she purchased 640 acres and launched a co-op store, boutique, and sewing enterprise. She single-handedly ensured that 200 units of low-income housing were built—many still exist in Ruleville, Mississippi, today. The FFC lasted until the mid-1970s; at its heyday, it was among the largest employers in Sunflower County.

Hamer died of breast cancer at age 59 in 1977. Forty-eight years after her death, President Joe Biden awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian honor, to Hamer. CLUW honors Fannie Lou Hamer and her incredible spirit and determination.

Julianna Stratton to increase African-American representation in U.S. Senate

By Mark Gruenberg

CHICAGO—Strong ties to community groups, civil rights organizations, and her support for Medicare for All and abolishing ICE, as well as other issues important to labor, civil rights, and immigrant rights groups helped Lt. Gov. Julianna Stratton overcome a huge fundraising gap to win the Democratic nomination Tuesday for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by retiring Illinois Democratic Sen. Dick Durbin.

Her victory reinforced the idea among many that a candidate can win when they are unafraid to take strong progressive positions, like her call for raising the minimum wage to $25 an hour and her call to abolish ICE.

In heavily Democratic Illinois, the winner of the Democratic primary is virtually certain to be elected in November. Her election then would bring the total number of African Americans in the U.S. Senate to six, a historic number. She is expected to join two Black women already there, Sen. Angela Ashbrook of Maryland, and Sen. Lisa Blunt Rochester of Delaware, and three African American men, Raphael Warnock of Georgia, Cory Booker of New Jersey, and Tim Scott of South Carolina. All except Scott, a Republican, are Democrats.



With 92% of the vote counted, both statewide and in politically dominant Cook County, Stratton had 473,355 votes (40%) to 391,984 (33.2%) for Rep. Raj Krishnamoorthi, whose district includes parts of Chicago and western suburbs. Veteran Rep. Robin Kelly, 69, who holds a South Side-based U.S. House seat, was third with 213,293 votes (18.4%).

Stratton will face former GOP State Chair Don Tracy in the fall. He won that primary with 39.8% of the total vote. Vote totals in the GOP primary were far lower than those in the Democratic primary.

Most Illinois unions, including the state AFL-CIO, the Chicago Federation of Labor, and the Chicago Teachers Union/AFT Local 1, stayed neutral during the primary race but are expected to strongly back Stratton in the general election.

SEIU did, however, endorse Stratton in the primary and operated a phone banking operation in support of her campaign.

Many of those campaigning for Stratton actually were unionists who remembered her role in support of a successful union-backed campaign to write the right to organize and a ban on right-to-work-for-less into the state constitution.

Krishnamoorthi spent $30 million in the race for the Democratic nod to replace retiring Democratic Sen. Dick Durbin. That was more than all the other candidates, Democratic and Republican, in the U.S. Senate race combined.

Stratton won big in Cook County, especially in Chicago. Her Cook County margins: 262,568 (40%) to 186,359 (29%) for Krishnamoorthi. Kelly, who is giving up her 2nd District congressional seat, was third in Cook County with 150,247 (23%). Kelly also has a strong pro-labor voting record. Both she and Stratton have 100 percent AFL-CIO ratings. Kelly's vote, combined with Stratton's, showed that a strong turnout in the African American communities of Chicago's South Side can command a majority of the Democratic primary vote across the entire state of Illinois.

Even though Stratton's support was particularly strong in Chicago's Cook County, her appeal appeared downstate, too. Among her wins outside Chicago were the counties around East St. Louis, the state capital of Springfield, and Champaign County, home of the University of Illinois. She defeated Krishnamoorthi there, 52%-37%.

Those two leading candidates split other Chicago counties, with Stratton taking Will County—again heavily urban and with people of color in Joliet and Chicago Heights. Krishnamoorthi won the others, but by smaller margins. That includes his share of populous DuPage County.

Though Stratton raised less than $4 million as compared to the more than $30 million raised by Krishnamorthi for the race, all of it in small contributions, she wasn't totally strapped for financial backing. Some $5 million came from a SuperPAC which her boss, Gov. J.B. Pritzker (D), established and funded.

Her victory is showcasing Pritzger's clout, according to people who support the idea of him running for president. The governor, an heir to the Hyatt Hotel fortune, but very pro-worker in all his major statements as governor, was unopposed in his primary. Stratton's win, his backers say, shows that Pritzker can not only fund his own campaigns, but has coattails, too.

Not all victories were in the progressive column on Tuesday night. One big spender, the controversial far-right American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), wound up with mixed results after first its individual givers and then the PAC itself pumped a combined $20 million into four open-seat House races.

AIPAC is a hard-line supporter of right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his war on Gaza and now on Iran. It demands absolute fealty on those issues—and also pumps millions of dollars into ads opposing anyone "soft" on Israel.

In the 2nd District, dominated by the South Side, AIPAC's endorsed candidate, Cook County Commissioner Donna Miller, won 40%, far ahead of her nearest challenger, former Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. Miller emphasized her support for Planned Parenthood.

The other hopefuls in the race, notably State Senate Labor Committee Chair Robert Peters, raised the AIPAC issue. Peters, who is both Black and Jewish, has questioned Israeli policies and wars. AIPAC spent some money on anti-Peters ads, but more on pushing Miller. Peters finished third, at 11.8%.

In the Northwest Side and suburban 8th District, former Rep. Melissa Bean (D) edged a progressive hopeful and war critic, Junaid Ahmed.

In the 9th District, which covers Chicago's Lakefront and northwest suburbs, AIPAC donors, individually, backed State Sen. Laura Fine, since AIPAC has become toxic among Democrats. She finished third, with 20.8% of the vote.

The winner was Evanston Mayor Dan Biss, a political veteran, with 30%. He's also somewhat skeptical about Trump-Netanyahu ties, having had to deal with the impact on his city of pro-Palestinian protests—and Trump's threats to pull federal grants—at Northwestern University, its dominant institution.

Finishing between them was 26-year-old Kat Abughazaleh, with 26%. She's Palestinian-American and was openly and extremely critical of the wars. AIPAC ran negative ads against her.

One more progressive emerged from the primary and again beat an AIPAC-backed hopeful in the 7th District, which stretches west from the Loop. State Rep. La Shawn Ford beat Chicago City Treasurer Melissa Conyears-Ervin, 29%-24%, with a multitude of candidates splitting the rest of the vote.

Ford told reporters he would "spend his first 100 days in Congress building up progressive congressional districts and working with community groups to set priorities for federal funds."

‘Waist deep in the big muddy’ and Trump says push on

By John Wojcik

Oil, gas, transportation, housing, grocery and most other prices are jumping more rapidly than ever over the last few days, as President Donald Trump orders the stepped-up bombing of energy facilities in Iran. It brings to mind the lyrics of a famous protest song by Pete Seeger from the Vietnam War era: “Waist deep in the Big Muddy and the big fool says to push on.”

The 1967 song, “Waist Deep in the Big Muddy,” was about a platoon leader who forces his men to cross a river even though everyone knew the soldiers would die. Seeger’s tune came to be used against then-President Lyndon Johnson, who built up U.S. forces in Southeast Asia to 500,000 troops, sending them to die in a war most already knew the U.S. could not win.

As the Trump administration announces almost daily how it is “winning” the war against Iran, Americans see the prices of everything, not just gasoline at the pump, skyrocketing. Every time another few hundred targets in Iran are allegedly hit, the prices of fuel, food, housing, transportation, and more skyrocket. It’s beginning to feel as though the entire economy could unravel.

Thursday morning, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell announced that job creation in the nation is “near zero.” Guaranteeing full employment is one of the main purposes of the Federal Reserve Board he heads. But job creation is collapsing at the same time that the cost of living is soaring.

The global price for crude oil is now over $100 per barrel, something that makes U.S. consumers shudder. The only people celebrating are the CEOs of the fossil fuel companies. As Trump has said, “We are making more money than ever because we are the biggest oil producer in the world.” The “we” he is referring to, of course, are the oil corporations, not the American people.

The same phenomena of ballooning prices is appearing all over the world. In India, the exploding price of cooking gas is leading to shortages and leaving hundreds of millions unable to prepare their daily meals.





In Thailand, the government has ordered public servants to work remotely to save fuel on their commute and asked the whole nation to turn off their air conditioning.

Iranian officials said Wednesday that U.S.-Israeli air strikes have severely crippled natural gas facilities in the country, further hampering exports and putting global energy supplies under more strain.

Train and airline travel is becoming more expensive. Airlines are cancelling flights because they say they can’t pay the higher refueling prices. SAS, the Scandinavian airline, said rising jet fuel costs are grounding their planes, with thousands of flights cancelled all the way out to the end of April.

In Chicago, as of Thursday, it was taking two hours and more for cars just to get into O’Hare Airport, the busiest air hub in the United States, as people scramble to fly before fares rise even more.

Agriculture is being severely affected as U.S. farmers, dependent on shipment of fertilizers that come through the Strait of Hormuz, essentially now blocked by Iran, are cut off.. That will no doubt ripple through the supply chain and send food prices across the U.S. spiking even further.

People in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, both U.S. allies, are fearful of retaliatory attacks from Iran against U.S. bases there. The Iranian military has warned civilians in those countries to stay away, for their own safety, from both the bases and oil and gas facilities.

When Trump’s war began, Pentagon spokespeople announced daily how many hundreds or thousands of facilities in Iran had been attacked. After a while, they stopped giving the exact number of targets struck because those numbers corresponded too closely with the increasing economic pain felt by U.S. consumers. The number of Americans realizing that has grown substantially since the beginning of the war.

The attacks on Iran have also backfired, with increased missile attacks by Hezbollah, an Iranian ally in Lebanon, across the border into northern Israel. The U.S. embassy in Iraq has also been hit.

As it did in Vietnam, U.S. imperialism, now under Trump, seems to have severely overestimated the ability of its powerful military to do whatever it wants in around the world. The movement against the war on Iran is growing here in the U.S. and will no doubt be a major part of the No Kings demonstrations at the end of this month.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

In a recent national press conference, Cuba's President Miguel Díaz-Canel remarked that in addition to the over 1,000 megawatts added to the national electrical system in 2025, "we aim to add a similar number this year, so we will be achieving levels above 15 or close to 20 percent of our electrical generation with renewable sources."

At the rate Cuba is going, they will reach their original goal of 25 percent renewable energy by 2030 a few years early. Cuba also boasts significant reserves of cobalt and nickel, empowering it to potentially produce its own solar panels, electric vehicle and battery technology with further development of its industrial capacities.

Another forward-looking policy, Cuba is incentivizing homes and businesses that have acquired their own solar and wind energy generation systems to engage in cogeneration. This means that private citizens and businesses would use their surplus energy (generated by solar panels or wind turbines) to share with their neighbors or sell back to the national grid.

What these examples show is that Cuba has known for some time that their future lies in renewable energy and autonomous national production of energy, technology, and other resources. The United States' aggressive petro-politics, encapsulated by the campaign slogan "drill baby drill," on the other hand, are evidence of its myopic and retrograde worldview.

part 5 of this article will appear in April 4th's edition

Dolores Huerta sobre las acusaciones contra Chávez: El movimiento es más grande que cualquier individuo

Por Dolores Huerta

Tengo casi 96 años y, durante los últimos 60, he guardado un secreto porque creía que revelar la verdad perjudicaría al movimiento de los trabajadores agrícolas, por el cual he luchado toda mi vida.

Siempre he animado a las personas a alzar la voz. Tras la investigación de varios años realizada por el *New York Times* sobre la conducta sexual inapropiada de César Chávez, ya no puedo guardar silencio y debo compartir mis propias experiencias.

Siendo una madre joven en la década de 1960, tuve dos encuentros sexuales distintos con César. La primera vez fui manipulada y presionada para tener relaciones sexuales con él, y no sentí que pudiera negarme, pues él era alguien a quien yo admiraba: mi jefe y el líder del movimiento al que ya había dedicado años de mi vida. La segunda vez fui forzada, en contra de mi voluntad y en un entorno en el que me sentí atrapada.

Ya había sufrido abusos y violencia sexual con anterioridad, y me convencí a mí misma de que aquellos eran incidentes que debía sobrellevar en soledad y en secreto. Ambos encuentros sexuales con César derivaron en embarazos. Decidí mantener mis embarazos en secreto y, tras el nacimiento de los niños, gestioné que fueran criados por otras familias que pudieran brindarles una vida estable.

A lo largo de los años, he tenido la fortuna de forjar una relación profunda con estos hijos, quienes ahora son muy cercanos a mis otros hijos, sus hermanos. Pero incluso entonces, nadie conocía la verdad completa sobre cómo fueron concebidos, hasta hace apenas unas semanas.

Guardé este secreto durante tanto tiempo porque construir el movimiento y asegurar los derechos de los trabajadores agrícolas era la obra de mi vida. La formación de un sindicato era el único vehículo para lograr y garantizar esos derechos, y no iba a permitir que César, ni nadie más, se interpusiera en el camino.

Canalicé todo lo que tenía hacia la defensa de millones de trabajadores agrícolas y de otras personas que sufrían y merecían igualdad de derechos.

Nunca me he identificado como una víctima, pero ahora comprendo que soy una sobreviviente: de la violencia, del abuso sexual, de hombres dominantes que me veían a mí —y a otras mujeres— como una propiedad o como meros objetos de control.

Cuento mi historia porque el *New York Times* ha señalado que no fui la única; hubo otras. Hay mujeres que están dando un paso al frente para relatar que fueron víctimas de abuso y agresión sexual por parte de César cuando eran niñas y adolescentes.

Saber que lastimó a niñas me repugna. Me duele el corazón por todos aquellos que sufrieron en soledad y en silencio durante años. No existen palabras lo suficientemente contundentes para condenar esas acciones deplorables que él cometió. Las acciones de Cesar no reflejan los valores de nuestra comunidad ni de nuestro movimiento.

El movimiento de los trabajadores agrícolas siempre ha sido más grande y mucho más importante que cualquier individuo en particular. Las acciones de Cesar no restan valor a las mejoras permanentes logradas para los trabajadores agrícolas con la ayuda de miles de personas. Debemos seguir involucrándonos con nuestra comunidad y brindándole nuestro apoyo, pues ahora más que nunca necesita defensa y activismo.

Mantendré mis compromisos con los trabajadores, así como mi compromiso con los derechos de las mujeres, para asegurar que tengamos voz y que nuestras comunidades sean tratadas con dignidad y reciban la equidad que se les ha negado durante tanto tiempo.

He guardado este secreto por suficiente tiempo. Mi silencio termina aquí.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924
March 28, 2026

USSA tells Congress: Save education, Stop the SAVE Act

By Brooklyn Crawford

WASHINGTON—"The reality is that our opposition has a lot of money, a lot of power, a lot of momentum. And so it's our job to ensure that all of us are clear about the assignment," Gresia Martinez told delegates gathered in D.C. this past weekend for the United States Student Association's 48th national grassroots legislative conference.

Martinez is executive director of United We Dream, the largest immigrant youth-led network in the country. She said student activists have to "be relentless, not seek out easy or short victories...and look at the long arc." The good thing, she said, is they don't have to do it alone.

Students from 23 states, most of them participants in their campus Student Government Associations, attended the USSA meeting to strategize on how to take action on issues facing students. The agenda was filled with legislative briefings, workshops and organizer training sessions, panels with experienced organizers, and preparations for meetings with representatives.

The USSA conference was hosted and led by its executive director, Tiffany D. Loftin, who joined USSA on her campus 18 years ago. Loftin spoke to students with energy and enthusiasm, intent on inspiring and preparing them to head back to their campuses with the right tools.

Martinez made her remarks at Saturday's "ICE vs. Everybody" panel and Q&A, where she appeared together with activists Abraham Paulos and Michael Foote. The discussion focused on "how federal immigration policy and ICE enforcement are impacting young people across the country."

Foote, an immigration attorney and social media influencer in New York City, gave advice about working collectively, saying, "Someone is capitalizing off of you feeling lonely. Someone is capitalizing off of you feeling like you aren't organized or that you are powerless, and that you don't have rights.... This really is a collective. There are so many people thrusting us forward, doing this work."

Paulos, a formerly incarcerated human rights advocate and deputy director of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration, spoke about the intersection of policing and immigration enforcement. During the Q&A, one student asked, "How does the immigration system uniquely impact Black immigrants and students from the African and Caribbean diaspora?"



Paulos responded, "The first people that were excluded from citizenship were Black and brown people, indigenous folks, and those of us that were stolen.... It'll always come back to that. The first civil rights movement gave us the 14th Amendment... . And that 14th Amendment is essentially birthright citizenship. Anybody that's born on this land is a U.S. citizen. So, shout out to the African-American movement for that and the Black Liberation struggle."

The students erupted into cheers and applause.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

USSA tells Congress

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Throughout the workshops and training sessions, attendees were energized and focused. Many students spoke about problems they were facing on their campuses, talked with each other about different strategies for expanding student rights, and collaborated with other students in their region.

Some stand-out workshops included "America's Censored Campuses: Defending the Freedom to Learn," "Powermapping For Real Change," and "How Students and Workers Win Change Together."

While the USSA has had a "largely liberal" early history, according to professor and historian Angus Johnston, in its earliest days the student union had radical roots in the 1930s in the fight against fascism leading up to World War II. Formerly known as the National Student Association, there was a consistent battle internally over whether the organization should take up "political" issues or just stick to campus organizing.

Throughout its existence, the USSA has played an essential role in providing infrastructure and funding to student-led movements, like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the 1960s. By the '70s, radicals across campuses won elected roles in the USSA, and left-leaning progressive voices became the voice for students demanding their rights. Today, the USSA has participants with a range of left voices, including Communists.

Howard University student and Young Communist League USA member David Green said he was attending the conference to expand his relationship with his own student government association and to "gain a pulse on the trajectory of student government and student organizing in general." He hopes to gain "experience, testimony, and strategy from students across the country as best as possible."

The students marched and rallied Monday afternoon on Capitol Hill before meeting with congressional representatives and staffers about four key issues:

Saving the Pell Grant: The Pell Grant, which currently funds tuition costs for more than 7 million low-income students, is at risk if Congress fails to secure full funding for the next fiscal year. Current projections estimate that the program will be at a deficit by the end of the 2026 fiscal year, affecting students who will be applying for aid for upcoming academic years. Without additional funding, maximum grants could be reduced by thousands of dollars per student. Pell Grants are under constant threat due to changing political priorities and budget crises. Many activists, in addition to requesting emergency funds, are urging for the long-term solution of moving the Pell Grant allocations from under the discretionary spending budget and instead have them be required under mandatory funding.

Saving the Federal TRIO Programs: The Trump administration's 2026 federal budget proposes cutting the federal TRIO programs, which provide support services to students of many different backgrounds as they apply to colleges and throughout their attendance. The TRIO Programs include support for students with disabilities, veterans, low-income students, and first generation students. They provide guidance, counseling, and other forms of hands-on support for students who need assistance.

Saving the Department of Education: Last year, the Trump administration proposed cutting all funds for the Department of Education (DOE), a move which was stopped by Congress. Still, several of the department's key functions were moved under different agencies with no funding or staff able to take on the tasks.

For example, management of the DOE's Title 1 program for funding K-12 public schools and low-income districts was moved to the Department of Labor. Even with pushback, the goals of the administration to dismantle the DOE piece by piece and push families into for-profit schools haven't changed. A robust fightback is needed to restore and protect the DOE, and students are leading the charge.

Stopping the SAVE America Act: The SAVE America Act, which has been called a new "Jim Crow" poll tax by many of the young people attending, would require voters to provide either a passport or birth certificate as identification to be able to vote.

If passed, the bill would go into effect immediately, which would put financial and bureaucratic barriers on the 21 million voters who don't have easy access to these documents ahead of the 2026 midterms in November.

USSA members also reported that the bill would prevent on-campus registration and would erect additional barriers for mail-in voting, which nearly half of all students rely on when attending school out of their home states.

The fight for education and for student rights is essential in the broader fight against fascism and for saving democracy. We cannot afford to leave the youth movement out of our radical struggle for a better future. Students and young workers across the country are being sidelined, but their energy and leadership will be what drives our movement forward.



"Capitalist Daydreams," Norman Goldberg, People's World, 1990

Praising Trump's war, monarchist forces hijack Iranian diaspora

By Rozhin Emadi

Earlier this year, the Iranian people took to the streets to protest the country's dire economic conditions. These hardships have intensified due to U.S. sanctions, which have contributed to a rapid surge in prices and the devaluation of the currency.

Soon, the protests grew into mass mobilizations against the severe economic difficulties millions of Iranians face, as well as against the country's political system, which has long relied on brutal repression to silence those demanding change in hopes of building a more just society.

Various segments of society rose up—from merchants and workers to students—demanding economic justice, democratic rights and an end to state repression.

In previous years, Iranians had also mobilized for gender equality through the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement, which led to some cultural changes within the country. For instance, women in major cities such as Tehran, Mashhad, and Shiraz increasingly appear in public without headscarves.

This widespread grassroots movement also generated mass opposition to Iran's morality police, making the compulsory hijab increasingly difficult to enforce in many areas. The Iranian state scaled back efforts to enforce its "hijab and chastity" law in 2024 because it feared widespread social unrest, demonstrating the power of people's movements to generate internal change within the country. However, women are still seen as inferior to men by law, so there is a long way to go to advance women's rights.

With that said, many believe that state repression and the violation of women's rights are the primary reasons the Iranian people have resisted the government. In reality, the Iranian working class also faces severe economic disparities and hardship due to capitalist exploitation by Iran's ruling class.

Today, 41 million Iranians (nearly 45% of the population) are considered "economically inactive," while over 20% are unemployed. Notably, 40% of the unemployed are university graduates. Additionally, 30-35% of the population (between 25 and 30 million people) lives in absolute poverty.

Hossein Raghfar, a state-affiliated economist, has stated that around 10% of Iran's population currently suffers from malnutrition and hunger. He warned that if current trends continue, "the poor population" could reach about 40% of the total population. Furthermore, according to Iran's Parliamentary Research Center, approximately 30% of Iranians live in absolute poverty, while 6%—around four million people—live in extreme poverty. Raghfar also pointed out that, "on one side, poverty is growing, and on the other, a small but extremely wealthy class has emerged which is influential within the system and manipulates policymaking in its favor."



Indeed, the richest 10% of the population holds more than 63% of the country's wealth, while the richest 1% alone owns 29%. Meanwhile, the bottom 50% of the population owns less than 4% of the wealth. Inflation has drastically increased the cost of living while wages remain low, particularly affecting food and housing.

In 2022, The Tehran Times reported that rent had increased by 40.9% in Tehran. Although the government later attempted to cap rent increases at 25%, Iran's Statistical Center continued to report record-breaking increases, and the country's rental crisis reportedly peaked in October 2025. Over 65% of workers do not own their homes and are trapped in a rental market where even a small apartment can cost 10 million tomans per month, equivalent to the entire minimum wage.

In 2025, Iran's Minister of Labor announced a minimum wage of 10,399,000 tomans, which is more than three times lower than the minimum cost of living. Meanwhile, government figures acknowledge that 96% of Iranian workers are employed on temporary or short-term contracts, leaving them without job security, pensions, or protections.

Iran also ranks 102nd in the world for workplace safety, with an average of 40 workers dying on the job each week. All the while, trade union activists and workers who have protested for better conditions have been attacked and jailed. This underscores the urgency of demanding freedom for political prisoners as part of solidarity with the Iranian people's struggles.

Drawing comparisons with Cuba helps show that that while sanctions have certainly contributed to Iran's economic difficulties, they are not the only reason the country's working class is struggling. Cuba has endured a U.S. economic blockade for over six decades—the longest-lasting trade sanction in modern history. But despite severe economic hardship, the government there has attempted to maintain strong public services, including widely accessible healthcare, education, and housing. Cuba's socialist society prioritizes social programs that meet the basic needs of people.

Iran, by contrast, has implemented waves of privatization and market-oriented reforms. In 2006, the government announced plans to overhaul its free trade zones by expanding privatization, increasing exports, and strengthening the private sector.

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As part of these reforms, 80% of shares in major public companies, worth roughly $130 billion, were slated for sale to private and cooperative sectors. This also intended to align Iran more closely with the requirements of the World Trade Organization.

These policies contributed directly to greater wealth inequality and worsening economic conditions for the working class. It was these legitimate grievances and real hardships, combined with theocratic state repression, that pushed many Iranians to protest even at the risk of losing their lives.

However, these mobilizations were soon co-opted by pro-imperialist and pro-Zionist forces. Outside Iran, the narrative began circulating that the Iranian people wanted to reinstall Reza Pahlavi as their "Shah," and pro-monarchist voices within the Iranian diaspora quickly reframed the entire movement around Pahlavi.

Some even rejected widely used protest slogans such as "Woman, Life, Freedom" and "Free All Political Prisoners," arguing that the only slogan that should be chanted is "Long Live the Shah." Another slogan promoted by monarchist groups was "Make Iran Great Again," a phrase clearly inspired by Donald Trump's MAGA movement.

Monarchist forces portray Iran under the Pahlavi monarchy as an ideal society to which the country should return, rather than the repressive, undemocratic, and unequal society that it actually was.

The Pahlavi monarchy was installed by foreign powers in 1953 after the democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh was overthrown in a U.S.-British orchestrated coup d'état. This intervention was triggered by Mossadegh's move to nationalize the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (now BP).

As a result, Pahlavi was widely disliked because he was seen as a ruler who conceded to U.S. interests while heavily suppressing his own people. With support from the United States, the Shah's secret police, SAVAK, inflicted widespread political terror—surveilling, imprisoning, torturing, and executing political opponents, particularly members of leftist, communist, and working-class organizations.

At the same time, poverty and illiteracy were widespread. A 1974 New York Times article noted that although oil revenues were flowing into the national treasury, "70% of the people are illiterate and 60% live at subsistence levels."

Despite widely circulated images of wealthier women wearing Western clothing and miniskirts, the female literacy rate under the Shah was only about 35.5%. Many impoverished women in rural areas were deeply religious, and social inequality remained stark. Pahlavi himself openly expressed that women were not equal or as intelligent as men, demonstrating that this society was also not a safe haven for women.

Child labor was common, trade union activity was banned, and the cost of living was high. Although the Shah attempted to address some of these problems through his so-called "White Revolution," the reforms failed to meet the needs of the population.

This failure led to mass mobilizations across Iranian society, religious and secular alike, which ultimately culminated in the 1979 Revolution.

After the revolution, there was a brief period during which various political organizations were able to mobilize openly and freely for the first time. Economic reforms were also introduced to redistribute wealth, including the nationalization of key industries, the creation of welfare programs, and policies aimed at reducing poverty in rural communities. These reforms contributed to rising literacy rates. Today, around 90% of Iran's adult population is literate, and women make up about 50% of university graduates, though many struggle to find jobs afterwards.

However, the Islamic Republic soon became violently repressive as well. In 1988, the government carried out mass executions of political prisoners, including thousands of communists and leftists. The country was further devastated by the eight-year war with Iraq, which resulted in around one million deaths and was prolonged by both countries' controversial acceptance of weapons from the United States to support their war efforts. By the 1990s, Iran was once again pushed into a severe economic crisis through privatization, the removal of energy subsidies, and the elimination of welfare programs.

Although Iran has been and continues to be a victim of imperialism, many Iranians have grown frustrated watching the Islamic Republic invest heavily in its military apparatus while neglecting the needs of its own people.

In the Iranian diaspora, the narrative that Iran was "great" under the Shah and that repression only began after the 1979 Revolution has convinced some that reinstating the monarchy is Iran's only path forward. Those who challenge this narrative are often silenced, shamed, or attacked.

Through these tactics, pro-monarchist forces outside Iran undermine the legitimate protests inside the country by reducing a broad mass movement to the ambitions of a single man who has lived outside Iran for more than 40 years and has little direct connection to the people currently struggling there.

Contrary to monarchist talking points, it is clear that the most decisive force remains the working class, not Reza Pahlavi. Although labor's participation in these protests was somewhat limited, it was nonetheless significant. Strikes at the South Pars gas facilities, actions by maintenance workers in Zagros and Lorestan, and solidarity statements from teachers, truck drivers, and oil workers all demonstrate the crucial role that workers play in leading a people's resistance movement in Iran.

Postmaster General says USPS may shut down in a year

By Mark Gruenberg

Speaking to a House Oversight subcommittee on March 17, Postmaster General David Steiner said cuts are coming. The USPS is deep in red ink, he said, and has hit its credit limit, which hasn't risen in more than 30 years. Unless Congress moves quickly on a short-term fix—doubling the credit limit to $30 billion—the post office will supposedly run out of money and close within a year, Steiner adds.

But the doubling would give USPS a financial lifeline and breathing spell, and let lawmakers work on a comprehensive solution to its fiscal ills, Steiner said. He had a few suggestions: Cutting unprofitable routes, which are 71% of the total, and closing unprofitable post offices, for starters.

The red ink that Steiner claims is afflicting the USPS, however, is caused not by its inherit unprofitability, but rather by unfair rules imposed upon it by legislative bodies who would prefer that USPS be privatized.

The Postal Service's own Inspector General has complained to lawmakers that USPS must overpay pension contributions to cover future retirees, as well as past workers who began their careers before the USPS became semi-independent in 1971.

That overpayment costs the Postal Service $3 billion yearly, on top of other very large retirement payment obligations to which the USPS is uniquely subjected. The Postal Service is denied the ability to act like any other public or private entity when dealing with future pension responsibilities.

What Steiner did not mention when talking to Congress was the most important issue: The Postal Service, and its ancestor the Post Office, dating before the American Revolution, was never intended to make a profit. The Constitution gives Congress the power to "establish post offices and post roads." There's no mention of profits or losses. The framers' intent was to help knit the country together.

Nor did he mention the Trump administration requesting a further $200 billion for the war in Iran at a time when many public services—not only the USPS—are desperate for cash in the United States.

Steiner, with his tunnel vision, sees doubling the credit limit as the main way to give the USPS a financial lifeline while letting lawmakers work on a comprehensive solution to its fiscal ills. His "comprehensive" solutions, however, involve cutting routes that don't turn a profit and closing allegedly "unprofitable "post offices. It's the approach of banks and businesses in the private sector: Offer more credit rather than higher income.

Steiner's suggestions lay the groundwork for getting rid of the USPS altogether and privatizing it entirely, according to labor leaders in the mail industry.

Also speaking to Congress the same day, Letter Carriers (NALC) President Brian Renfroe and Postal Workers (APWU) President Jonathan Smith agreed with Steiner on the short-term fix but said it is not a long term solution.

Renfroe criticized some of Steiner's proposals, such as reducing long-time retirees' pensions, hiring more part-time contract carriers, and unspecified revisions in how workers' comp claims are handled. After all, Renfroe pointed out, workers are forced to file for compensation due to unsafe working conditions which management causes. And those workers' comp payments range from $400 million-$800 million a year, Steiner admitted.

Smith, the new APWU president, repeated prior union opposition to privatizing the Postal Service, turning it and its 600,000 workers—more than 80% unionized—over to Wall Street investors.

Steiner told lawmakers that while the Postal Service has made some progress in cutting costs, that wasn't enough. He said that in the last 20 years, first-class mail volume, which is the main revenue raiser for the USPS, has dropped by 48%.

So revenue from that source has crashed, too. If first-class volume had stayed the same but at the current 78-cents-an-ounce stamp price, the Postal Service would have been $81 billion richer in those two decades, Steiner calculated.

Meanwhile, the Postal Service can't raise its rates on its own and can't adjust rates to cover the often-long distances a first-class letter or package must travel. The postal rate is the same if the letter travels from D.C. to suburban Alexandria, Va., or all the way to Honolulu. Other nations both have higher rates and charge more by distance. Only two other nations—one of them Malta—charge less.

Steiner also said that while his predecessor, Louis DeJoy, a longtime advocate of privatization, began improvements which cut costs, they weren't enough. DeJoy's "Delivering for America" plan also envisioned huge workforce cuts. DeJoy, a former private package company CEO, also slowed down first-class mail delivery—by closing sorting centers—and emphasized package delivery over letters.

In some of his statements, Steiner admitted that he really does not know that much about the USPS and its importance to the American people. "I am not sure the American public is aware the Postal Service is at a critical juncture," Steiner stated. "I know I wasn't aware of the extent of it before I took on this role, but at our current run rate and if we continue to pay our required obligations in the same manner as we have done in recent years, then we will be out of cash in less than 12 months," he said, gloomily.

Celebrating Women's History Month: Sue Ko Lee

By Sylvia J. Ramos and Coalition Of Labor Union Women

Sue Ko Lee was a Chinese American garment worker and labor organizer with the Chinese Ladies' Garment Workers' Association. In 1938, she participated in a successful fifteen-week strike against the National Dollar Stores garment factory. At the time, it was the longest strike in the history of San Francisco's Chinatown. Lee went on to become a leader in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) in California.

Most Chinese workers in San Francisco worked for Chinese employers like Joe Shoong, owner of National Dollar Stores. They made low wages and worked in poor conditions, but their options were limited. Most white-owned businesses refused to hire them. In addition, because the Chinese immigrant community was so close-knit, many workers were connected to their bosses through family and friendship ties. Such personal relationships sometimes made workers reluctant to speak out against poor treatment.

Chinese workers had a complicated relationship with the labor movement. Many unions had supported the Page Act (1875) and the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) which restricted immigration from China. They had argued that Chinese laborers would undermine white workers' union gains by accepting lower wages and poor treatment. They often used racist imagery in lobbying for the laws. This tension persisted into the 1900s. Chinese and Chinese American workers were locked out of unionized factories by racist hiring practices. They feared their jobs would be taken by white workers if all the factories were unionized.

But by the 1930s, unions like the ILGWU were working hard to organize Black, Latino, and Asian American workers. New Deal laws had established a minimum wage and legal protections for unionizing. Empowered unions wanted to expand their ranks. In San Francisco, the ILGWU was concerned that Chinese-owned factories undercut white-owned union shops by charging lower prices for work. They did this by paying lower wages and assigning their workers longer hours. These practices allowed them stay in business in the face of the hardship of the Great Depression—but came at a high cost to their workers.

During The Dollar Store Strike, ILGWU organizers struggled to make any headway among Chinese workers until an organizer named Jennie Matyas arrived. Matyas, herself an immigrant from Hungary, worked hard to gain the trust of the workers and their Chinese community. She built personal relationships and made the case for unionization in local outlets like the Chinese Digest.



In 1938, Sue Ko Lee and her coworkers voted to join the ILGWU, using ballots written in both English and Chinese. They became the Chinese Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, Local 341. The strike was the beginning of Chinese women fighting for higher wages and better working conditions in the Chinatown garment industry.

After several bilingual collective bargaining sessions, the union and National Dollar Stores signed a preliminary agreement. But then the factory arranged a "sale" to a group of its managers, which the workers saw as an attempt to get out of the contract. In response, they decided it was time to go on strike. More than 150 of them walked out. Both American-born Chinese workers and Chinese immigrants, many of them older women, joined the strike. With the ILGWU's help, Sue Ko Lee and other strike leaders organized picket lines and breakfasts of donuts and coffee for the strikers.

After more than three months on the picket lines, the strikers prevailed, winning a new contract and a guaranteed pay rate. Unfortunately, the factory closed the following year. While the ILGWU's progress in organizing Chinese workers remained slow, Jennie Matyas was able to help some of the union members, including Lee, get jobs in white-owned factories where they could make more money. In the 1950s, Lee joined the ILGWU as a staff member in Local 101 and attended national conventions.

Lee was married to Lee Jew Hing, a Chinese migrant who also worked at National Dollar Stores, and they had two children, Mervyn and Stanley. On May 15, 1996, Sue Ko died at the age of 86 in El Cerrito, California.



Call your U.S. Representative and Senators to demand that Congress refuse any funding for the unauthorized, unjustified, and criminal escalating war on Iran.

The request for $200 billion for the Iran war, on top of a trillion dollar military budget, must be rejected outright. Support an emergency War Powers Resolution to stop U.S. troops from being sent into Iran.

End the deadly war, costing the lives of civilians, including children, and the $1 billion a day being spent to enrich war profiteers. Not one cent for the illegal war on Iran!

Nashville journalist & ICE critic Estefany Rodriguez arrested

By Albert Bender

NASHVILLE—It's a case that's become a cause célèbre nationwide. Courageous young journalist, Estefany Rodriguez, a reporter for the Spanish-language news outlet Nashville Noticias, was arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on March 4 for allegedly violating immigration laws.

Rodriguez is originally from Colombia and had produced numerous reports critical of ICE and its violent tactics. She was arrested after being surveilled with her husband and 7-year-old daughter shortly after dropping the child off at school.

Rodriguez was then whisked off to a county jail in Alabama where she was held for a week and not allowed to contact her attorney, held in isolation for multiple days, and forced to strip naked in a shower while an officer reportedly poured chemicals over her head to kill a contrived lice infestation. She said the chemical smelled like floor cleaner. Her attorney, Joel Coxander, called the treatment "inhumane."

Subsequently, Rodriguez was taken to a detention center in Louisiana. Her attorneys filed for her immediate release citing violations of the First and Fourth Amendments, which guarantee freedom of the press and protection against unreasonable search and seizure, respectively.



On the morning of March 16, an immigration judge granted Rodriguez's request to be released on a bond of $10,000, but nonetheless she remained in custody as of March 17, due to an apparent disagreement between her attorneys and government counsel.

While Rodriguez languished in detention, a hearing was held in federal court in Nashville before U.S. District Judge Eli Richardson on Tuesday, March 17, for the federal government to show cause to justify the arrest of Rodriguez in the first place.

ICE claimed that Rodriguez "has no lawful immigration status" and had missed two immigration appointments. Coxander has refuted those claims.

After receiving death threats for her work as a journalist in Colombia, Rodriguez fled to the United States, where she applied for political asylum. At the time of her arrest, she had a pending permanent resident (green card) application and a valid work permit issued by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

As for the supposed missed immigration appointments, one was due to the ICE office being closed that day due to a winter storm. When Rodriguez came for the second appointment, officers were unable to locate the appointment in their system, according to her attorney.

As a correspondent for People's World, this writer was in attendance for the hearing and observed that there was considerable confusion in the case. After the hearing, which lasted the entire afternoon, the judge could not reach a decision and continued the matter to a conference call on the next day, Wednesday, March 18, for "a status report."

On the morning of March 19, the family of Rodriguez attempted to pay her bond but were unable to do so because of a claimed technical problem with the government's electronic payment system. Reportedly, it was said that bond payment had to be done by "hand delivery" before Rodriguez could be released. Judge Richardson had said the case could not "go forward" until she was released over bond procedures.

On the morning of March 20, it was reported that the bond had finally been paid and that Rodriguez had returned home to her family in Nashville. The community anxiously awaits the next hearing in federal court.

The Committee to Protect Journalists called the $10,000 bond amount "unusually high," since Rodriguez's husband and daughter live in the U.S. and she is unlikely to represent a flight risk.

The organization welcomed her release but said her case shows the dangers now faced by journalists across the U.S.

"Her detention has had a chilling effect, undermining journalists' ability, especially local reporters, to cover their communities without fear of retaliation," José Zamora, CPJ's regional director for the Americas, said in a statement. "The government must uphold press freedom and ensure all journalists can work safely and without reprisal."



A labor of love for People's World: An appeal for the incarcerated community

By Melissa Parks



Let me start by thanking you for being a loyal reader of People's World. If ever there was a time well spent reading this publication it is now, with so many literal life or death issues facing all of us.

I can say from personal experience that some of the articles I have read really impressed me. The most captivating story that's captured my attention in recent years was one concerning the imprisonment of Native American Leonard Peltier. He was granted clemency by former President Joe Biden before he left office. But before Mr. Peltier was released, he went through harsh treatment. Even during the pandemic, he was denied parole despite his failing health. How profound it is that he's finally home, sharing new and positive experiences with his family. And People's World was on top of his story for many years.

People's World provides stories that describe the true meaning of human struggles, of the everyday, average American people. Very seldom will you read about stories of this type in the corporate media. But stories on working class struggles and the fights for the rights of all people are the kinds of articles being produced every day of the week by People's World.

The job I do at People's World is in itself an example of why this publication is so special. I prepare a weekly edition in print (the one you're now holding in your hands) that summarizes several of the online articles of the week. What is really important about this is that we send it out to incarcerated people across the country, as well as a few seniors who live in nursing homes, where they have no computer access.

For many years, one of the people on the mailing list to receive the weekly People's World print edition was none other than Leonard Peltier—that's why his name was constantly on my mind.

Our incarcerated friends are so grateful to receive People's World. Each copy is read by many people, as recipients share it with other individuals they are interacting with. Those new folks, in turn, write to us asking to be added to the mailing list. I recently received a letter from one such individual who was upset with himself that he didn't discover us sooner. He read a fellow inmate's copy and immediately wanted his own subscription. He thanked us for the hard work that goes into the paper and its informative and well-written articles. His letter said, "Please keep up the good work and quality reporting—Thank you!"

The corporate media outlet is beholden to the billionaire clique. They don't deal with or address the huge incarcerated section of our population.

Keeping a large number of people incarcerated enables the ruling class to more effectively exploit all of us, and it is People's World that understands this and raises awareness of its in its coverage of the war on workers.

To do what we do, we need funds, and that is where you come in. If you're a regular reader, thank you. If you've donated before, thank you for that, too. But could you pay a little more for your paper? Could you become a monthly sustainer? There's a check box on the website to make the process easy. Donations and sustainer contributions keep us going; they help pay for things like the weekly print edition for incarcerated readers.

So please, donate whatever you can. And tell your family, friends, and neighbors to read us and then donate, too. People's World belongs to you. It belongs to all of us.

Sincerely,
Melissa Parks
Print Edition Editor

Go to **PeoplesWorld.org/Donate**
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CPUSA calls election conference 2026

2026 elections — Repel fascism and build for the future

Call to the CPUSA National All-Party Conference on Political Action, May 23, 2026, starting at noon eastern



In towns large and small across our country, a powerful resistance is rising in opposition to ICE raids, economic hardships, fascistic violence at home, and imperialist war moves abroad. The demand is growing that elected officials represent the interests of the multi-racial working class, not the white supremacist billionaires and capitalists. The ability to organize broadly and deeply in solidarity will determine the outcome of this struggle.

Trump and MAGA are doing everything to steal the upcoming elections so they can consolidate power and impose their destructive anti-democratic agenda. They are attempting to use direct threats from ICE and stricter voter ID requirements to suppress the vote. A new level of organizing and collective action at the ballot box is needed to end MAGA control of the House and Senate and in local elections on November 3. We have a special role to play in upholding the leadership and interests of the working class. That is why we are holding a national CPUSA All Party Conference on Political Action on May 23, 2026, starting at 12:00 noon eastern.

Elections are a hard-fought means to express working-class power — not just on Election Day, but every day in our workplaces and neighborhoods. Elections are an opportunity to engage with neighbors and co-workers on the issues. In this way, door-to-door campaigning can help to organize clubs, connect with our neighbors, and prepare to run our future candidates. The skills we can gain include speaking to a variety of people and understanding their needs and issues, deepening our knowledge of our local conditions, and learning the nuts and bolts of political campaigns.



Campaigning on the issues at election time is an opportunity to deepen our relationships with unions and other coalition partners, including immigrant rights, housing, health care, education, and civil rights groups, get out the vote (GOTV) initiatives, religious organizations, the peace movement, and women's, LGBTQ+, and student groups. Building a united movement with these coalitions is necessary to stop the dangerous move to fascism, bring forward our program, and, in our day-to-day work, fight for our future. The immediate fight for democracy is part of the longer-term fight for socialism.

Everywhere, clubs have an important role to play. It is of the utmost importance that we gain experience in different parts of the country, since elections and campaigns are different from state to state and city to city. Leading up to the conference, we will identify key races and support these areas as much as we can.

Articles and other materials leading up to the conference can spark discussions in clubs and districts. We will go door-to-door across the country to engage neighbors for the March 28 No Kings III and May Day mass rallies.

The conference itself will have a national presentation online, with in-person gatherings to watch, and then to discuss and formulate a plan of work leading up to Election Day and beyond. After the conference, we will have materials generated from it.

We will have 175 days from the conference to the election to build a lasting movement. The conference is ultimately about building broad people's movements on the issues and building the Communist Party, including running Party candidates to repel fascism and win multi-racial working-class gains for the future. We in the Communist Party must make sure that what is possible happens.

LABOR NEWS

BP locks out 900 oil workers in Indiana

By Paul S. Kaczocha

Energy giant BPlocked out 900 United Steelworkers on St. Patrick's Day at its Whiting, Ind., oil refinery, the largest in the Midwest.

Negotiations have been underway management since the union's contract ended on Feb. 1. USW Local 7-1 President Eric Schultz said the lockout followed a proposal the union made.

"We presented British Petroleum with that included accepting several of their proposals, only for them to reject that after just four hours and serve us with a lockout notice," he said.

Union leaders have said they will not accept BP's proposals, including cutting 100 union jobs, eliminating all the union jobs from the environmental department, cutting pay for most job classifications, and stripping away bargaining rights.

"They continue to demand that we cut more than 100 jobs, accept pay cuts to nearly all positions, and give up our bargaining rights," Schultz said. "That's just unacceptable. We are prepared to keep fighting for a fair agreement that protects local jobs, protects wages, and protects the rights of our members."

"The company wants to make all the safety jobs salaried," one worker said. "They aren't following the industry pay raise negotiated and instead gave the raise, changed all the jobs around, and then lowered the wage."

Management has already hired replacement workers and solicited the services of a union-busting company called Starcon.

Dolores Huerta on Chavez revelations: The movement is bigger than any individual

By Dolores Huerta



I am nearly 96 years old, and for the last 60 years have kept a secret because I believed that exposing the truth would hurt the farmworker movement I have spent my entire life fighting for.

I have encouraged people to always use their voice. Following the New York Times' multi-year investigation into sexual misconduct by Cesar Chavez, I can no longer stay silent and must share my own experiences.

As a young mother in the 1960s, I experienced two separate sexual encounters with Cesar. The first time I was manipulated and pressured into having sex with him, and I didn't feel I could say no because he was someone that I admired, my boss and the leader of the movement I had already devoted years of my life to. The second time I was forced, against my will, and in an environment where I felt trapped.

I had experienced abuse and sexual violence before, and I convinced myself these were incidents that I had to endure alone and in secret. Both sexual encounters with Cesar led to pregnancies. I chose to keep my pregnancies secret and, after the children were born, I arranged for them to be raised by other families that could give them stable lives.

Over the years, I have been fortunate to develop a deep relationship with these children, who are now close to my other children, their siblings. But even then, no one knew the full truth about how they were conceived until just a few weeks ago.

I carried this secret for as long as I did because building the movement and securing farmworker rights was my life's work. The formation of a union was the only vehicle to accomplish and secure those rights and I wasn't going to let Cesar or anyone else get in the way. I channeled everything I had into advocating on behalf of millions of farmworkers and others who were suffering and deserved equal rights.

I have never identified myself as a victim, but I now understand that I am a survivor —of violence, of sexual abuse, of domineering men who saw me, and other women, as property, or things to control.

I am telling my story because the New York Times has indicated that I was not the only one—there were others. Women are coming forward, sharing that they were sexually abused and assaulted by Cesar when they were girls and teenagers.

The knowledge that he hurt young girls sickens me. My heart aches for everyone who suffered alone and in silence for years. There are no words strong enough to condemn those deplorable actions that he did. Cesar's actions do not reflect the values of our community and our movement.

The farmworker movement has always been bigger and far more important than any one individual. Cesar's actions do not diminish the permanent improvements achieved for farmworkers with the help of thousands of people. We must continue to engage and support our community, which needs advocacy and activism now more than ever.

I will continue my commitments to workers, as well as my commitment to women's rights, to make sure we have a voice and that our communities are treated with dignity and given the equity that they have so long been denied.

I have kept this secret long enough. My silence ends here.

People's World is a voice for progressive change and socialism in the United States. It provides news and analysis of, by, and for the labor and democratic movements to our readers across the country and around the world.
Visit the daily paper on the web at peoplesworld.org, or scan QR code.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
FOUNDED 1924

April 4, 2026

Spoiled milk: Capitalism's role in infant nutrition

By Carole Wong Chacon

Through my years of experience in women's health care as an international board certified lactation consultant, I worked and lived in frustration, tolerating longstanding issues with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that stem from the fundamental premise that health care is a privilege. Access to care equates to ability to pay, and quality of care is distinguished by type of insurance.

In this current health insurance situation, higher premium payments do not buy better care. My frustration has now transformed into pure disdain. The gutting of HHS personnel and the dismissal of evidence-based health care policies reveals the true disinterest of the current administration in America's health.

On Jan. 8, 2026, both HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and Department of Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins announced their new *2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The secretaries proclaimed a return to basics as they presented the revamped food pyramid now symbolically turned upside-down.

HHS claims to be focused on resetting nutrition policy to combat the rise in chronic health conditions, including heart disease, obesity, and diabetes. For decades, scientific data has linked these conditions, in part, to poor, improper, and/or inadequate nutrition. Some policy changes HHS has announced since March 2025 appear positive, including the elimination of certain dyes in foods and the allowance of new plant-based dyes in foods. These changes exemplify HHS's definition of a reset in miniature. A more fitting change to aid consumers would be to recategorize products containing these dyes as "treats" or "junk food" since they are highly processed concoctions of food.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), an independent advocacy group, reviewed the new Guidelines. CSPI explained that development of previous Guidelines has historically been a multi-step, evidence-based process normally conducted by a Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC). Previous DGACs were composed of a non-governmental, independent panel 10-20 experts.



Approximately 50 years of rigorous research and data by previous panels yielded successive and improved guidelines that included the reduction in consumption of certain meats and animal fat found harmful to good health.

In contrast with the 2026 Guidelines, a newly formed panel called "Scientific Foundation for the Dietary Guidelines for Americans" was created. According to CSPI, this panel of policy makers is comprised of hand-picked insiders in the beef, dairy, and protein supplement industries.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Spoiled milk: Capitalism's role in infant nutrition

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

CSPI also reports that the Foundation did not follow established methodology nor conduct the transparent public protocols and peer reviews that all previous DCAGs adhered to. Consequently, the Foundation's newly released Guidelines recommend consumption of butter, tallow, full-fat dairy, and a marked increase in the total daily intake of animal proteins.

Several organizations, such as the American Heart Association, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, American Society for Nutrition, and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, expressed concern about the Guidelines rollbacks. They cited the Foundation's lack of rigorous scientific review to support its recommendations, which ultimately can negatively impact the chronic health conditions that this HHS claims to want to combat.

How does this apply to the infant nutrition?

Got milk?

Since the beginning of life on earth, the offspring of mammals were fed their own mother's milk from their own mother's mammaries, or fed by other lactating mammaries when necessary, utilizing the female anatomy specifically designed for newborn and infant feeding. This feeding process is the essential characteristic of every mammalian species. Mammalian milk is a living biological nutrient that develops during pregnancy and modifies throughout the period of breastfeeding. Mammalian milk provides and adjusts nutrients required in various developmental stages of growth and protects against infection and certain medical conditions. There is abundant evidence in art and artifacts throughout history from all over the world of animals and humans feeding their newborns and infants via mammaries, yet contemporary mothers struggle to emulate human ancestors.

In modern industrialized—especially wealthy—countries, the majority of newborns are fed some amount of or only infant formula within the first six months of life. The 2022 U.S. Breastfeeding Report Card shows a rate of 24.9% of exclusive breastfeeding in their first six months of life. According to the 2023 UNICEF/WHO Global Breastfeeding Scorecard, in countries of Africa, Asia, and Oceania the rates of exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months of life have increased by 10 points over the past decade to 48%.

What conditions (excluding physical or medical) have impacted birthing mothers from providing essential mammalian nutrition to infants? New mothers and families encounter multiple social conditions under capitalism, including insufficient hospital and community breastfeeding resources, inhumane maternity leave policies, and low household incomes that necessitate early return to work. These conditions interrupt and impede sustainable development of the breastfeeding process. Similar to the new dietary guidelines, capitalist industries—dairy and infant formula manufacturing—are at the foundation of the negative impact to breastfeeding in the United States.

Transition stage

The formation, growth, and development of industrial centers in the late 19th century beckoned villagers and farmers to leave their livelihood and relocate to them. Farmers, tradesmen, and their families were enticed these centers—cities—with promises of steady incomes, improved living conditions, and in general, a happier life with housing, water, food, and medicine.

The health care model at this time also transitioned. At-home care once provided by family based on the recommendations of a local healer, not always a doctor, shifted to city hospitals. New medical specialties, including obstetrics and bacteriology and the vocation of nursing, found footing in city hospitals.

To seize profit from the volume of deliveries in hospitals, despite incomparable delivery experience, midwifery fell under siege. Hospital doctors discredited the important and popular work of female birth attendants and traditional cultural practices. What was historically a normal life cycle occurrence—pregnancy, childbirth, and lactation—tended to by midwives at home became a managed medical condition by doctors in hospitals. Institutional protocols were imposed on mothers as routines of care, several of which lasted throughout the 20th century.

One such protocol was the separation of newborns from mothers. While mothers rested (if possible) on beds in quiet rooms, babies remained in newborn nurseries for most of each day. Instead of calmly sleeping on or near mother to aid in transition from womb to world, babies burned precious energy stressfully crying for extended periods of time. Reuniting with mother only for the scheduled feeding proved challenging. Instead of getting to the business of latching, suckling, and swallowing, babies calmed and perhaps slept when held by mothers. This scenario was starkly different from those depicted in historical artifacts.

The reality is that babies utilize their powerful sense of smell to understand their environment. Research has shown that the scent of mother and her milk are present in the womb, which can calm a baby after birth when in direct proximity of these scents. A stressed baby that experienced separation requires several minutes to calm, commonly in the arms of its mother. Baby may even fall asleep from the comfort it feels before feeling the sense of hunger or demonstrating readiness to feed.

The U.S. Breastfeeding Report Card also reported that approximately 84% of newborns initiated breastfeeding within the first two days of life, while 19.2% were fed some amount of formula. Breastfeeding attempts with a swaddled and/or sleepy newborn are overwhelmingly inadequate or unsuccessful. Instead of receiving factual breastfeeding education or skilled assistance, mothers are often told by pediatricians and nurses that their first milk, colostrum ("liquid gold"), is inadequate or that they do not have enough milk, leading to feedings by bottle of a breast milk substitute—formula.

When a mother witnesses how easily her baby sucks on a bottle and consumes most if not all of its contents, she begins to question the breastfeeding process or her own body's ability to produce an equal volume.

After returning home, families rely on formula to feed baby when encountering breastfeeding difficulties or when access to skilled lactation assistance is unavailable. Without consistent skilled lactation education and support, subsequent breastfeeding difficulties are "resolved" by a bottle.

It is now well understood that the hospital practice of separating a healthy newborn from its mother is harmful for the baby and contributes to breastfeeding failure. Although mother-baby separation policies have been eliminated in most U.S. birthing facilities since the early 2000s, several generations of mothers were unable to benefit from the wisdom of another's experience, and countless offspring did not receive the benefits of breast milk. Yet, formula remains readily accessible.

Fool's liquid gold

Industrialization in the U.S. and Europe also spawned mechanization of dairy milk processing, generating a surplus of cow's milk. The substitute concoction for breast milk emerged in the mid-1800s to capitalize on this dairy surplus.

In 1856, Gail Borden (Borden Dairy Company) patented a process to condense milk (boiled-down milk water plus sugar) in the United States. Borden's first profitable endeavor of canned condensed milk was financed by Ruehl Milbank, and together they formed New York Condensed Milk Company in 1858. More success followed after expansion into a new factory in 1864 that daily processed 20,000 gallons of milk supplied by over 200 dairy farmers. Canned condensed milk became an invaluable ration during the Civil War, which somehow transitioned into being invaluable for babies.

In 1867, Henri Nestlé developed farine lactée (wheat flour, malt, and sugar with cow's milk), touted for saving the life of a baby that had rejected its mother's milk. By 1873, Nestlé sold and shipped 500,000 boxes of Nestlé's Infant Food to Europe, the United States, Argentina, Mexico, and the Dutch East Indies, estimated to cost $0.50 per bottle.

In this same period, former militiaman and then U.S. Vice Consul of Trade to Switzerland Charles Page and his brother, George Page, formed the Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company. Anglo-Swiss used Borden's patented process for its product, Milkmaid Brand canned condensed milk, which was advertised as the perfect mother's milk substitute. By 1868, 374,000 cartons of Milkmaid Brand were sold primarily to Great Britain and its colonies, which spawned factory expansion across Europe and the U.S. Over time, improvements in cow's milk processing and transporting reduced the cost of production, facilitated distribution, and increased profits.

However, these products were far from perfect. Infants around the world developed severe gastrointestinal illness and diarrhea that often resulted in death. Governments tested these products and deemed them nutritionally unsuitable for infants, impure, not sterile, and rife with microbes. In 1900, the U.S. estimated the rate of infant mortality due to contaminated breast milk substitutes to be 13%. In response to this catastrophe, public milk depots were established to distribute bottled pasteurized milk to the poor primarily in cities.

In 2011, African-American Surgeon General Dr. Regina Benjamin presented The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding. This seminal call to action laid a roadmap to support and normalize breastfeeding across social, industrial, medical, and scientific infrastructures. It was, and is, the only federal directive to emphasize the importance of breastfeeding and generated supportive—though insufficient and short-lived—resources for mothers and babies.

Today, despite sterile processing conditions and formula fortification with manufactured additives said to be inspired by mother's milk, the health of infants remains at risk. Two such ingredients are arachidonic acid (ARA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). ARA and DHA are long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids essential for the development of the brain, eyes, and immune system, and are naturally present in breast milk. ARA and DHA additives are produced from industrial fermentation of microalgae and fungi and extracted using the solvent hexane. As recently as Jan.13, 2026, Nestlé was forced to recall some infant formulas in several countries traced to possible bacterial contamination of ARA.

After 50-plus years of evidence-based research on the benefits of breastfeeding and the risks of formula feeding, why is formula so prevalent? It's not a stretch of the imagination that multi-national formula manufacturers (specifically Nestlé/Gerber and Abbott Nutrition) stand to lose lots of milk money.

Count the money

Infant formula is extremely profitable for the manufacturers, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture generously contributes to their wealth. The largest domestic purchaser of infant formula is the federal food assistance program, Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). WIC distributes monthly food packages of basic nutrition—including only one brand of infant formula—to low income women and to children up to 5 years of age. Formula manufacturers are required to bid for a multi-year sole supplier contract for a state's WIC program in order for their product to be distributed by WIC. The contract also requires the manufacturer to provide a rebate for each container of formula purchased by the state.

Currently, the only two formula manufacturers awarded WIC contracts are Nestlé S.A. and Abbott Laboratories.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

Reported revenues for these manufacturers in 2023-24 were estimated at $19.3 billion and $3.9 billion, respectively, and the value of manufacturer rebates to states totaled $1.6 billion. Adding to their coffers are the purchases of formula products by birthing facilities to align with the product distributed by WIC programs. Yet, these profits are not enough to satisfy manufacturers' greed.

It is very common for a family to continue to feed the same brand of formula that was provided in the birthing facility. Formula manufacturers rely and profit on this behavior. On Jan. 15, 2025, U.S. Government Accountability Office reported that the winner of the sole supplier contract increased the retail cost of a 12-ounce container of powdered formula—the same container obtained from WIC—by 1.7%, on average, and a 0.3% price increase for other formula products of the same brand.

In the case of WIC participants, when their monthly supply of formula is exhausted, additional supply must be purchased out-of-pocket until the next month's allotment is available. When the infant reaches six months of age, formula is removed from the monthly WIC supply. Families then assume full payment of formula for the remainder of the infant's first year of life, the recommended duration of formula feeding.

While shopping for infant formula, consumers can find products labeled as a toddler nutritional drink to complement a toddler's diet. These drinks are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) explains that in the absence of federal regulation, the composition of these drinks is inconsistent and perhaps nutritionally incomplete. AAP states these toddler nutrition drinks should be avoided even in situations of children with feeding difficulties and dependence on liquid nutrition.

Formula manufacturers have thrived from this surefire marketing strategy: insert themselves as invaluable to families for feeding their child and reducing their stress.



In reality, the strategy is to profit by undermining the healthier but unprofitable choice of breastfeeding.

A genuine return to basics

Human milk is developed by the human body to provide for the fundamental growth, development, and health of infant bodies as newborns and throughout their lifespan. The body's production of human milk is linked to providing many maternal health benefits, such as reduced risks of breast and ovarian cancer, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and cardiovascular disease, the same chronic diseases targeted by the current HHS. If this current HHS cares for the health of people and not the health of profit, breastfeeding would be fundamental in its plan for resetting nutrition.

The capitalist drive for profit and wealth impacts the working class for their entire life span. Indeed, formula is invaluable in certain situations, including the maternal choice to not provide breast milk. However, the experimentation of artificial breast milk on vulnerable (presumed weaker) women and babies resulted in the institutionalization and normalization of a product with a dubious and harmful history.

Generations of women were left to feel inadequate, guilty or even depressed (postpartum depression is estimated at 20% of mothers in the U.S.) for not successfully breastfeeding, and for possibly increasing the risk of ill health to their offspring and themselves.

Investment into healthy evidence-based practices, like wearing a seatbelt, not smoking, and breastfeeding, are investments in humanity. In my experience, the majority of pregnant women choose to breastfeed, but when asked why, most answers are based on the mantra "breast is best" without reciting benefits. The decision to breastfeed must be a standardized practice early in pregnancy and throughout the breastfeeding experience, with access to skilled lactation support for meaningful and practical education in every pregnancy, regardless of ability to pay or quality of insurance.

We should all call on this HHS to make a real return to basics by banning special interests and funding the policies and practices that truly support lifelong health.

Will U.S.-Israeli war on Iran open the road to Palestinian freedom?

By Ramzy Baroud



Some are expressing frustration that Iran's conditions to end the war have not explicitly and unequivocally included a demand to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine and dismantle the apartheid regime.

Among the conditions circulated in Iranian and sympathetic media—though not formally confirmed by Tehran—is the proposition that any resolution must include an end to Israel's war across all fronts: Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, and beyond. However, these conditions did not specifically prioritize the freedom of Palestine as a precondition to ending the war.

That frustration is neither misplaced nor marginal. For many, Palestine is not one issue among others, but the defining axis of the conflict itself. Precisely for that reason, however, it cannot be approached in isolation. To treat the current war solely through what has or has not been explicitly stated risks narrowing a profoundly complex confrontation into a single dimension, when in fact it is through this broader, interconnected struggle that the question of Palestine is ultimately being shaped, contested, and potentially resolved.

Several strands of analysis capture elements of this reality, but few sustain it. Some focus narrowly on Israeli domestic politics, arguing that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is prolonging the war to preserve his coalition, delay accountability, and avoid legal consequences that could end his political career.

Others shift to a broader strategic reading, situating the war within Israel's long-standing pursuit of regional dominance—neutralizing adversaries, expanding normalization, and consolidating its position as the central power in the region.

A third line of analysis, closer to the mainstream, continues to operate within the declared framework of Washington and Tel Aviv. Even when it introduces criticism, it remains anchored in the language of Iran's nuclear program, Israeli "security," and the familiar architecture of justification.

This framework is not neutral.

It systematically evades assigning responsibility to Israel for the war, just as it has persistently refused to confront the genocide in Gaza. Even its criticisms of U.S. President Donald Trump remain procedural—focused on the White House's unclear objectives, poor coordination, and contradictory messaging—rather than on the political and moral logic driving the war itself.

Between narrowly internal explanations and an increasingly hollow mainstream narrative, the broader historical trajectory disappears from view.

The truth lies elsewhere.

The Middle East has not entered a crisis suddenly. It has been shaped—deliberately—for instability. What we are witnessing is not an abrupt rupture, but the acceleration of a long-standing historical process that is now reaching a decisive phase.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, concluded between Britain and France, did not simply divide territory; it engineered fragmentation. Arbitrary borders were imposed with little regard for historical, cultural, or social realities, ensuring that the region would remain politically fractured and externally manageable.

This colonial framework was later reinforced through post-World War II arrangements that transferred effective control of the region to the United States. A defining moment came in 1945, when U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt met Saudi King Abdulaziz aboard the USS Quincy, establishing a strategic formula: American security guarantees in exchange for stable access to oil resources.

That arrangement evolved, particularly in the 1970s, into the petrodollar system, whereby global oil transactions were denominated in U.S. dollars. The consequences were structural. Global demand for the dollar was secured, and the strength of the U.S. economy became directly tied to its influence over Middle Eastern energy flows.

From that point onward, U.S. dominance in the region was not merely strategic—it was foundational to the global economic order.

When did this begin to shift?

A common answer points to the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. Intended to consolidate American control, the war instead destabilized the region in profound and lasting ways, exposing the limits of direct military intervention and accelerating forces that Washington itself could not fully contain.

By 2011, the United States began to recalibrate.

The Obama administration's "pivot to Asia" reflected a strategic reorientation toward China, while in the Middle East, Washington adopted a more indirect model of engagement—often described as "leading from behind."

This approach was evident in Libya in 2011, where NATO forces, under U.S. coordination, intervened militarily without a large-scale American ground presence, resulting not in stability, but in state collapse.

Across Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and elsewhere, the United States increasingly relied on proxies, regional alliances, and hybrid forms of warfare. It sought to maintain influence while reducing the political and financial costs of direct occupation.

Within this evolving framework, Israel assumed a more central role. It was no longer simply an ally, but a pillar—positioned as a regional guarantor of security within a U.S.-led order. Arab states, particularly in the Gulf, were incorporated into this arrangement as economic partners, their normalization with Israel framed as both pragmatic and inevitable.

The Abraham Accords, signed in 2020, formalized this shift. They were not merely diplomatic agreements but components of a broader project to reorganize the Middle East in alignment with U.S. and Israeli strategic priorities.

While widely described as a betrayal of Palestine—and rightly so—the Accords were also designed to bypass the Palestinian question altogether. Jared Kushner articulated this logic explicitly, arguing that regional cooperation and economic integration could proceed independently of resolving Palestinian rights.

The discourse itself began to shift accordingly. Israel adopted and expanded the language of a "new Middle East," advancing a vision in which it occupies a central, uncontested position.

This vision was made unmistakably clear in September 2023, when Netanyahu addressed the United Nations and presented a map of the region that excluded Palestine entirely—a political statement as much as a visual one.

Yet even the genocide in Gaza did not fundamentally disrupt this trajectory. Several Arab governments, despite rhetorical condemnation, continued to prioritize the preservation of this emerging order, investing political capital in its survival while offering little meaningful support to Palestinians.

This posture is not accidental.

Many Gulf states were not the product of anti-colonial liberation movements, but of colonial arrangements. As former British protectorates, their political and security systems remain deeply intertwined with Western power. Their limited population size, territorial depth, and strategic autonomy render them dependent on external guarantees for survival.

With China still cautious in projecting military power, and unwilling—at least for now—to replace the United States as a security patron, these states remain anchored to Western political validation, military protection, and technological infrastructure.

From their perspective, the collapse of the existing order is not liberation—it is risk.

This helps explain the absence of any serious shift in their stance toward Israel, even when Israeli leaders openly articulate expansionist ambitions. Netanyahu himself has repeatedly framed Israel's role in terms that suggest a broader regional project—namely "Greater Israel"—one that extends beyond partnership into dominance.

Such statements, while alarming to some, have not fundamentally altered the calculations of Arab regimes. They have long understood the nature of Israeli power, yet continue to operate within a system that rewards alignment with stronger actors, not resistance to them.

With all of this in mind, the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran cannot be understood as a series of isolated decisions or short-term calculations. It is the outcome of a layered and cumulative historical trajectory.

Yes, Netanyahu seeks political survival. Yes, U.S. policy remains deeply shaped by pro-Israel influence. But to reduce the war to these factors alone is to miss its structural function: the attempt to impose a new regional order.

It is precisely within this broader context that the Palestinian resistance in Gaza must be understood. It was never intended to defeat Israel in conventional military terms. Rather, its objective was to widen the scope of the conflict, disrupt Israel's ability to unilaterally reshape the region, and challenge what can be understood as an emerging "Sykes-Picot II"—this time centered on Israeli dominance.

Israel is fully aware of this dynamic. Hence its constant framing of the war as existential, equating it with its founding moment in 1948—the Nakba, and the ethnic cleansing of Palestine.

Yet Iran's powerful response, the sustained role of Hezbollah, the involvement of Ansarallah, and the broader consolidation of what Tehran calls the Axis of Resistance suggest that Israel may not achieve its strategic objectives after all.

And this is precisely where much of the prevailing analysis falls short.

For Iran and its allies, victory does not require a decisive military triumph. It requires endurance. Not losing, in this context, is itself a strategic victory.

Such an outcome would not simply interrupt the existing trajectory; it would begin to reverse it. The strategic arc that followed the Iraq war—reinforced by the "pivot to Asia," the collapse of the Arab uprisings, and the normalization process—would be fundamentally unsettled. Israel's role as a regional "security" guarantor would be weakened, compelling Arab regimes to reassess their alignments and, potentially, to explore new forms of regional coexistence—not with Israel, but with Iran.

In that same moment, the United States would face a narrowing set of options: either deepen its entanglement in a region it has been attempting to recalibrate away from, or accept an altered geopolitical landscape in which Iran and its allies are no longer peripheral actors, but entrenched and unavoidable forces in shaping the region's future.

While this alone will not liberate Palestine or dismantle apartheid, it would nonetheless open new political, geopolitical, and legal spaces for Palestinians to operate—spaces made possible by shifting regional balances and a loosening of long-standing constraints.

If the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran fails, the implications will extend well beyond the battlefield. What will begin to unravel is not only the existing balance of power, but the very language and assumptions that have governed the region for decades.

In that context, global powers such as China and Russia are likely to position themselves more assertively as alternative economic and strategic partners, seeking to capitalize on a changing regional landscape.

At the same time, some European states—already signaling discomfort with U.S. policy—may attempt to negotiate new arrangements, particularly given the strategic centrality of the Strait of Hormuz and its direct implications for global energy flows.

Countries across the Global South may also draw lessons from this moment, exploring forms of regional cooperation that challenge inherited colonial frameworks and long-standing hierarchies of power.

Taken together, these shifts do not resolve the "Palestinian question"—but they do create openings. They expand the terrain on which Palestinians and their allies, including the global solidarity movement, can act, organize, and exert pressure.

With support for Israel declining among ordinary Americans, and with global solidarity for Palestine reaching unprecedented levels —including within Western societies—the contours of a broader political shift are already emerging.

The challenge now is not simply to recognize that change is underway, but to understand its depth and direction, so as not to remain confined to partial readings of the war on Iran. It must instead be engaged as part of a larger struggle over the future of the region, in which Palestine remains central.



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By People's World



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Only People's World tells workers' stories the way they should be told

By Cameron Harrison

TO: People's World readers
FROM: Cameron Harrison, Labor Correspondent

There's a moment that stays with all of us who cover the labor movement. For me, it was an early January morning in Minneapolis. The wind chill was 16 below zero. And there, outside the Delta terminal at the airport, a group of clergy were being zip-tied and loaded onto yellow school buses. They were singing "Everybody's Got a Right to Live." Behind them, a sea of union members—SEIU, Unite Here, the Teachers—were chanting "ICE OUT!" so loud it drowned out the sound of the planes landing and taking off on the runway.

People's World was there with our notebooks and cameras, watching it happen. And we thought to ourselves: Nobody else is going to tell this story the way it needs to be told.

That's why we write for *People's World*. Not to sit in press galleries and report on what big-business politicians said to their billionaire donors or repeat the shameful excuses the capitalist class makes for laying off our fellow workers. But to stand on the picket lines next to the workers who are building a movement—and to bring you their voices, their courage, and their clarity.

As PW labor correspondents, we crisscross the country to cover working-class struggles that the mainstream media ignores. Just recently in Colorado, we covered the 3,800 meatpacking workers who walked off the job at JBS, launching the first major strike in that brutal industry in 40 years. In Detroit, we reported on 10,000 nurses who voted to authorize a strike against a healthcare monopoly that treats them like cogs in a machine, purely for profits.

And here's what the corporate media won't tell you: These fights are connected. The nurses in Detroit, the meatpackers in Greeley, the autoworkers in Tennessee who just won their first union contract after years of anti-union campaigns—they're all part of the same story.

It's the story of working people deciding they've had enough. Enough of speed-ups that break their bodies. Enough of executives who pile on profits while stripping away safety. Enough of the capitalist system that treats immigrant workers as disposable and tells the rest of us to look the other way.

We cover these stories because we believe labor solidarity doesn't stop at the border.



That's why our reporting has taken us from the UAW breakthrough in Chattanooga to the international labor movement's response to the war on Iran, and why we've been following the World Federation of Trade Unions' call for a week of action in solidarity with Cuba.

The same billionaires who attack unions here are funding wars and blockades abroad. And the same working-class power that wins contracts in the South can help win peace and justice everywhere.

We're proud of the work we do. But we can't do it alone.

People's World doesn't take corporate advertising. That means we answer to you—our readers—not to the capitalist class that tries to control the narrative. But it also means we depend on you to keep us going.

If you're already a donor, thank you. You're the reason we could be in Minnesota, Greeley, Detroit, Chattanooga, and beyond, bringing you stories that no one else will tell. If you can give a little more—or become a monthly sustainer—you'll help make sure we can keep showing up, wherever workers are standing up.

And if you haven't donated yet, please consider it. Every dollar goes straight into the work.

There's a checkbox on the "Donate" page of our website to become a sustainer; just choose "monthly." It takes two minutes. And it makes all the difference.

We're in this together. That's what solidarity means. So, let's keep showing up for each other.

In solidarity,

Cameron Harrison
Labor Correspondent

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Pope rebukes Hegseth's prayers, labeling them as bloodlust

By Cameron Harrison

Pope Leo II launched the beginning of the holiest week on the Christian calendar with what is seen worldwide as a sharp attack on U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and the right-wing Christian nationalist movement he is pushing.

The Pope said, "God refuses the prayers of leaders who have hands full of blood." His remarks were seen as a sharp condemnation of Hegseth and a variety of other U.S. lawmakers and Christian nationalist leaders who use religious invocations to claim that the war on Iran is America doing the work of God.

"This is our God: Jesus, King of Peace, who rejects war, whom no one can use to justify war," Leo said to thousands of people attending his Palm Sunday mass at St. Peter's Square. "He does not listen to the prayers of those who wage war, but rejects them."

The Pope demanded an end to all military airstrikes on Iran. The bombings have been carried out for weeks by the Trump and Netanyahu regimes in the U.S. and Israel.

"Thousands of innocent people have been killed, and many others have been forced to abandon their homes," Pope Leo said. "I renew my prayerful closeness to all those who have lost their loved ones in the attacks that have struck schools, hospitals, and residential areas."

The Pope's Palm Sunday remarks directly challenged what Hegseth said just four days earlier. The Defense Secretary offered his "prayers" at the Pentagon.

Hegseth called on his listeners to pray that God will support the mission of U.S. troops to "rain violence and death on the enemy." He also asked God to guide American bullets straight into the bodies of their opponents, saying, "Let every round find its mark against the enemies of righteousness and our great nation."

He prayed, "We ask these things in bold confidence in the mighty and powerful name of Jesus Christ."



Hegseth has previously organized "prayer meetings" at the Pentagon, which also call upon God to aid the U.S. war effort in Iran and elsewhere.

Christian nationalist supporters of these actions have gone so far as to claim that U.S. wars are part of God's plan to bring on the apocalypse, after which Christ will descend upon the Earth, and judge everyone, condemning all non-believers to Hell.

Hegseth has several tattoos featuring imagery associated with Christian nationalism, including a Jerusalem cross on his chest. That cross was carried by medieval European Crusaders who set out to kill followers of the Muslim religion.

Christian nationalists inject their racist views into U.S. politics wherever they can in an effort to move the political agenda to the right, critics charge. Americans United for Separation of Church and State has filed a lawsuit over Hegseth's latest remarks and similar religious meetings hosted by Labor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer.

The group said the two officials abuse "the power of their government positions and taxpayer-funded resources to impose their preferred religion on federal workers."

Rev. Primo Racimo, an Episcopal Church pastor at St. Margaret's Church on the South Side of Chicago, the hometown of the Pope, said, "It is encouraging and invaluable to have someone from our city who has risen to such a high position in the Church take positions that are in the interest of all the people of the world." He said the Pope follows a just tradition in the Church.

Father Primo mentioned St. Margaret of Scotland, the patron saint of his church. He noted that during her reign, her husband, the king, went off on the Crusades against Islam. While he was gone, Margaret opened the country's jails, freeing those imprisoned for political and religious beliefs.

LABOR NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

Seen through these facts, Cuba is more than a passive supplicant, waiting on humanitarian aid to bring oil or other essentials back to its shores. It is a nation adapting to the artificial oil scarcity created by Trump and Rubio's intensified blockade and preparing rationally for a future independent of fossil fuels, capable of confronting both the political and environmental challenges that will surely come.

A sign of the changing times, throughout Havana—a city known for its vintage American cars—the collective taxis people use on their everyday commutes are rapidly changing. Whereas these were usually old, gas-guzzling 1950s Chevrolets, increasingly Cubans are using new, electric Chinese tricycle wagons.

Imperialism vs Internationalism

Highlighting Cuba's modes of resistance and future-oriented planning is not to negate the real material effects of the intensified blockade in Cuban's lives. Currently, Cuba is still far from achieving its planned goals of energy independence, and the toll of fuel shortages on people's lives is real and heavy; Cubans are dealing with difficult realities no one should have to endure.

The United States uses its financial and economic hegemony to prevent the island nation from full participation in the world market, cutting off its access to, for example, the dollar currency. Cuba must also rely on trade with geographically distant partners, such as Russia and China, which drives up prices for goods.

part 6 of this article will appear in week's edition

La brecha de igualdad salarial para las mujeres se amplía por segundo año consecutivo

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—Por segundo año consecutivo, la brecha de igualdad salarial entre hombres y mujeres trabajadores se amplió en 2025, informaron la National Partnership for Women and Families y el Economic Policy Institute.

Como resultado, el 26 de marzo de 2026 fue el Día de la Igualdad Salarial, el día en que el salario medio de una mujer trabajadora por todo 2025 finalmente igualó al de su contraparte masculina. Controlando por raza y etnicidad, la brecha fue del 19%, más amplia que el 18% de 2024.

EPI dijo que la brecha se amplió debido a los ataques del republicano Donald Trump contra los trabajadores, los cuales afectaron duramente a las trabajadoras y especialmente a las trabajadoras de color.

Esos ataques incluyeron los despidos masivos de trabajadores federales por parte de Trump, su abolición de los programas de diversidad, equidad e inclusión—y la adopción de ese mandato por parte del sector privado, de manera voluntaria o bajo amenaza—y su reversión de las políticas de la administración Biden que aumentaban los salarios de los proveedores de cuidado infantil y de atención domiciliaria.

Esas acciones afectaron de manera desproporcionada a las mujeres trabajadoras, señaló EPI. La brecha se amplió porque, mientras el salario mediano de los hombres trabajadores aumentó un 3,7% en 2025, el salario mediano de las mujeres trabajadoras se mantuvo sin cambios.

"Las mujeres reciben menos salario que los hombres debido a la discriminación asociada con la segregación ocupacional. Esto devalúa el trabajo de las mujeres según las normas sociales, muchas de las cuales se arraigan mucho antes de que las mujeres ingresen al mercado laboral", informaron los analistas del EPI.

"La brecha salarial es menor entre los trabajadores con salarios más bajos, en parte porque el salario mínimo crea un piso salarial. En el percentil 10, a las mujeres se les paga $1.39 (o 9.1%) menos por hora que a los hombres, mientras que la brecha salarial en el punto medio es de $4.12 por hora (o 14.7%). A las mujeres en el percentil 90 de su distribución salarial se les paga $14.05 (o 19.6%) menos por hora que a los hombres en el percentil 90 de la distribución salarial".

Y las mujeres no pueden salir de la brecha salarial únicamente mediante la educación, debido a normas históricas y sociales, dijo EPI. Estas incluyen la segregación ocupacional de las mujeres en empleos peor remunerados y la devaluación del trabajo de las mujeres, ambos factores que han estado arraigados en la sociedad durante décadas.

"Los estados pueden reducir la brecha salarial de género con políticas que garanticen el acceso a licencias familiares y médicas pagadas, exijan transparencia salarial, aumenten el salario mínimo y faciliten que los trabajadores formen sindicatos", dijo EPI.

Pero la legislación para lograr estos objetivos está estancada en el Congreso liderado por los republicanos, mientras que el régimen republicano de Trump ha estado revirtiendo regulaciones de igualdad salarial que las administraciones demócratas anteriores de Obama y Biden habían promulgado, señaló la National Partnership.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
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April 11, 2026

What's next after No Kings? May Day!

By Joe Sims

No Kings 3 was by far the largest, broadest, and most important expression of the anti-MAGA upsurge to date. Organizers estimate that some 8 million people turned out at over 3,000 protests across all 50 states. In New York City, it is estimated that some 300,000 demonstrated against Trump and the MAGA agenda. Organizers anticipated such a massive turnout that they directed marchers along two avenues instead of one. They were right: protesters filled both 7th Avenue and Broadway before merging at Times Square and marching to 34th Street, where the demonstration ended.

New York's protest was militant, joyous, and celebratory. It was filled with song, marching bands, drumming, and, of course, militant chants. Due to labor's participation, the march showed signs of a breakthrough — already somewhat present in October's No Kings 2 — in the crowd's class and racial composition. With the exception of the first protest in Manhattan in March 2025, led by Make the Road and a few labor unions, New York's anti-Trump marches have been overwhelmingly white. This time, however, the civil rights movement was represented by the NAACP, along with Rev. Al Sharpton of the National Action Network, who joined the press conference on the morning of the march.

Thus, while the third march may not quite have been the charm, it revealed modest progress, laying the basis for greater multiracial and multinational unity. This cooperation was an achievement following the divisions that emerged after the defeat of the Biden–Harris electoral coalition. That loss sparked feelings of betrayal among segments of the Black electorate, alongside shock and despair within the broader democratic base, leading to a general demobilization of anti-MAGA resistance. In the ensuing vacuum, a new social movement — "50501" — emerged to organize the first national anti-MAGA protests. Initially organized on Reddit, the movement's leadership lacked established ties to communities of color, contributing to limited Black, Brown and Asian participation.

A major feature of No Kings 3, however, was the AFL-CIO's support. The trade union federation not only endorsed the protest but also organized two national online meetings to increase worker participation.



The NAACP also endorsed the march, with local branches organizing turnout. Latino organizations joined as well, including United We Dream and the League of United Latin American Citizens.

The CPUSA organized militant contingents in many protests around the country marching in New York under a banner demanding an end to the war on Iran.

At this stage of the anti-MAGA fightback, labor's participation is vital.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

What's next after No Kings? May Day!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

The people's front must not only be broad but must also reach deeply into the ranks of the working class. In fact, the future success of the anti-fascist coalition depends largely on whether it becomes working-class-led. The working class must place its unifying imprint on the struggle to preserve democracy and overcome the vacillating and half-hearted efforts that have characterized centrist and liberal bourgeois Democratic Party leadership. In this regard, those who attacked No Kings — labeling it a "liberal block party" and urging people to stay away — are making a serious mistake. Weaknesses in program and platform are not corrected from the sidelines but through engagement in the main avenues of struggle.

That is precisely what is beginning to happen. At the Minnesota No Kings protest — the country's "flagship event" — Indivisible co-chair Ezra Levin, drawing on the success of the Twin Cities January action, called on the anti-MAGA movement to adopt a "No Work, No School, No Shopping" theme for the upcoming May Day marches and protests. The May Day Strong coalition appears to be among the initiators. While local conditions vary greatly, a Minnesota-style economic shutdown could have a major impact, and support for such actions seems to be growing. At this stage, however, major trade union backing remains uncertain. That said, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, at a No Kings 3 follow-up meeting, emphasized the importance of Workers Memorial Day and May Day, calling them not only "days of reflection" but also "days of worker demand. "This expression of support for May Day appears to signal a significant shift for AFL-CIO leadership, whose spokespersons in the past encouraged unions to celebrate Law Day on May 1.

May Day appears poised to be the next major national action. Organizers argue — and rightly so — that, in addition to marching, other tactics are necessary, including demonstrative, nonviolent shows of force. Indeed, all the tools in the toolbox must be employed in the fight against the MAGA right. Whether calls for strikes and boycotts this May Day will be widely heeded remains uncertain. That said, the concept of working-class action capable of halting the flow of goods is now gaining traction and will not be easily dismissed — the success of the national Target boycott is a case in point.

Speaking of the Target actions, despite some confusion that entered the boycott movement when one coalition partner recently withdrew, the campaign continues. Anger at Target's capitulation to MAGA runs deep in the African American community, and key demands have yet to be fully met. In addition, the corporation continues to allow ICE to use its facilities—a callous act that has significantly broadened public awareness of its ongoing complicity with MAGA policies. In a notable display of solidarity, the American Federation of Teachers has reiterated its support for the boycott.

Thus, May Day appears to promise a new level of working-class unity against the MAGA right. Needless to say, such unity must also include demands to end the blockade against Cuba and the war against Iran. Nor can there be any retreat from the demand to end the genocide in Gaza.

All out for May Day 2026!

What can I do to fight fascism?

By Kate Jones



This question has occupied the minds of millions of working people across the United States as Donald Trump and his allies on the extreme right have tightened their grip on American life. The people's answer has been resounding: The No Kings protests have been the largest demonstrations in American history, while whistle-toting brigades have become symbols of the resistance to ICE.

Among these efforts, two initiatives have stood out for striking at the economic foundations of the extreme right: the recent general strike in Minneapolis and a nationwide Target boycott against their failed promises to Black communities and anti-DEI policies.

The impact that these grassroots struggles have had in fighting fascism makes them inspiring examples for all working people as the fight against Trumpism continues. They also provide critical lessons for activists in Philadelphia —and everywhere—as we continue our own struggles.

The Minnesota General Strike: A day years in the making

The images out of Minneapolis this January rippled across the nation. They showed a city under federal occupation and innocent people arrested or killed by their own government. But scenes of people protecting their friends and neighbors also showed the power of solidarity. The culmination of this solidarity came on Jan. 23, when tens of thousands left their workplaces and braved -15 degree weather to fill the streets in protest.

Less apparent to those outside of the city, however, were the organizing structures that made this all possible.

One of the most notable aspects of the strike in Minnesota was the leading role the labor movement played in the coalition. This was no accident. Unions in Minnesota have been central to winning a variety of policy victories in the state through what they call the "Minnesota Model."

In this approach, the solidarity that unions have traditionally expressed in the workplace is extended to fights for broader policy wins, whether that be for a $15 minimum wage, against police brutality, or for free school meals. Through these efforts, unions built connections with faith organizations, political groups, and community organizations that allowed them to mobilize swiftly when action was needed.

The importance of this holistic, labor-led approach to organizing was demonstrated amply in the general strike. While, because of decades-old union-busting laws, unions did not formally call for a strike, their memberships mobilized nonetheless. Teachers and hospitality workers called out sick en masse. Even this tactic was a demonstration of the power of the Minnesota Model, as in many cases, it was the Earned Sick and Safe Time law, in effect since 2024, which gave workers the ability to participate.

The Minnesota General Strike demonstrated the importance of the hard, sometimes thankless work that goes into building communities that can fight back against the extreme right. It was because so many Minnesotans were connected with organizations in their community and their workplace that they could work together effectively.

It was the alliance these organizations had built through years of struggle that allowed them to form a single movement. And it was the leading role of the labor movement that gave the general strike the economic power to effect real change.

The Target boycott: Bringing the fight to capital's bottom line

January also marked the one-year anniversary of another struggle against the extreme right that started in Minnesota: the Target boycott. It was at Target's headquarters in the state that the company announced it was rolling back the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives it had enacted in the wake of the killing of George Floyd. It was also at Target's headquarters that local activists announced an indefinite boycott of the company until these programs are restored.

What started in Minnesota went national. A coalition in Washington, D.C., picketed a local Target for almost an entire year. The American Federation of Teachers joined the boycott on Labor Day. Here in Philadelphia, local churches joined a "Target fast" effort during the Lenten season.

The boycott had massive effects on Target's bottom line, with the company's stock price dropping by more than 50% and the company's CEO deciding to step down in late 2025.

One of the most notable aspects of the Target boycott was how its goals adapted over time to the different ways the Trump administration worked with the company to attack working people.

As Target stores were used as bases for ICE raids in Minneapolis this January, and Latino workers were detained in Target stores in the city, a coalition of faith leaders occupied the company's headquarters demanding change. Nationwide actions at Targets followed, and the company's CEO broke with the administration by signing a letter calling for de-escalation of actions in the city.

However, organizers have called for substantive changes from Target, including protections for its customers and employees against ICE action, as a condition for stopping their boycott.

This latest effort against Target's cooperation with ICE has also spread to Philadelphia. The No ICE Philly Coalition has organized a number of actions at local Target stores. They echo the demands that Target clearly state its opposition to ICE actions and affirm itself as a 4th Amendment workplace, which would protect its customers and employees from ICE actions on Target property without a judicial warrant.

In this way, activists hope to bring the action against Target to a new stage, fighting not only the extreme right's racist anti-DEI policies, but also their brutal attacks on immigrant workers.

Building the resistance in Philadelphia

The examples of the Minnesota General Strike and the boycott against Target are important markers of how to build the fightback against fascism. They show the importance of a fighting labor movement taking a leadership role, the benefits of coordination between unions, faith groups, community organizations, and others involved in the fight against ICE.

Minnesota also underscores the economic power that ordinary people can wield when working together—not least of which because it shows the importance of understanding the connections between campaigns as disparate as those for DEI and against ICE to defeating the extreme right in all of its forms.

That being said, it is not possible for Philadelphians to simply copy the example of other cities. How, then, should we apply these lessons in our own lives? There are three elements that are deserving of particular focus.

First, the example of Minnesota speaks to the importance of being organized. This can take many forms, whether that be through connection to a politically active religious group or to a political or community organization.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

However one does it, being connected to other ordinary people engaged in the fight against fascism allows us to pool our efforts and achieve goals that would be impossible on our own.

In addition, for those in these organizations working to build broader coalitions between different groups can help to create the kind of city that is capable of resisting even the strongest of federal onslaughts.

Second, for those who are members of labor unions, urging co-workers and fellow members to use their economic and political power to defend working people as a whole is essential. Unions played a leading role in Minnesota, and they can likewise play an indispensable role in efforts against the Trump administration in Philadelphia.

For those who are not members of unions but are interested in organizing their workplace, these examples likewise speak to the power of unions to win not only economic gains for their own workers but their essential role as part of the broader campaign against the extreme right.

Finally, taking actions that use our economic power to fight back is essential.

Every one of us can participate in the boycott against Target and ensure that we have signed a boycott pledge to let the company know whose business they are losing. Taking these campaigns to our local stores makes the fight concrete. Similarly, in other campaigns against corporations aligning with MAGA, we should think about how we can have real economic impacts.

In short, the answer to the question "What can I do to fight fascism?" is a multifaceted one. By keeping the lessons of the efforts over the past year in mind, we can ensure that we are each doing our part.

What can I do next?

- Sign a pledge to boycott Target.
- **Join a community organization:** There are dozens of groups across the city doing the work of fighting MAGA. If you aren't a member of one, join one! One of many great organizations discussed in this article is No ICE Philly. If you're not in Philly, there are bound to be local groups in your area.
- **Organize your coworkers:** If you are part of a union, push them to join the fight against Trump. If you are not, consider organizing your workplace.
- **Get involved in local politics:** Local officials play a key role in the fight, and local elections are happening all of the time. Support a campaign, or if necessary, start one.

Trump demands $1.5 trillion for war plus domestic cuts

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—Budget proposals, especially for the federal government, are political documents—and that was never more obvious than in the spending plan for fiscal 2027, which right-wing, militaristic, and dictatorial President Donald Trump unveiled on April 4. Amidst tirades full of obscenities and threats to carry out illegal attacks on Iran, he demanded Congress give him the biggest military budget in U.S. history.

The bottom line: A 45 percent increase for war and the military in the year starting October 1, with much of it devoted to Trump's Iran War. Trump's "War Department" would get $1.5 trillion total, with $350 billion to, as he said, bomb Iran back to the Stone Age. The budget has more than a 10 percent cut in domestic spending, with dozens of programs cut to zero. Mostly, he wants to cut aid to poor people, people of color, or both.

Children will go hungry under Trump's budget blueprint, says Becky Pringle, president of the National Education Association, the nation's largest union.

Families won't be able to afford rent or even keep the lights on, she adds. The budget also zeroes out home heating and cooling assistance for low-income people, its documents show.



Centers where such services are provided are located in the city of Chicago, including a long-time provider operating at the Unity Center at 3339 South Halsted Street.

"This is not merely irresponsible, it is cruel," Pringle said of Trump's spending plan.

Another summing up of the Trump regime's budget plan came from Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., the top Democrat on the Republican-run Senate Budget Committee. That panel will play a dual key role in the coming drawn-out budget fight, where the president proposes, and Congress disposes.

Trump's budget "is just an out-of-touch plea for more money for guns and bombs, and less for the things people need, like housing, health care, education, roads, scientific research, and environmental protection," Merkley said in a statement. Trump would cut the EPA by 52%.

Trump's budget is the opening salvo between Trump and Congress—on both sides of the aisle—over spending priorities. If the conflict plays out like it did for fiscal 2026, which is now almost half over, expect to see another deadlock over the Homeland Security Department.

Trump wants more money for that agency to pay to private prison firms to convert factories into prisons or to build concentration camps for the tens of thousands of people his vicious and violent ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents sweep up.

Congressional Democrats may try to stop camp and prison construction cash. Polls show most respondents call for abolishing ICE.

The budget battle and subsequent ones over actual money bills will also produce a spate of temporary fixes, called continuing resolutions, and potentially another partial government shutdown.

The two congressional budget committees will set priorities for the budget. More importantly, they'll handle another monster "reconciliation" bill dealing only with taxes and spending in broad categories. Trump wants to lump the $350 billion for the Iran War into that, as reconciliation cannot be filibustered.

And his budget blueprint calls for axing spending for any programs that could help people of color and/or poor people, who need aid the most. It particularly aims at what it calls "woke" programs, a deliberate coded slam at non-white people.

The nation's two largest unions, the National Education Association and the Service Employees, promptly denounced Trump's budget blueprint. SEIU, in a BlueSky tweet, blasted the extra hundreds of billions of dollars for the war on Iran.

"Voters are saying it loud and clear: Spend $200 billion on healthcare, education, and communities, NOT war. People want investments that actually improve their lives. This is about priorities. And right now this administration is putting working families last," the union tweeted.

NEA President Pringle, a Philadelphia science teacher, was more detailed.

Her union noted the total cut in domestic spending of at least 10%, including a $3.2 billion cut in the already decimated federal Department of Education. Overall, NEA said, "students and educators need a budget that funds and protects public education, safeguards essential programs, and invests in our communities.

"Trump's budget…also exposes an administration that utterly abandoned working Americans. This administration is sending an unmistakable message: Students, educators, and working families do not matter," said Pringle. "This proposal rips even more resources away from classrooms and communities that need them most, while handing more power and privilege to the wealthy and well-connected."

Among the education programs Trump would ax are full-service community schools–so-called wrap-around schools, a top cause of the Teachers/AFT–teacher quality training, money to improve secondary school education, and increases for institutions that serve minorities.

"This budget attacks efforts to ensure every student, no matter their race, ZIP code, or family income, can thrive…These programs help educators meet the needs of all students," said Pringle.

Labor Department enforcement, including civil rights enforcement, would suffer under Trump's spending plan. Like Trump, his Budget Director, Russell Vought, is responsible for most of the federal worker firings in the last year, particularly hates diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. Overall, DOL would be cut from $13.3 billion to $9.9 billion (26%).

For the first time, there is no separate line for the National Labor Relations Board, which Trump proposed cutting in fiscal 2026 by a third, to $200 million—its level in current dollars (not counting inflation) equal to that of 2012. Instead, his budget lumps the NLRB in with "other agencies," and cuts the total for all of them by around 40%.

Worker protection agencies, including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, and the Labor Department's Wage and Hour Division, would suffer a combined $234 million cut. And that doesn't include the $100 million budget for the office that ensures federal contractors follow civil rights laws in their hiring and promotions. It would be eliminated.

Also eliminated: Susan Harwood worker training grants. Trump charged the grants fund for the Laborers Union, the National Day Labor Organizing Network, Farmworker Justice, and the Latino Worker Safety Center, among others. All are "woke organizations," Budget Director Vought alleged, without proof.

Like prior Republican regimes, Trump's DOL would "emphasize outreach, education, and assistance—rather than harsh penalties—for employers and workers trying to comply with labor laws and standards, and eliminates overbearing and burdensome regulations." In past GOP governments, outreach and education often meant giving corporate America a free pass on workers' rights violations.

Trump's Environmental Protection Agency, led by former Rep. Lee Zeldin, a Republican from Long Island, previously trashed environmental rules and findings, including the key one that said EPA had power under its "clean air" mandate to pursue carbon-emitting coal power plants. Now, Trump wants to cut the EPA's budget by 52%.

"Trump is doubling down on his attacks on clean energy, while even his own voters recognize it's the fastest, cheapest way to get new energy on the grid

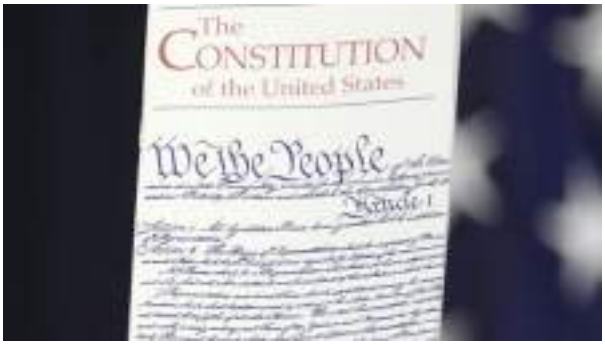
This is happening at a time when demand is at an all-time high and utility bills are skyrocketing," responded Jason Walsh, executive director of the BlueGreen Alliance, a Steelworkers-co-founded coalition of unions and green groups.

Trump's budget also devotes an entire section to "eliminating the Green New Deal." That includes killing all funds for electric vehicle stations, ending a tax break for EV purchases, and defunding other EV programs, including battery construction plants.

The Auto Workers have invested in EV production, in cooperation with the Detroit 3 automakers. Ford, GM, and Stellantis. Managements agreed EV factories would be unionized. Nevertheless, many rank-and-file Auto Workers voted for Trump, believing his promise that they could keep building gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles.

Birthright citizenship battle reflected at the Supreme Court

By David Sobelsohn



In 1607, an English court ruled that babies born in Scotland after it unified with England were born the English king's "subjects," with all the rights of Englishmen. Well into the 19th century, standard American and British legal treatises included, as basic law, the 1607 case's principle of "birthright citizenship."

Donald Trump is now attempting to overturn more than four centuries of settled law. Based on a recent Supreme Court argument, he will likely not succeed.

The United States first adopted a national rule of birthright citizenship after the Civil War. In 1868, mostly to overturn a Supreme Court decision that no one of African descent could qualify as an American citizen, Congress passed the 14th Amendment. It explicitly confers American citizenship on any person "born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof."

Until 2025, American courts and presidents have consistently held that the "citizenship" clause means what it says. For example, in 1898, in the case of Wong Kim Ark, the Supreme Court ruled that the 14th Amendment "reaffirmed in the most explicit and comprehensive terms" the "fundamental principle of citizenship by birth within the dominion."

The court only recognized two exceptions: Children of foreign enemies in hostile occupation of the child's birthplace and children of foreign diplomats.

In 1940, and again in 1952, Congress enshrined birthright citizenship in federal statutes.

Despite these federal laws and four centuries of legal history, on Jan. 20, 2025, President Donald Trump issued an executive order that "United States citizenship does not automatically extend to persons born in the United States." It specifically excludes babies born when their parents were here illegally. Trump claims only those legally in the United States are "subject to" American jurisdiction.

A standard law dictionary defines "jurisdiction" to mean a court's "power and authority" to "pronounce the sentence of the law, or to award the remedies provided by law." So far, every court that's considered Trump's executive order has declared it invalid. One judge called it "blatantly unconstitutional."

In 2025, the Supreme Court ducked the issue. It ruled that—whatever their ruling on birthright citizenship—other courts had no authority to apply their decisions beyond those who brought the case. This year, on April 1, in *Trump v. Barbara*, birthright citizenship returned to the Supreme Court.

For the federal government, Solicitor General D. John Sauer argued that "jurisdiction," in the 14th Amendment and the 1940 and 1952 statutes, doesn't mean what's in law dictionaries. He distinguished between what he called "political jurisdiction," the type that confers citizenship, and "regulatory jurisdiction," the type involved when governments regulate behavior, as with criminal law.

For Sauer, "political jurisdiction" requires "allegiance," a "reciprocal relationship," which Sauer claimed exists only when someone lives somewhere legally and with intent to remain "permanently." It excludes temporary visitors or anyone lacking legal immigration status.

No justice bought Sauer's distinction. As Justice Neil Gorsuch pointed out, no one debating the 14th Amendment in 1868 limited its citizenship clause in the way Sauer suggested. And if intent to remain permanently matters, whose intent counts—the mother's or the father's? Besides, if intent to remain is key, why should it matter whether a baby's parents are here legally or illegally?

The justices raised other practical problems with a line based on the parents' intent and on legal residence. Asked Justice Amy Coney Barrett, would pregnant women have to sit for an interview as to their intent, or bring proof of legal residence to the delivery room? What if, at the baby's birth, hospital workers don't even know the parents' identity?

Sauer could only respond by claiming intent to remain is "objectively verifiable," and suggesting that, when their baby is denied citizenship, new parents could appeal.

What about Sauer's claim that citizenship requires "allegiance"? Justice Elena Kagan called that claim "technical" and "esoteric," based on "obscure sources." Justice Sonia Sotomayor noted that even visitors, when in the United States, owe allegiance to our laws.

To Sauer's claim that allegiance is a "reciprocal relationship," Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson argued that even travelers have that relationship with the place they find themselves. Just as foreign travelers must obey local law, they can count on local law enforcement to protect them.

Chief Justice John Roberts was also skeptical about Sauer's argument. He saw Sauer as trying to expand the long-recognized birthright-citizenship exceptions, which the Chief Justice called "tiny" and "idiosyncratic," to cover a much larger category of children.

Added Justice Coney Barrett, the standard exceptions all constitute "natural outgrowths" of the general rule. All deal with people outside the reach of American authority and within the jurisdiction of another country. The children covered by the standard exceptions have legal immunity from the local government. Diplomats' children can literally get away with murder.

By contrast, ordinary criminal defendants, just because they were in the United States temporarily or without legal status, can't claim their status allows them to escape American jurisdiction.

Sauer echoed Donald Trump's claim that virtually no other country still has birthright citizenship.

Not only is that false—around three dozen still offer birthright citizenship—but, as Justice Brett Kavanaugh pointed out, American courts interpret American law based on American precedent and history. What other countries do is irrelevant.

And when Sauer warned that an increased threat of illegal immigration makes this a "new world," the Chief Justice retorted that, even if it's a "new world," it's "the same constitution."

The justices also questioned Sauer's analysis of the longtime understanding, since its 1868 ratification, of the 14th Amendment, of the Supreme Court's 1898 decision in the Wong Kim Ark case, and of what Congress meant in its 1940 and 1952 laws.

Justice Kagan noted even Sauer's brief concedes the government's taking a "revisionist" position regarding a "substantial part of our history." Wondered Justice Gorsuch, given the multiple expansive readings of Wong Kim Ark and of the amendment between 1868 and 1940, shouldn't the court infer that the 1940 Congress incorporated those readings?

Indeed, because the Supreme Court prefers to base decisions on statutes, not the Constitution, both Justices Gorsuch and Kavanaugh suggested the court should rule against Trump's order using the 1940 and 1952 federal statutes, instead of the 14th Amendment.

Warned of the Trump order's potentially harmful real-world effects—including those in a brief filed by the AFL-CIO—Sauer reminded the justices that Trump proposes his order apply only to babies born after the court's decision, not to current citizens. But, as Justice Sotomayor noted, the logic of Sauer's argument would permit any president, even Trump, to start stripping away citizenship from current citizens.

Even Justice Samuel Alito warned about the "humanitarian problem" raised by expelling immigrants who have gone "through the proper procedures," and who have "made a permanent home here and have established roots."

Seeking to overturn the order, Cecillia Wang, ACLU legal director and herself the daughter of Taiwanese immigrants, picked up on this point. Ruling for the government could jeopardize the status of "millions of Americans," who thought they and their ancestors were citizens, she said.

A decision is expected by July 4.

People's World inspired me to become a volunteer working-class journalist

By Raven Raevsky

TO: People's World Readers
FROM: Raven Raevsky, New writer from DFW



I hope you are doing well, and I thank you for engaging so deeply with People's World. The reactionary forces are in very strong positions right now, so staying in touch with us is very important.

As the crises in the United States continue to worsen, I've grown increasingly frustrated with mainstream news sources.
In their reporting I see a callous dismissal of working people's frustrations with the capitalist system. Healthcare reforms are dismissed for being expensive while the ballooning military and police budgets are ignored or cheered for.

Rallies asking for basic democratic rights are lambasted for being too violent, all the while the violence inherent to our system of private wealth accumulation is treated with kiddy gloves.

Urgent threats to our siblings at home and around the world—such as voting rights and xenophobic demonization campaigns domestically or our country's brutal sanctions regimes, military strikes, and promotion of antidemocratic economic systems internationally—are routinely ignored and often actively promoted.

Many of us Americans have increasingly sought out alternative news sources, but many of them come with their own issues. Some regurgitate corporate media talking points, others stoke the fires of bigotry more strongly than mainstream communications dare to try.

Even outlets that might not overtly call to pogrom marginalized communities may still verbally call to throw them under the bus to focus on "the most important" issues facing Americans.

Other commentators inexperienced in struggling against reaction urge people to give up against the struggle for liberation in the U.S. Some podcasters frustrated with the status quo may encourage their viewers to pursue individualistic and futile strategies.

People's World's strength comes from how our reporting is informed by confrontations with corporate attacks on all sectors of the working class. Our writers understand that attacks on our siblings from the Black, undocumented, queer, immigrant, and international communities interlink with each other to deepen oppression for everybody.

We know that fighting for a better world is never hopeless, and we show that people are struggling every day to build that better world.

All of these strengths of *People's World* inspired me to join the struggles against corporate tyranny. If you are as moved by *People's World* as I am, I implore you to consider signing up for as a monthly sustainer or make a one-time donation to the *People's World* Fund Drive!

Perhaps you or your organization can take out an ad in the upcoming May Day Greetings Book.

With enough consistent income from our supporters, we can afford to expand our staff, broaden our network of volunteers, and widen our coverage. We can deepen our fight against the oligarchs as a voice of the people.

Thank you for your support,

Raven Raevsky
Volunteer correspondent, Dallas-Fort Worth

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Latino/Chicano(a) identity and working-class solidarity

By David Trujillo

A recent report, *State of Latinos in California*, published by the UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Institute, shows data that Latinos make up nearly two in five workers in California. What are the trends forecasted in the report?

- Younger Latinos are attaining higher levels of education than previous generations.
- Latino entrepreneurship has grown by 44% percent since 2008.
- Latino workers play indispensable roles in the industries that keep California running.

The report also indicates the structural barriers that keep Latinos from full access to opportunities, such as remaining highly represented in lower-wage, labor-intensive sectors, and the wage gap persists. This data is useful for assessing the role of Chicanos/Latinos in the United States and in the state of California.

The Latino/Chicano(a) identity

Latino/Chicanos(a) are not separate from the working class. We are an important and integral part of the working class. There should be no doubt about this. In California and across the country, demographics indicate that Latinos/Chicanos(a) are influential because of our numbers. The UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Institute's recent study makes this very clear.

For example, the Latino population has surpassed 68 million, which is 20% of the U.S. population. There are 35 million Latino workers with a 69% labor force participation rate. California has nearly 7.8 million workers with a Latino population of 41%. 37.4 million people of Mexican origin in the U.S. represented nearly 60% of the nation's Latino population in 2022. Those of Puerto Rican origin are the next largest group, at 5.9%, which does not include another roughly 3.2 million Puerto Ricans who live on the island, according to Pew Research.

Within this community, many Latino/Chicano(a) activists continue to organize at the grassroots level to address tough social problems and engage the community in addressing the extreme inequality in the distribution of urban infrastructure, rural services, and other social needs. In many cases, community activists brought working people together to create community programs and to put pressure on institutions and politicians to improve community access to services and to challenge inequality and unfair practices.



Most recently, the Latinos/Chicanos(a) have begun to play an active role in the labor movement, although in the past the labor movement was still a white male-dominated organization. However, as a growing community, we learned from history and past struggles.

This community has matured over the decades, despite all the setbacks endured. We can review one aspect of this maturity. The majority of Latino voters believe that their economic fortunes have declined under the Republican majority, including President Trump's tenure, with 55% of Latinos viewing Democrats as a little bit more responsive to their needs but clearly view the GOP as hostile, according to UnidosUS.

Today, there is a new political maturity in the Latino/Chicano(a) community. This maturity has its roots in the establishment of the Mexican-American movement starting in the 1940s, when many Mexican-American GIs returned to their communities. Political and community empowerment organizing continues today as well.

Although Mexican-Americans have been active members of the progressive movement dating back to the 1800s, this marked the beginning of a rich progressive movement within the Mexican-American community. Later, the Mexican-American/Chicano(a) movement would become rooted in this tradition; it marked the beginning of a rich progressive movement in the Mexican-American/Chicano(a) community, creating avenues for new political maturity and renewed militancy.

The Latino/Chicano(a) community has developed, over the years, alliances with other groups that are necessary for this turbulent period. This new community and alliance-building is an important part of the current Latino/Chicano(a) movement organizing, which will eventually realign California and, in the process, realign American politics. This movement realignment, in collaboration with grassroots community action, the political left, and the trade union movement, is a struggle for social change at the grassroots level. This type of movement scares many people within America, but the struggle and unity-building will continue.

LABOR NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

One example of this hardship is the shortage some Cubans are facing in gas for their home cooking stoves. Cooking over a charcoal fire may be a fun way to pass a Saturday afternoon in the park, but it's no way to prepare dinner in your fourth-floor Havana apartment. Nonetheless, this is what some Cubans have had to resort to with increasing gas shortages.

As one young Cuban researcher at the Institute of Philosophy in Havana explained, there are two ways gas for cooking stoves is distributed to the population: through direct gas lines, which only some buildings in the oldest zones of the capital have, or through the distribution of liquid gas tanks. While the government provides these tanks for citizens through its socialized distribution system, breakdowns in the national refinement system—the result of wear and tear that cannot be easily repaired due to inaccessibility of parts and machinery—have meant there is not enough liquid gas to go around, and importation of these tanks means higher prices.

"The last time I had access to a tank was June 6th of last year," the researcher explained. "In the informal market, a full tank costs around 18,000 Cuban pesos, a number that my modest salary as a researcher in a state institution cannot cover."

part 7 of this article will appear in 2 weeks

Series de televisión imperdibles centradas en la clase trabajadora

By Dennis Broe

En un panorama televisivo donde las series centradas en la clase trabajadora son escasas, he aquí dos producciones que presentan las adversidades y tribulaciones de dicha clase, así como su antagonismo hacia la clase superior —tal como se ejemplifica en la hegemonía estadounidense—.

La mejor y más lúcida de las dos es la comedia de situación de la BBC *Can You Keep a Secret*, la cual arranca con la revelación de su gran secreto —guardado por una pareja de ancianos de un pueblo del oeste de Gran Bretaña— a su hijo, un ciudadano respetuoso de la ley. El secreto consiste en que el padre del joven —a quien este daba por muerto— ha fingido su propio fallecimiento; la pareja, liderada por Dawn French (conocida por *Absolutely Fabulous*) en el papel de Debbie Fendon, se está embolsando ahora el dinero del seguro y las prestaciones estatales derivadas de su supuesta defunción.

Su lógica de clase trabajadora —expuesta por Debbie para justificar lo que la ley calificaría como fraude— resulta impecable. Su marido padece la enfermedad de Parkinson, un trastorno que, según les comunicó la compañía aseguradora, no cubrirían. Así pues, argumenta ella: tras toda una vida pagando impuestos, acatando las normas y sin haber sido arrestados jamás, «¿qué tenemos para mostrar? Una casa destartalada en medio de la nada, con una caldera averiada y un jardín lleno de mierda de zorro».

Todo esto sugiere la desesperación propia de la etapa final de la vida de una clase social que se encuentra en sus últimas, y el fraude se presenta como un recurso tan válido como cualquier otro para sobrevivir. El exuberante personaje de edad avanzada interpretado por Dawn French en esta serie constituye, en la presente temporada televisiva, el equivalente a la abogada encarnada por Kathy Bates en la temporada anterior de *Matlock*, quien buscaba vengar la muerte de su hija, propiciada por un bufete de abogados corporativos.

Ambas series abordan con gran dignidad la figura de las personas mayores —ese «residuo» del capitalismo—, así como los problemas y los triunfos propios de dicho grupo de edad. Se trata de un intento por no caer en el olvido; un intento que, en el caso de los padres, se halla además repleto de energía sexual.

¿Qué hace Debbie con lo que, a su juicio, no son en absoluto ganancias ilícitas? Una de las cosas que hace es revertirlas en la comunidad, concretamente mediante una donación a un centro cultural de su localidad; un centro que, al igual que tantos otros en la Gran Bretaña de la austeridad bajo el mandato de Keir Starmer, se encuentra gravemente falto de fondos para sostener las actividades comunitarias.

Lamentablemente, a medida que avanzan los episodios, la serie pierde su enfoque en el tema del envejecimiento para centrarse en una trama de chantaje. Cabe esperar que, en la segunda temporada, se retome el enfoque original.

Cuando obtienen fondos del negocio, Vicki prefiere gastárselos en sí misma en lugar de reinvertirlos en la empresa; una actitud que refleja, a un nivel superior, la de los directores ejecutivos estadounidenses, quienes no invierten en innovación, sino que derrochan el dinero en sus propios y extravagantes estilos de vida.

Esta brutalidad se disfraza bajo manidos clichés corporativos, tales como «ayúdanos a ayudarte» o «si nosotros triunfamos, tú triunfas»; una filosofía que incluso adoptan los gánsteres, pues uno de ellos —en su intento por abandonar la vida delictiva— llega a decir: «Busco una salida a mi actual situación laboral».

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

April 18, 2026

May Day: Take to the streets for workers' power

By CPUSA Labor Commission

This May Day, International Workers' Day, we are calling every worker, organized and unorganized, employed and unemployed, to hit the streets!

On May 1, workers, students, immigrants, and families in over 1,000 cities nationwide will join May Day actions. They will march, rally, and refuse business as usual to demand one thing: *Workers Over Billionaires*. Some will take the pledge: "No Work. No School. No Shopping."

May Day Strong, the coalition leading this year's actions, includes demands of taxing the billionaires so working families, not big business, come first; no ICE; no war; no private army serving authoritarian power; expand democracy; hands off our vote.

Workers over billionaires is an important slogan. The biggest beneficiary of the Trump regime is monopoly capital itself — the financial oligarchy of trillion-dollar corporations and billionaires who rig the political system, bust our unions, profit from division and war, and bankroll MAGA fascism.

Why is this May Day so crucial?

Because working people are under the most intense assault in generations. We are producing more wealth than workers ever have in history. Yet, as many of us are painfully aware, our wages have flatlined, and layoffs are rising. The share of value returned to us as wages has hit a historic low. Full-time work has grown precarious, and the prices for essential goods and services continue to skyrocket. The rich are getting richer, and we continue to lose ground.

And now, the same Big Tech monopolies driving rapid automation through the adoption of AI — which analysts say will displace 25% of working hours — are leading the charge to strip our basic democratic rights in service of the anti-democratic MAGA agenda.

The attacks on our labor movement are intensifying. Last year, the Trump regime launched the largest union-busting campaign in recent history, stripping collective bargaining from 1.3 million federal workers. They have gutted the National Labor Relations Board. They have purged over 300,000 Black women from the workforce by demolishing DEI and affirmative action.



They have escalated ICE raids to terrorize immigrant workers into silence.

This is the crisis our working-class faces and this is why we need to come out as strong and unified as possible this May Day. For us, it is not a single event but another launchpad for continued mass organizing.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

May Day: Take to the streets for workers' power

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

What are we demanding?

This May Day, the Communist Party USA Labor Commission calls for a working-class program that can unite the multiracial, multi-gender, multi-generational working class and our allies — civil rights, women, youth, LGBTQ, immigrant defense, and peace movements.

- Six-hour day, no cut in pay – automation and the adoption of AI should make life better and more secure for workers, not less. Share the wealth we produce.
- Equal pay for equal work – across race, gender, and immigration status.
- Break up the big monopolies!
- No union-busting – pass the PRO Act!
- Tax the rich! Fund jobs, housing, schools, and healthcare.
- Cut the military budget, close the bases, end the forever wars!
- Hands off Cuba! No war on Iran!
- Boycott Target and all corporations that have backed away from equal opportunity.
- No ICE, no raids, no occupation of our cities – defend immigrant workers as our own.

These are not just slogans but concrete demands we can fight for and win now that also build the class consciousness and collective power we need to go further. They link the struggle against Trump directly to the struggle against the monopolies and the entire capitalist system which perpetuates the crisis.

Look at the lessons from Minnesota. When they shut down the state against ICE occupation — with the Minnesota AFL-CIO, Service Employees, Teachers, Unite HERE, ATU, and others leading — they showed what is possible when organized labor, workers, community groups, and faith organizations come together. What happened in Minnesota is a model: labor as the leading force in a broad, struggle-oriented, all-people's coalition.

Importantly, the same monopolies that drive down our wages, bust our unions, and lay off our fellow workers operate internationally. They consciously pit workers of different countries against each other, including in wars, to maximize their profits. In response, our resistance must reflect international solidarity.

That is why we say: No war! Cut the military budget! Close the bases! End the forever wars! U.S. imperialism must be defeated! From Palestine to Cuba to Iran to our own ICE-occupied streets, we stand for peace and international solidarity.

We must redouble our efforts to end the criminal blockade on Cuba and demand its immediate removal from the "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list. Add to that ending the imperialist war on Iran, as well as an end to the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza.

This May Day, we march for all of this

Join a May Day Strong action if one exists in your area. If your central labor council or union is involved, link up with them. If not, organize an event with your co-workers, your neighbors, and your community. Bring the civil rights and youth movements with you. If you can, take the pledge: No Work. No School. No Shopping.

And when you are in the streets, talk to each other. Make connections. Build unity. Organize!

This May Day, we aren't just protesting Trump and MAGA; we are building the working-class led, pro-democracy coalition that can lead us out of this crisis and toward a socialist future where the people and the planet come before profits.

And on May 1st – we'll see you in the streets.

Algeria at crossroads of civilizations: The Pope's visit and reaffirmation of a Mediterranean power

By Dr. Hana Saada

In an era defined by geopolitical fragmentation and a crisis of civilizational confidence, Algeria is quietly but decisively reasserting itself as one of the Mediterranean's most consequential anchors of stability, memory, and intellectual continuity. The forthcoming visit of the head of the Catholic Church, Pope Leo XIV, from April 13 to 15, 2026—far from a routine diplomatic or religious engagement—has crystallized this reality with unusual clarity.

What is unfolding is not merely a visit. It is a recognition.

A recognition of Algeria's unique ability to operate simultaneously across multiple registers: as a sovereign political actor, a stabilizing regional force, a custodian of deep historical memory, and a rare space where civilizational dialogue is not theoretical but lived.

At a time when many states struggle to reconcile identity with openness, Algeria has crafted a model rooted in equilibrium—anchored in its historical depth and projected through a confident, independent diplomacy.

The decision to begin a major African papal journey in Algiers speaks volumes. It reflects an implicit acknowledgment that Algeria occupies a strategic and symbolic position within the global architecture of dialogue—between North and South, between Islam and Christianity, between Africa and Europe. Few nations can credibly claim such a multidimensional relevance; fewer still can sustain it with coherence.

This is where Algeria distinguishes itself.



From the capital, where high-level political engagements will take place, to Annaba—the ancient Hippo Regius—the visit unfolds across a geography that is as intellectually charged as it is historically grounded.

The visit will also include a highly symbolic stop at the Djamaa El Djazair, widely known as the Great Mosque of Algiers, a landmark that encapsulates Algeria's synthesis of tradition and modernity. As the largest mosque in Africa and the third-largest in the world, after Masjid Al-Haram in Mecca and Masjid Al-Nabawi in Medina, the complex stands not only as an architectural achievement but as a strategic cultural statement. With its soaring 265-meter minaret—the tallest in the world—its vast prayer hall accommodating up to 120,000 worshippers, and its refined fusion of Andalusian aesthetics, geometric precision, and contemporary engineering, the mosque reflects a nation that has successfully translated its historical identity into a modern, forward-looking vision. Beyond its religious function, the site operates as a comprehensive intellectual and cultural hub, housing research centers, libraries, and institutions dedicated to knowledge production, thereby reinforcing Algeria's positioning as a space where faith, scholarship, and civic life intersect.

The symbolism of the papal presence within such a setting is profound. It signals not merely a gesture of interreligious courtesy, but a deliberate affirmation that dialogue between civilizations can unfold within spaces deeply rooted in their own spiritual traditions. In a global context often marked by tensions surrounding identity and belief, Algeria offers a compelling alternative model—one in which sovereignty, religious authenticity, and openness coexist without contradiction.

Algeria's constitutional order gives this symbolism an added institutional weight. The 2020 Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience and the free exercise of worship, exercised in accordance with the law, while also placing the protection of places of worship under the State's impartial guarantee; at the same time, Article 2 affirms that Islam is the religion of the State. In that balance, Algeria presents a model of rooted identity and regulated openness, where respect for religious plurality is preserved within a clear legal and public-order framework.

Reconnecting with the visit's trajectory, it is in Annaba that the itinerary takes on its deepest meaning. For it is here that Saint Augustine, one of the most influential thinkers in human history, lived, wrote, and shaped ideas that continue to structure global philosophical and theological thought.

That Augustine was not merely associated with North Africa but was a product of it—Born in 354 in Thagaste (present-day Souk Ahras), educated in Carthage, and intellectually matured in Hippo—repositions Algeria within the very foundations of global intellectual history. His theological and philosophical works, including *Confessions, On the Trinity,* and *The City of God*, are not detached abstractions; they are deeply rooted in the lived realities of a North African world marked by plurality, debate, and intellectual vitality.

In reclaiming this legacy, Algeria is not engaging in retrospective glorification. It is activating a civilizational continuity that remains profoundly relevant today. Augustine's synthesis of philosophy, faith, and political reflection—crafted on Algerian soil—resonates in a contemporary world grappling with fragmentation and searching for frameworks of coexistence.

The Pope's visit, therefore, becomes an encounter with this continuity. A return not only to a place, but to an intellectual origin.

Yet Algeria's significance is not confined to its past. Its contemporary posture reflects a rare strategic clarity. In a region often destabilized by external interventions and internal fractures, Algeria has maintained a consistent doctrine of sovereignty, non-alignment, and regional mediation. It has positioned itself as a stabilizing force across the Sahel, a key actor in Mediterranean security, and a reliable partner in addressing transnational challenges such as migration and energy security.

This consistency has earned Algeria a form of credibility that cannot be manufactured—it is accumulated over time through restraint, coherence, and strategic independence.

At the same time, Algeria's internal composition reinforces its external strength. It is a nation shaped by a rich synthesis of Arab identity, Amazigh heritage, Islamic tradition, and Mediterranean openness. This plurality is not a point of tension; it is a source of resilience. It allows Algeria to engage with multiple civilizational narratives without diluting its core identity.

In this sense, Algeria embodies something increasingly rare in global politics: a state that is deeply rooted without being closed, and open without being dependent.

The symbolism of the visit to sites such as the Maqam Echahid further underscores this synthesis. It anchors the engagement in Algeria's modern history of struggle and sovereignty, reminding observers that the country's openness to dialogue is inseparable from its hard-won independence.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

Algeria does not host the world from a position of vulnerability; it does so from a position of historical confidence.

Meanwhile, the Vatican's engagement with Algeria reflects a broader recalibration toward Africa—not as a peripheral space, but as a central arena of global religious, demographic, and intellectual transformation. Within this shift, Algeria stands out as a uniquely strategic interlocutor: historically grounded, politically stable, and culturally complex.

The visit also amplifies Algeria's growing soft power. Not through spectacle or projection, but through depth—through its ability to embody a narrative that is at once ancient and contemporary, local and universal. In an age where influence is often equated with visibility, Algeria demonstrates that enduring relevance is built on substance.

And it is precisely this substance that defines Algeria's role today.

To stand in Annaba, overlooking the Mediterranean from the Basilica of Saint Augustine, is to confront a powerful historical truth: that the intellectual foundations of what is often termed "Western civilization" are inseparable from North African soil.

That Algeria was not a passive recipient of ideas, but a generative force in their creation.

This realization carries profound implications. It challenges inherited geographies of knowledge and re-centers Algeria within the global narrative—not as an exception, but as a foundational actor.

The Pope's visit brings this reality into sharp focus.

It affirms that Algeria is not merely a participant in contemporary international affairs, but a country whose historical depth, strategic clarity, and civilizational richness position it as a pivotal actor in shaping the future of dialogue between cultures, religions, and regions.

In a world searching for balance, Algeria offers something both rare and necessary: continuity without stagnation, openness without compromise, and identity without exclusion.

This is not simply a moment of visibility.

It is a moment of recognition—long overdue, and increasingly undeniable.

Workers rise against MAGA on May Day

By Eric Brooks

May Day 2026 is not just a celebration but a national, labor-led pro-democracy uprising — a coordinated set of demonstrations and work stoppages aimed at defending workers' rights, resisting fascistic MAGA policies, and building a broad coalition to protect social programs and democratic institutions in the U.S.

May Day, which falls on May 1, 2026, is approaching. People across the United States are preparing for protests. The Trump/MAGA actions against working people are not going to stop workers from celebrating or prevent street heat from happening. People are in motion.

While May Day has grown into an international workers' holiday and day of action, it was born from the U.S.-based struggle for the eight-hour workday — an effort to limit the boss's control over the worker's day and a democratic struggle.

The current period under Trump and MAGA has ignited a similar labor-led pro-democracy fightback.



"On May 1, 2026," May Day Strong, a leader of this year's protests, says, "workers, students, and families rally, march, and take action across the country to demand a nation that puts workers over billionaires, with many refusing business as usual through No School. No Work. No Shopping."

In response to the destructive chaos of the Trump administration, the months leading up to May Day have been filled with pro-democracy protests.

As comrade Joe Sims said about “No Kings 3,” March 28, 2026: “it was by far the largest, broadest, and most important expression of the anti-MAGA upsurge to date. Organizers estimate that some 8 million people turned out at over 3,000 protests across all 50 states.”

Starting a baseless war with Iran, treating the Gaza genocide like a real estate opportunity, bankrupting the nation with billionaire tax cuts and military spending, working to destroy social programs like SNAP, Medicare, and Social Security, gutting DEI and institutional protections for constitutional and democratic rights, enabling ICE to detain brown and Black people without due process regardless of citizenship or documentation, attacking women’s health and abortion access, undermining LGBTQ+ legitimacy and dignity, and exercising arbitrary and vicious power are some hallmarks of this Trump-afflicted year. The people have been saying “No” in large numbers during protests, and even more are expected to protest on May Day.

All-out struggle against the anti-democratic, anti-people, anti-labor MAGA right and Trump characterize the current period. That struggle is the background against which May Day is unfolding, making it an important moment to send a mass “No” to the fascistic administration and its unconstitutional war on the people, which began immediately upon Trump entering office in 2025.

This May Day is important, but it is also one protest in a season of actions heading toward the 2026 midterm elections. Masses of U.S. residents are rejecting Trump and his ICE-enforced policies. May Day appears poised to be the next major national action. Organizers argue — and rightly so — that, in addition to marching, other tactics are necessary to protect U.S. democracy and to counter the Trump dictatorial onslaught. Tactics can include demonstrative, nonviolent shows of force. Indeed, all the tools in the peaceful toolbox must be employed in the fight against the MAGA right.

And every tool is needed. Trump is described as the biggest union-buster in U.S. history, with more than 1 million federal workers’ collective bargaining rights at risk. While people struggle for work and to eat, Trump repeatedly — and without basis in fact — claims the U.S. has the greatest economy in history.

As rents and gas prices rise, Trump dismisses the brutal reality experienced by the majority of people in this country: a reality of struggle to meet basic needs and of a lack of affordability.

With tax cuts for billionaires and regulatory changes, including weakened environmental protections, Trump is stuffing the mattresses of the super-rich while denying school lunches to children.

Organized labor is taking a leading role in this year’s May Day. Dozens of AFL-CIO affiliates and state federations have endorsed the call to protest.

The North Carolina AFL-CIO, the Metro-Detroit AFL-CIO, the Texas AFL-CIO, and the Milwaukee Area Labor Council are among the labor bodies that have signed on, alongside major national unions including AFT, NEA, AAUP, Starbucks Workers United, UE, UNITE HERE, NNU, CWA, and several UAW locals.

The militant National Nurses United, representing 200,000 members, is also backing the actions. UFCW Local 3000, which represents 50,000 workers in Washington state, is tabling at workplaces and community events to build support for May Day. UNITE HERE Local 11, representing 32,000 workers in Southern California and Arizona, has instructed members not to work at locations where ICE is present.

The May Day Strong coalition, led by the Chicago Teachers Union and its allies, is urging locals to organize real work stoppages, not just send members to rallies. AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler has declared that the state of working people in this country is “under attack,” and the federation’s upcoming “Workers Revive Democracy” national convention in Atlanta on May 14–16 will seek to carry forward the momentum that May Day begins.

Join a May Day Strong action if one exists in your area. If your central labor council or union is involved, link up with them. If not, organize an event with your co-workers, neighbors, and community. Bring the civil rights and youth movements with you. If you can, take the pledge: No Work. No School. No Shopping.

And when you are in the streets, talk to each other. Make connections. Build unity. Organize! This May Day isn’t just about protesting Trump and MAGA; people are building the working-class-led, pro-democracy coalition that can lead the people of the U.S. out of this crisis toward a socialist future where people and the planet come before profits.

And on May 1 — join us in the streets.

‘I am Chinese’: Taiwan’s Nationalist Party leader visits mainland, advocates reconciliation

By Liu Xuegang and Michael Christopher



BEIJING—In the latter days of January 1923, the Chinese revolutionary democratic leader Sun Yat-sen issued a joint agreement with the ambassador of the newly established Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This manifesto marked the beginning of the Nationalist Party’s cooperation with Communists, paving the way for the First United Front in China.

United on the basis of reinvigorating the Chinese nation and beating back imperialist and fascist aggressors, the Communist and Nationalist parties ushered in a brief, but deeply formative, period of cooperation. That alliance—along with the Second United Front against Japanese imperialism—were cooperative interludes falling in the middle of a more than 20-year civil war.

A little over a century later, it appears that those same principles which framed the United Fronts—safeguarding the nation and standing up against imperialism—could be fueling a new convergence of interests between the two former foes.

Cheng Li-wun, the recently elected leader of the now Taiwan-based Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, or KMT), began a five-day visit to the mainland on Tuesday, April 7, following a high-level invitation from Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is also leader of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Her arrival marks the first time in more than a decade that a leader of the KMT, which once engaged in a brutal decades-long civil war against the ruling CPC, has formally visited the mainland.

Aside from its high-level nature, the timing of the visit is also noteworthy. It occurred at a critical juncture, when tensions across the Taiwan Strait have been steadily escalating and just ahead of the much-anticipated arrival of embattled U.S. President Donald Trump. He’s expected to undertake his own visit to the mainland next month. Cheng’s arrival also coincided with the 99th anniversary of the historic Shanghai Massacre, a grim episode in which KMT forces brutalized thousands of civilians and suspected communists, underscoring the sordid history between the two parties.

With these facts in mind, many, including Cheng herself, consider her visit as one of peace and reconciliation, with serious implications for Taiwan’s relationship with the mainland.

Indeed, during every step of her visit, the chairperson, who proudly proclaimed, “I am Chinese,” and garnered massive grassroots support from within the KMT, spoke loud and clear of the common grounds between Chinese people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

At the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum in Nanjing, she reflected on the death and legacy of Sun, who is regarded by both the KMT and the CPC as Guofu (Father of the Nation). She then acknowledged the KMT’s early history in searching for China’s future, as well as its historic errors, such as the decades-long White Terror, which claimed the lives of thousands. Particularly well-received was her emphasis on Taiwan’s anti-imperialist history of combating Japanese colonization, notable in light of the China-Japan friction over Taiwan.

The formal meeting with Xi on April 10 sent a similar message: The two party leaders agreed that both Taiwan and the mainland bear a responsibility for the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, with the 1992 Consensus—the CPC-KMT agreement which opened cross-straits relations—and anti-separatism as the basis of peaceful exchange. The institutionalization of peaceful communication, as well as mutual understanding of the differences in the political system and way of life was called for.

“Hopefully, with the unremitting efforts of our two parties,” Cheng said, “the Taiwan Strait will no longer be a focal point of potential conflict, nor will it become a chessboard for external intervention.”

Her effort was received with enthusiasm, especially from Taiwanese businesspeople and students living on the mainland, who have long felt political pressure from home, as the current government of Taiwan President Lai Ching-te has increased its efforts to cut off cross-strait communication.

As Taiwanese economist and politician Chiu Yi pointed out, “Many broke into tears when Cheng said: ‘You all have endured so much over these years.’” Cheng promised that if the KMT wins the coming elections, she will open a new era for the cross-strait economy, allowing the people of Taiwan to ride the tide of China’s 15th Five-Year Plan.

Despite her ambition, Cheng still faces numerous contradictions back home. Although she took won the KMT leadership election handily, pressure from various factions within the party threaten her with ostracization.

The KMT, once an iron-clad ally in the U.S.' anti-communist Cold War, has long suffered from internal division, with many higher-ups having deep ties with the United States. Hung Hsiu-chu, the last sitting KMT chairperson before Cheng to visit the mainland, was forced to pull out of the 2016 presidential campaign for being "too pro-unification," and many fear Cheng could face a similar fate.

Simultaneously, the KMT's modern rival—and governing party in Taiwan—the U.S.-backed Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), seems to be willing to go to any end to consolidate its power. Its recent attempt to pass a new military budget that would include tens of billions of dollars in contracts for the U.S. military-industrial complex, has met with fierce resistance from the KMT so far. In turn, the DPP shifts the blame to Cheng, claiming that her visit to the mainland was evidence of CPC interference in blocking the military budget and threatening legal persecution on Cheng and her colleagues.

Also worth noting is the much-anticipated visit of Trump, who is scheduled to arrive in Beijing in May but has yet to confirm his itinerary. He has already rescheduled once, a move publicly explained by the supposed need to give further attention to the U.S. war on Iran. In light of the developments in the Middle East, some scholars on cross-strait issues speculate that the Trump administration might be planning to eventually abandon Taiwan after draining the island dry through military deals and the forced movement of Taiwan's chip industry.

For the People's Republic of China, which is recognized under UN Resolution 2758 as the sole legitimate authority over China, including Taiwan, such a buildup of military force—which it sees as an obvious attempt to foment armed separatism and provoke a conflict—is an unacceptable affront to the nation's territorial sovereignty.

Faced with the prospect of the DPP turning Taiwan into a proxy for a new Cold War against the Chinese people, is it possible that Cheng and her KMT comrades are giving thought to a new alliance of some kind, a united front, with their old Communist adversaries?

With these contending interests at play, it may very well be that Cheng's visit marks a new inflection point in the ongoing struggle for China and the world: Will Taiwan become yet another pawn for U.S. imperialism, or will the KMT overcome its history to reforge the anti-fascist legacy of unity and brotherhood established by Sun Yat-sen? Will Cheng, who herself once stood on the side of Taiwan separatism before declaring it a "dead-end" and a "lie," be able to set a new direction in the region?

Tell Congress: Tax dollars for healthcare not warfare

By People's World

Tax dollars for healthcare not warfare



Call, write, and visit your U.S. Representative and Senators to demand that Congress immediately **pass an emergency War Powers Resolution to end the illegal and deadly war on Iran.** Congress has the power and must refuse the White House budget request to fund wars and ICE violence while slashing health care and human needs. Reject the outrageous $200 billion more for the war on top of a trillion dollar military budget. Stop enriching corporate war profiteers and instead invest hard earned tax dollars in healthcare, jobs, housing, education, climate justice and working class communities.

Tax dollars for healthcare not warfare! No money for bombs to Israel!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your US Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Fund Drive: Without your help, People's World won't make it

By C.J. Atkins



TO: People's World Readers
FROM: C.J. Atkins, Managing Editor

That headline should alarm you—and here's why.

With two weeks left in the People's World 2026 Fund Drive, we've raised only $67,400 of our $140,000 target.

Not reaching that goal won't just be a disappointment—it would have an immediate and damaging impact on the publication and its work. Finances are unbelievably tight right now, and every aspect of our operations is being reviewed to look for savings and efficiencies, but pinching pennies only gets you so far.

COVID-19 might seem like a long time ago, but the health of People's World is still suffering the effects of that pandemic. The mass layoffs and soaring inflation triggered by coronavirus devastated working families—and since we have no corporate sponsors, when their incomes suffered, ours did too. We furloughed staff, cut travel, and deferred upgrades. But we never missed a single day of publishing, and we have our readers and donors to thank for that.

People's World has been there for every major fight of the last few years: the Black Lives Matter national uprising, the January 6th MAGA coup attempt, the Women's Marches, Gaza, the 2024 effort to block fascism, the resistance to DOGE cuts and ICE violence, the Target boycott and efforts to save DEI policies, and the growing No Kings movement.

Right now, we're covering the labor upsurge building toward a massive May Day 2026 and our reporting on the May 1st "No Work, No School, No Shopping" actions is already getting pickup from the AFL-CIO, the Chicago Federation of Labor, and the Chicago Teachers Union.

And of course, we bring you the most up-to-date analysis on the wars against the peoples of Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, Lebanon, and Palestine, as well as ideas for how to stop them.

It's a lot, right? As I hope you can see, People's World is a powerful tool for the working class, but it can do even more with your support. So, we're appealing to you, our readers:

- Can you become a monthly sustainer? — Reliable income keeps our journalists in the streets when the labor and people's movements are in action.
- If you can't be a sustainer, how about a one-time donation? — Any amount is welcome, and it could make the difference in keeping a reporter on staff.
- How about placing an ad in our May Day Greetings Book? — The deadline is now, and it's a chance for your group or union to reach a national audience with a message important to you.

We know that People's World asks a lot of our readers, and it might sometimes feel like we're always coming to you for money. But we hope you think this publication is worth keeping alive. With war raging, elections on the horizon, and the resistance in motion, we can't afford to let this voice for the working class grow quieter. Please give today.

With solidarity and gratitude,

C.J. Atkins
Managing Editor

Go to **PeoplesWorld.org/Donate**
or mail a check made out to
"People's World"to:

People's World
235 W. 23rd Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10011

Peoria Rally for Palestine gets divestment ban challenge on November ballot

By Nicholis Hall

PEORIA, Ill.—At a special township meeting on Tuesday, April 14, the solidarity group Peoria Rally for Palestine and its allies brought out the community to push for an advisory referendum on the November ballot.

The question seeks to ask voters to weigh in on a pending state bill, H.B. 2723, the Illinois Human Rights Advocacy Protection Act. The bill would amend an Illinois policy that punishes free speech by preventing companies from divesting and boycotting Israel for its genocidal against Palestinians.

Justin Leuba of Peoria Rally for Palestine emphasized the importance of the bill. “This has lost Illinois pensioners substantial dollars that they could use in retirement,” they said. “I myself am a member of the State University retirement system, and so this issue strikes particularly close to my own heart and future quality of life.”

After back-and-forth debate between supporters and opponents, the advisory question was approved in a 69 to 27 by the Peoria community and will be on the November ballot.

Prior to the vote, Peoria Rally for Palestine hosted a pre-vote party at local bar, Kickback on Fulton, with local musicians Ava Easter, Ethan Zulz, and Kuhntree Jerry, getting people excited to go to the township meeting. The event eased people’s nerves, getting supporters excited for what was to be a drawn out and tense meeting. Joining Peoria for Palestine in support of the vote were organizations like the Peoria Club of the Communist Party USA and Fully Free Peoria Chapter.

During debate, a few key points came up in support of the referendum. The first issue, as raised by Lawerence Maushard of Peoria Rally for Palestine, was the question of the constitutionality of restricting free speech under current law.

“There’s no way that there should be an Illinois law that prohibits boycotting of Israel, and it surely would not pass a constitutional case, and I’m surprised that it hasn’t come out yet,” Maushard said. “It’s truly an unconstitutional law, and you don’t have to be a legal scholar to figure this out.”



Another key theme of the debate was brought up by Lydia Wilson, which is how the existing state law ends up colluding with the genocide against Palestinians. “The actual issue at hand that is the ongoing genocide and slaughter of millions of civilians,” she said. “It’s laws like this that prevent companies from divesting from Israel.”

Opposition to the motion largely raised issues of technicalities, such as the referendum not having anything to do with the township’s local affairs, defense of Israel’s actions, and wrongly equating Jewish religious identity to Zionist ideology. There were also challenges raised about the specific wording of the question having a perceived mistake in how it was written.

In rebuttal, Noah Palm of Peoria CPUSA spoke up about the technicality issues, saying, “National and international politics are local. I think we are all feeling the impact of international and state politics, and I think we have a way here to make our opinion known here.”

After the vote, a brief rally was held outside city hall with activists and organizers celebrating the referendum being added to the ballot. Justin Leuba said that Peoria Rally for Palestine is overjoyed but that this win is just the first step.

“We’re going to make sure voters are educated as to the content of the referendum question and understand exactly what their vote and support of our nonviolent referendum will mean in terms of our state legislators’ ability to determine the public will,” they told the crowd.

In addition to Peoria, similar ballot questions were added at township meetings in the cities of Medina, Normal, Kickapoo, Urbana, DuPage, and Naperville, setting up the opportunity for voters to weigh in on the banning of boycotts and divestments against Israel. As a result, several communities will be asked to inform legislators of their position as the whether the Prairie State should continue giving special protection to the actions of the State of Israel.

LABOR NEWS

Lebanon: Communist movement combines resistance and humanitarian mobilization

By CPUSA International Department

The Lebanese Communist Party has combined opposition to Israeli aggression with sharp criticism of the Lebanese government's economic policies. In February, the party condemned new indirect taxes and fuel price increases as measures that disproportionately burden working people. Throughout March, it has promoted discussions around alternative economic policies and reconstruction through initiatives such as the "Popular Steadfastness Committee," linking the anti-war struggle with the fight against austerity and neoliberal restructuring.

At the same time, the broader communist youth movement has launched concrete humanitarian efforts in response to the war. The World Federation of Democratic Youth, together with the Union of Lebanese Democratic Youth, has initiated an emergency humanitarian appeal aimed at providing urgent relief to those affected by Israeli aggression. The campaign focuses on mobilizing and equipping ambulances, organizing rapid-response medical teams, and distributing essential medicines, including treatments for chronic illnesses such as diabetes and cardiovascular conditions.

In addition, the initiative is delivering food, clothing, hygiene supplies, and shelter support to displaced families, while establishing centralized kitchens to provide daily hot meals under safe conditions. Particular attention is being given to children through psychosocial programs, including organized activities designed to reduce trauma and restore a sense of normalcy. The campaign has issued a call for $20,000 in international support, emphasizing that organized, people-led solidarity is essential to sustaining life-saving assistance and strengthening community resilience in the face of ongoing aggression.

El candidato al Congreso Chris Rabb habla sobre la organización sindical y el futuro de los trabajadores estadounidenses

By Dom Shannon

FILADELFIA — Chris Rabb, candidato por el Tercer Distrito Congresional de Pensilvania, ha obtenido importantes respaldos de organizaciones progresistas clave. A finales del mes pasado, Justice Democrats y el Working Families Party (WFP) dieron su aprobación a Rabb, sumándose así a su impresionante lista de organizaciones de apoyo, la cual ya incluye a OnePA, Reclaim Philadelphia, Sunrise Movement, el capítulo de Filadelfia de los Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), entre otras.

«¡Nuestro increíble equipo de 300 organizadores de campo y voluntarios de todo el distrito recolectó más de 7.000 firmas de votantes de Filadelfia para nuestra campaña al Congreso en el PA-03! Esta cifra superó en más del triple el número requerido para aparecer en la boleta electoral», declaró Rabb en una conversación con *People's World*. La campaña recaudó más de 300.000 dólares durante el último trimestre, provenientes de pequeños donantes, con el fin de compensar los fondos perdidos.

Un ámbito en el que Rabb espera ganar apoyo es el del movimiento sindical organizado. Hasta la fecha, ha recibido el respaldo del sindicato del personal y el cuerpo docente del Community College of Philadelphia, afiliado a la AFT. Asimismo, ha sido recomendado por el AFSCME DC47.

Rabb, sin embargo, sigue considerándose un candidato a favor de los trabajadores, haciendo referencia a su propia trayectoria y a su participación en el movimiento sindical. Rabb es el único candidato destacado que ha sido despedido por ejercer el derecho a organizar su lugar de trabajo. Declaró a *People's World*: «En mi cuarto año de docencia en Temple, contribuí a sindicalizar con éxito a 1.500 colegas, profesores adjuntos, en lo que constituyó una victoria aplastante para los derechos de los trabajadores. Como represalia, fui despedido; pero si tuviera la oportunidad de volver a hacerlo todo, no cambiaría absolutamente nada».

También abordó la importancia de la nueva organización sindical. «Un movimiento obrero fuerte y vibrante se cimenta en un compromiso genuino con la nueva organización, aquella que ayuda a llevar la democracia a cada lugar de trabajo y a garantizar que todos los trabajadores —independientemente del sector o del estado en el que se encuentren— puedan ejercer sus derechos». El número de trabajadores amparados por un contrato colectivo alcanzó en 2025 su nivel más alto en 16 años, situándose en 16,5 millones. No obstante, esa cifra sigue abarcando únicamente al 11,2 % de la fuerza laboral.

Rabb afirma que la Ley de Protección del Derecho a Organizarse (PRO Act) —una prioridad legislativa en materia de reforma laboral para muchos sindicatos— constituiría «una de mis principales prioridades en el Congreso: fortalecer la capacidad de cada trabajador para formar un sindicato y defender sus derechos». La AFL-CIO califica la PRO Act como «la clave para el futuro de Estados Unidos» y como «una legislación histórica en materia de empoderamiento de los trabajadores, derechos civiles y estímulo económico; un componente esencial de cualquier plan destinado a reconstruir mejor tras la pandemia de COVID-19 y la recesión».

Hasta la fecha, Rabb es el único candidato en la contienda que ha declarado que la legislación de reforma laboral representa una prioridad absoluta para él en el Congreso.

Rabb centra sus esfuerzos en ganarse el respaldo de las bases sindicales a través de sus propuestas políticas y de su trayectoria.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

April 25, 2026

Rev. Barber, religious allies bring anti-war message near to Trump

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—Declaring it is time to stop Donald Trump's war on Iran and shift its $1 billion-a-day cost to domestic needs, New Poor People's Campaign co-chair the Rev. William Barber II—via a colleague's computer speakers—and his religious allies brought that message to the militaristic GOP president's doorstep.

In an anti-war rally in the blocked-off median of D.C.'s downtown 16th Street, with the White House in the background, and the AFL-CIO headquarters off to the side, the religious leaders denounced the war as illegal, immoral, "an unholy war of choice"—as Barber put it—and more.

And they laid blame for it primarily on Trump, but also on the Republicans who seem to blindly follow his lead, out of political fear for their jobs.

The April 20 noontime event was part of a series of "Moral Mondays," Barber's New Poor People's Campaign has mounted for years, starting in his home state, North Carolina, where marchers began by protesting Jim Crow 2.0 political repression.

But this time, the speakers promised, it will be different. Prior Moral Mondays have been on the first Monday of every month. The coming ones will be the first Monday of each week until the war ends—which they urged Congress to legislate. Both the House and the Senate are debating the war, but so far, party-line majorities have stood with Trump and his war.

And the April 27 rally, Barber said, same time, same place, will see more than 100 clergy on 16th Street, who will then commit an act of peaceful civil disobedience, by stepping off the median and sitting down in the street in "non-violent moral action." They want thousands of people to witness it.

Barber himself could not attend the April 20 event, though he tried. He spent the previous day—Sunday—voicing those same themes at a special symposium at Yale University in New Haven, Conn., but then ran into delays and problems which prevented him from boarding the plane to D.C.



They didn't prevent him from speaking to the crowd, though, "Even when people try to make a justification" for Trump's war of choice, which began February 28, "two wrongs don't make a right," Barber said.

"This is an unholy war of choice, of a madman [Trump] who wants to be like God and who wants to do things so he can say he did them first." And he urged listeners, "This is no time to be in the shadows."

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Rev. Barber, religious allies bring anti-war message near to Trump

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Barber's "be like God" characterization harkens back to a Trump meme, which the president posted on his Truth Social media platform on Easter Sunday, of all days. It portrayed him in a white robe with red trim, dispensing bounty, just as Christ dispensed loaves and fishes to the hungry. Mass uproar from all across the political spectrum ensued before Trump pulled it.

"This is a war on humanity," Barber continued. It comes from "a man who places himself as God and who determines who has rights, and which ones." Earlier, in a statement read by an ally, sent from New Haven, Conn., Barber said right now "is a time for truth-telling and for a radical exorcism" of the lies permeating the country.

Other clergy speaking not only denounced the war but offered comparisons, compiled by another organization, Barber co-chairs, Repairers of the Breach, of what the billion dollars a day could buy if it weren't spent on weapons and war.

For example, it could buy SNAP (food stamps) for 160 million people, or restore Medicaid cuts which Trump pushed through Congress last year—on party-line votes—for 105 million children. And it could fund paid parental and family leave for 22 million workers. Or nine million university scholarships.

"Instead, we are rushing ships, missiles, and drones to [attack] Iran, Cuba, and all over the world," said Joe Izzo, of the Friends Committee (Quakers) on National Legislation's D.C. chapter.

In the statement the staffer read, Barber also waded into the verbal battle between Pope Leo XIV—a Chicago native and the first U.S.-born Pope, versus Trump and his Catholic Vice President, former Ohio Sen. JD Vance. Vance suggested the Pope stick to religion and stay out of politics. Trump's statement was even nastier.

For his part, Leo has firmly denounced the war on Iran, those who profit from it, those who turn a blind eye to the carnage, or both, and politicians wielding force. "Pope Leo is my Pope," said Rev. Barber, an ordained Protestant minister. Trump's "constant demeaning of other nations and other cultures is predatory and must not go unchecked."

"We must build the movement that we can, to take back our government," Barber declared.

U.S. workers reclaim May Day

By C.J. Atkins

For most of the 20th century, May Day—International Workers' Day—was largely absent from the official calendar of the U.S. labor movement. While workers around the globe marched on May 1 to honor the martyrs of Chicago's 1886 Haymarket uprising, bosses pushed their employees to only observe Labor Day in September, leaving May Day—the original workers' holiday—to the left, immigrant rights activists, and the occasional socialist rally.

That era is over.

This May 1, labor councils from Milwaukee to North Carolina, from UFCW locals to teachers' unions, are marching with a demand that cuts to the heart of today's crisis: *Workers Over Billionaires*. The scale and character of this year's mobilizations represent something new: the formal re-entry of U.S. organized labor into International Workers' Day, on a national scale, for the first time in generations.

When the people of Minnesota shut down their state to protest ICE occupation in January, the AFL-CIO, SEIU, Teachers, Unite HERE, and ATU were in the lead, showing what's possible. In temperatures of -30 degrees, over 100,000 workers and residents marched and brought much of the economy there to a halt, forcing a partial federal retreat. That action is the model for today.



The demands workers are carrying into the streets reflect the weight of the current moment. Corporations are waging a coordinated offensive on wages and benefits even as profits soar. The AFL-CIO has documented that working women and people of color stand to lose the most as employers race to deploy artificial intelligence—often without workers' consent—to hire, monitor, evaluate, and even fire employees.

Nearly 80% of those who will see their jobs erased by AI in the next decade could be earning less than $38,000 a year. Unions from the Longshoremen to the Las Vegas Culinary workers have begun writing AI protections directly into contracts, requiring bargaining before any AI implementation.

Meanwhile, corporations have raced to roll back DEI commitments and equal-opportunity programs with barely a word of public accountability. Workers and community groups are boycotting the companies leading that retreat, particularly Target.

The international dimension of this May Day cannot be separated from the domestic one. The Trump administration's military intervention in Venezuela showed that this government has no respect for the law. An oil blockade now squeezes Cuba, which has faced more than 65 years of economic siege simply for choosing to build a sovereign nation.

And the threat of expanded war with Iran—whose workers are already suffering under sanctions—makes an anti-war labor movement a necessity. With the Trump administration demanding a new $1.5 trillion military budget—paid for with cuts to our education, health care, and other services, it's clear that his wars are an attack on the entire working class, both abroad and here at home.

This May Day, labor is calling on working people to demand that elected officials—from city councils to Congress—stand up to the federal attack on working people. The movement's pledge—*No Work. No School. No Shopping*.—is an explicit exercise of the only power workers have ever had: the collective withdrawal of their labor.

The demands are concrete and winnable: Pass the PRO Act, tax the wealthy, fully fund public schools and healthcare, protect immigrant workers, end the wars, halt the AI free-for-all, restore equal opportunity on the job, and save constitutional democracy.

Wealthy corporations and businesses are leveraging their influence to stifle worker power and rig the rules of the economy in their favor. They want to undo the progress the labor movement has made over decades to gain livable wages, high-quality health care, retirement security, and stronger protections on the job. But history is on our side, and we refuse to go back.

May Day began in the USA. This year, it comes home.

Cuban youth organizations mobilize against intervention

By Cassandra Lopez-Warren



HAVANA—Earlier this month, the Young Communist Union (Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas, or UJC) and the José Martí Pioneers of Cuba celebrated their 64th and 65th anniversaries respectively. In the face of heightened U.S. aggression, the UJC is launching a national campaign of youth mobilization against imperialist intervention.

On April 2, the two revolutionary youth organizations kicked off the effort with an anti-imperialist march in Havana along the Malecón, led by a caravan of bikers and motorcyclists.

In an interview with the UJC's newspaper, *Juventud Rebelde*, Cuban President and Communist Party First Secretary Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez explained the significance of bikes for the youth during the economic crisis of the 1990s: "We got to the university, to activities, and to work on bikes. With bikes we did volunteer work and mixed with different sectors [of society]."

With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cuba entered its worst economic crisis since the fall of the Soviet Union, so comparisons naturally arise between the generations.

Especially since the Trump administration began its total oil blockade of the country in January, freedom of mobility within the urban sprawl of Havana has been severely compromised, as gasoline is rationed and prices surge. Bikes are one of the most reliable modes of transportation for young people and provide a much-needed escape from extended blackouts at home.

A new Special Period

In early February, a few weeks after the oil blockade was put in place, the University of Havana shut down its operations indefinitely. While medical students and some science departments were able to continue in-person instruction out of necessity, most students now take asynchronous classes.

Many government workplaces, cultural centers, museums, and social spaces—important places of employment and public life for young people—can only operate for a few hours a day, three to four times a week.

Primary and secondary schools are also running on reduced schedules. Access to education, one of the core tenets of the Revolution, is being compromised in a way that it never has before, even during the so-called "Special Period" of the 1990s.

Some young people now have a surplus of free time on their hands.

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Others fill their days with the daily grind of survival. The process of procuring basic necessities like food, water, and medication, as well as keeping up with household chores like cooking and laundry, becomes a full-time job thanks to the limited transportation and periodic blackouts.

The social and mental effect of both of these lifestyles is similar, though. Discourses within the UJC revolve around trying to find ways to renew revolutionary vigor among young people who only associate socialism with slogans and economic hardship.

Organizers with the UJC have thus characterized the current economic crisis as an ideological one as well—the phrase "Homeland or death!" and memories of Fidel don't carry the same weight with the newer generations.

Much like in the United States, many people intrinsically believe in the need for a more just and equitable society, and they reject the impoverishment and alienation offered by the free market. But they don't necessarily use the term "socialist" to describe their beliefs due to preconceived notions of what socialism is or what it means in practice.

Private sector jobs are becoming much more common, at least in Havana, but they don't come with the same organizing structures or community involvement offered by many public sector workplaces.

Young people are also leaving the country in large numbers, leading to a shortage of educated workers, artists, and caretakers for an aging population. The reasoning behind this mass migration is more economic than ideological—there simply aren't enough job opportunities. For example, artists are severely limited by the impositions of the blockade unless they have connections abroad. Public sector wages are also unable to keep up with the inflation of recent years.

Mobilizing the Cuban youth

But the UJC remains committed to educating and engaging young people in the cause of a more just and healthy socialist society.

Amalia Díaz-Pérez, an organizer with the University of Havana's chapter of the UJC and the Federation of University Students (Federación Estudiantil Universitaria, or FEU), describes the task of young Cuban militants as providing a communal solution in the face of the individualism that arises out of need and desperate circumstances.

"When you're hungry, the solution is to eat. You can't pass judgement on someone for that, but every time we can provide a solution to that shortage, we need to provide it in a manner that is collective, less individualistic," she explained to *People's World*.

Individual solutions, as Díaz-Pérez calls them—such as starting up a business in the private sector or leaving the country in search of better opportunities—are inevitable results of the economic crisis. But the UJC seeks to plug Cuba's youth back into their communities and to give back to the neighborhoods they grew up in.

Much of the UJC's day-to-day activities take the form of cultural and community work within the context of one's neighborhood, school, or workplace—organizing festivals and group outings, hosting workshops, checking in on the welfare of neighbors, delivering food to schools, or doing street cleanups where the municipalities' trash pick-up has suffered.

Work is distributed among members based on where they live or what they study; medical students distribute medicine within their neighborhoods while engineering students help install batteries and solar panels in homes and schools.

It may seem like grunt work, but the strategies of the UJC and student organizations tackle a fundamental task of communist organizing that is often overlooked—the development of personal connections, a community focus, and hands-on experience.

"The idea is that those neighborly relationships fortify us to see this crisis through, to resist it in some way," Díaz-Pérez said. "The act of thinking about these problems collectively is something to enjoy, something to share. For me, it's part of my day-to-day life."

Structures to learn from

Most UJC hubs consist of between three and 15 people, organized within the context of workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, or departments within the university. Unlike the FEU, the UJC does not function as a mass organization which anyone can join.

UJC members identify prospective recruits by their level of political consciousness and organizing potential. Membership is determined after getting to know the candidate on a personal level, through inviting them to excursions and activities organized by the UJC.

Building that sense of community is integral to making prospective members feel committed and connected to the work they will eventually do within the organization. This commitment is fortified through the more formal initiation process of interviews and evaluations.

Through this process, which may take up to several months, the UJC works to maintain its function as the vanguard of the Cuban youth, putting into action what it sees as the Leninist concept of the "professional revolutionary." It provides its members with a sense of belonging and purpose.

The FEU works closely with the UJC on many activities, but it serves a different function in student life. Every student at the University of Havana is automatically a member of whichever branch of the FEU corresponds to their department of study.

The FEU, although still a political body with a storied revolutionary history, engages students more on a recreational and educational level, putting together cultural and sporting events, helping students with career and educational development, and serving as a bridge between students, professors, and the administration.

Many a UJC militant is born out of the experience of organizing first with the FEU or its high school counterpart (Federación de Estudiantes de Enseñanza Media, FEEM), as was Díaz-Pérez's trajectory.

In school and the workplace, faculty or co-workers who are members of the Communist Party (PCC, or Partido Comunista de Cuba) often mentor rising UJC militants, identifying prospective members and aiding in the process of initiation. UJC members are inducted not based on tests of moral purity but rather on their willingness to learn and get involved.

Many times, when there is a PCC hub established in a particular locality, a UJC is soon to follow, and vice versa. The party understands the importance of building the consciousness and the practical skills of its younger cadre to ensure the longevity of the Revolution.

Connected struggles

Despite having their distinct history and being a socialist country, Cuba shows that communist organizing is necessarily local, personal, and intergenerational. As the Communist Party USA is in the process of building out a national structure for its youth affiliate, its members may want to look to the experiences of organizing among young people in Cuba.

The work of the Cuban youth organizations also show that the Cuban people are not helpless victims by any means, as reporters on all sides of the political spectrum in the U.S. media often make them out to be.

Cuba solidarity movements in the U.S. and in the global north more broadly should be wary of perpetuating paternalistic models of aid or spreading misinformation about the actual effects of the blockade.

Aid should be organized around the work that Cubans are already doing, aimed at the government's stated goals of energy self-sufficiency starting with the sectors of society that need it most—key centers of production, schools, hospitals, workplaces, etc.

It is important to remember just how many ways Cuban society remains adaptable, dynamic, and lively—this, too, is resistance. When a blackout hits, people go about their daily routines or find new ones. Even with the University of Havana shut down and social spaces limited, young people find places to congregate and organize.

In the face of so much uncertainty and fear among the population at large and youth in particular, Díaz-Pérez told People's World: "I think that to inform oneself about everything that's happening in the world, to exchange ideas with the movements in other countries, is always important, to give us perspective on Cuba's future. We don't live alone in the world."

The gains of working-class struggle are hard-won, and can never be taken for granted—especially for Cuba, whose institutions and ways of living are constantly under attack by powerful international capitalist forces.

The next generation, Cuban Communists believe, cannot realize its full potential without the guidance of the party, but the PCC cannot rest on its laurels as long as the international class struggle continues. The dialectical relationship between the youth and community, YCL and party, strengthens both.

Díaz-Canel said that his memories of the UJC during his youth in the '90s were "filled with sweat, toil, but also music, song, dance, and, above all else, heavy with ideas, creation, a desire to save the homeland, the Revolution, and socialism."

This strategy of community-building, recreation, and militancy within revolutionary youth movements is one that we can take with us in our own struggles at home.

The war is not over: A moral resistance is needed

By Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove

After Donald Trump announced on social media Friday that the Straight of Hormuz was open, he told *USA Today* that he was celebrating a "great victory." According to the US President, his war of choice had achieved its objectives without him ever clearly enumerating them. Spokespersons for the Iranian regime immediately contradicted Trump, and Iranian forces fired on two ships over the weekend, insisting that the Straight was still closed. Trump's war of choice is not over, but it is increasingly evident that it is more than an exercise of military might against the Iranian regime. If we listen closely, it is clear that Trump is waging a war on divinity itself.

At a press conference this past week, Bishop Barber challenged the media to pay closer attention to what Trump has been saying, both about Iran and the Pope:

Why has he been talking about "reigning" down hell? Why does he write "reign," not "rain"? What authority is he claiming to serve?

Why was he so threatened by Easter that he had to try to make it about him?

Why is the Pope teaching what Jesus and the church have always taught getting under his skin? The religious nationalist movement for so long has been saying he is an imperfect instrument being "used by God." But he's not satisfied with that. He wants to be God.

While public polling suggests that Trump's attacks on the Pope and blasphemous portrayals of himself as God are not popular, even with much of his base, Trump seems unable to resist attacking religious authority that challenges his abuse of power. He says he should be able to decide who lives and who dies half a world away, who controls the governments of other nations, who has a right to citizenship in this country, and whose rights are respected by law enforcement. If the Pope says, as he must, that God opposes such an abuse of power, Trump thinks he can attack the person who holds the office – calling him "weak" and claiming that he wouldn't be Pope if it weren't for Trump.

But this is where the moral articulation of public theology is so important in challenging authoritarianism. As Ruth Ben-Ghiat has written, "The strongman's goal is always to make his collaborators descend to his level." When he makes personal attacks against Pope Leo the official MAGA doctrine, he forces JD Vance, Marco Rubio, and any Catholic who wants to stay in his good graces to side with the boss over their own faith community. This is not only the case for Catholics. By trying to make his defiance of moral authority personal through attacks against the Pope, Trump has intensified his campaign to make himself the arbiter of good and evil.

But this confrontation between Trump as strongman and the Pope as representative of the Catholic church's just war doctrine is a window into the importance of moral witness in every generation.

Pope Leo has been able to state clearly that he is not afraid of Donald Trump and challenge all who "misuse religions and the very name of God for their own military, economic, and political ends" because this is not his personal conviction. It is the official teaching of the church. Archbishop Paul Coakley, the head of the US Conference of Bishops, said this week, "Pope Leo is not [Trump'] rival; nor is the Pope a politician. He is the Vicar of Christ who speaks from the truth of the Gospel and for the care of souls." Pope Leo's opposition to total war is church doctrine. The story of how it came to be so clear is an important reminder why small acts of faithfulness matter, even when they don't make front-page news.



More than 60 years ago, when the Second Vatican Council met in Rome, 2,300 bishops gathered from around the world to consider how the ancient faith of the church should be lived and interpreted in the modern world. Given the potential threat of nuclear weapons, the bishops debated how the church would interpret its just war doctrine in the face of 20th century realities. The most prominent Catholic theologian in the United States, Fr. John Courtney Murray, had argued since World War II that a limited nuclear war could be just. But the global community was increasingly clear that nuclear war could not be limited. The bishops had to wrestle with the question of whether a total war could ever be just.

Outside the White House this week, Trump told ABC News "you cannot let a certain country, which is a very mean-spirited country, have a nuclear weapon. If they did, they would use it." At Vatican II, it was precisely this logic which led some theologians to argue that a total war against a potential nuclear power could be justified. Long theological treatises were written with much greater clarity than Trump has ever been able to muster, but toward the same conclusion. The threat of a bomb that could destroy the world world might justify the destruction of a whole people, the advocates for total war argued.

Because she understood that some of the bishops could be persuaded by this cold logic, Dorothy Day organized a "peace lobby," which held a 10-day fast in Rome during the final session of Vatican II in 1965. "I had offered my fast in part for the victims of famine all over the world," Day wrote, "and I could only feel that I had been given some little intimation of the hunger of the world." By calling the bishops to remember Christ's presence in the least of these, the fast persuaded the bishops that the church could never justify total war. "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and humanity itself," the Second Vatican Council wrote in Gaudium et Spes. "It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation." As Catholic theologian James W. Douglass, who was instrumental to the peace lobby's communications with the bishops has noted, it was the only condemnation of Vatican II.

When Pope Leo offered "unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation" of Trump's threat to annihilate a whole civilization, he wasn't acting on his personal convictions alone.

He was speaking as the head of a church that has a moral position on total war – a position that was debated carefully over years and influenced by the moral witness of people who practiced the power of nonviolent love through a fast and vigil in Rome. As we prepare for another week of Moral Mondays, both in Washington, DC, and in local communities across the nation, the Pope's moral clarity is a powerful reminder why faithful moral witness, however small, is important in every moment.

This moral position is not just church tradition; it is the result of listening to the words of the prophets and the words of the Gospel, especially the words of Jesus that have ultimate authority for Christians. "Blessed are the peacemakers" can't just be pushed aside or written away or changed whenever there is a new president or a new pope. Every generations of the church is met with this reminder of Jesus and call to be faithful, not to politics or a particular power structure, but to the Gospel.

To be sure, the church – both Protestant and Catholic – has not always been consistent in its witness to the message of Jesus, but in this moment the Word of the Lord is clear, and the Pope, along with many other moral leaders, is clear that the religious nationalism embraced by Trump, Hegseth, and the MAGA movement is wrong, sinful, and blasphemous.

The 20th century theologian Reinhold Niebuhr said, "The tendency to claim God as an ally for our partisan value and ends is the source of all religious fanaticism." We can't bow down to a false god in a president, nor to the false and immoral narrative that this war of choice is holy and can bring a lasting peace.

The moral authority of a voice in the public square is never dependent on their personality alone. It is the articulation of a consensus that has been built over generations, often by people who consistently show up to insist that some things cannot be about what is most expedient or even what is immediately possible. This is why, whenever we hold Moral Mondays, we say people of faith enter into the public space not with partisan facts and focus, but with the truths of the gospel and the prophets, declaring, "Thus saith the Lord." To take a moral stand is to insist that somethings must be resisted no matter how inevitable they may seem, simply because they are wrong.

Because this war on divinity is not over, we must continue to mount a moral resistance to it.

Rapid Response: Hands off Cuba

By People's World



Hands Off Cuba!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Representative and Senators to demand immediate intervention by Congress to stop the Trump administration's stated illegal plans for a military attack on Cuba after it already created a cruel humanitarian crisis with a full-scale oil blockade.

Tell them to support and co-sponsor the War Powers Resolutions introduced to prevent U.S. military involvement in Cuba by Rep. Nydia Velazquez in the House and Sens. Tim Kane, Ruben Gallego, and Adam Schiff in the Senate.

The blockade of Cuba is endangering the lives of ordinary Cuban people and is designed to threaten their sovereign right to decide their own future.

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your US Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

This May Day, workers will take to the streets against MAGA

By CPUSA Labor Commission

This May Day, International Workers' Day, we are calling every worker, organized and unorganized, employed and unemployed, to hit the streets!

On May 1, workers, students, immigrants, and families in over 1,000 cities nationwide will join May Day actions. They will march, rally, and refuse business as usual to demand one thing: Workers Over Billionaires. Some will take the pledge: "No Work. No School. No Shopping."



May Day Strong, the coalition leading this year's actions, includes demands of taxing the billionaires so working families, not big business, come first; no ICE; no war; no private army serving authoritarian power; expand democracy; hands off our vote.

Workers over billionaires is an important slogan. The biggest beneficiary of the Trump regime is monopoly capital itself—the financial oligarchy of trillion-dollar corporations and billionaires who rig the political system, bust our unions, profit from division and war, and bankroll MAGA fascism.

Why is this May Day so crucial?
Because working people are under the most intense assault in generations. We are producing more wealth than workers ever have in history. Yet, as many of us are painfully aware, our wages have flatlined, and layoffs are rising. The share of value returned to us as wages has hit a historic low. Full-time work has grown precarious, and the prices for essential goods and services continue to skyrocket. The rich are getting richer, and we continue to lose ground.

And now, the same Big Tech monopolies driving rapid automation through the adoption of AI—which analysts say will displace 25% of working hours—are leading the charge to strip our basic democratic rights in service of the anti-democratic MAGA agenda.

The attacks on our labor movement are intensifying. Last year, the Trump regime launched the largest union-busting campaign in recent history, stripping collective bargaining from 1.3 million federal workers. They have gutted the National Labor Relations Board. They have purged over 300,000 Black women from the workforce by demolishing DEI and affirmative action. They have escalated ICE raids to terrorize immigrant workers into silence.

This is the crisis our working-class faces. This is why we need to come out as strong and unified as possible this May Day. For us, it is not a single event but another launchpad for continued mass organizing.

What are we demanding?
This May Day, the Communist Party USA Labor Commission calls for a working-class program that can unite the multiracial, multi-gender, multi-generational working class and our allies—civil rights, women, youth, LGBTQ, immigrant defense, and peace movements.

- Six-hour day, no cut in pay – automation and the adoption of AI should make life better and more secure for workers, not less. Share the wealth we produce.
- Equal pay for equal work – across race, gender, and immigration status.
- Cut the military budget, close the bases, end the forever wars!
- Tax the rich! Fund jobs, housing, schools, and healthcare.
- No union-busting – pass the PRO Act!
- Hands off Cuba! No war on Iran!
- Break up the big monopolies!
- Boycott Target and all corporations that have backed away from equal opportunity.
- No ICE, no raids, no occupation of our cities – defend immigrant workers as our own.

These are not just slogans but concrete demands we can fight for and win now that also build the class consciousness and collective power we need to go further. They link the struggle against Trump directly to the struggle against the monopolies and the entire capitalist system which perpetuates the crisis.

Look at the lessons from Minnesota. When they shut down the state against ICE occupation—with the Minnesota AFL-CIO, Service Employees, Teachers, Unite HERE, ATU, and others leading—they showed what is possible when organized labor, workers, community groups, and faith organizations come together. What happened in Minnesota is a model: labor as the leading force in a broad, struggle-oriented, anti-monopoly coalition.

Importantly, the same monopolies that drive down our wages, bust our unions, and lay off our fellow workers operate internationally. They consciously pit workers of different countries against each other, including in wars, to maximize their profits. In response, our resistance must reflect international solidarity.

That is why we say: No war! Cut the military budget! Close the bases! End the forever wars! U.S. imperialism must be defeated! From Palestine to Cuba to Iran to our own ICE-occupied streets, we stand for peace and international solidarity.

We must redouble our efforts to end the criminal blockade on Cuba and demand its immediate removal from the "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list. Add to that ending the imperialist war on Iran, as well as an end to the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza.

This May Day, we march for all of this.

Join a May Day Strong action if one exists in your area. If your central labor council or union is involved, link up with them. If not, organize an event with your co-workers, your neighbors, and your community. Bring the civil rights and youth movements with you. If you can, take the pledge: **No Work. No School. No Shopping.**

And when you are in the streets, talk to each other. Make connections. Build unity. Organize!

This May Day, we aren't just protesting Trump and MAGA; we are building the working class-led pro-democracy coalition that can lead us out of this crisis and toward a socialist future where the people and the planet come before profits.

And on May 1st – we'll see you in the streets.

Go to **PeoplesWorld.org/Donate**
or mail a check made out to
"People's World"to:

People's World
235 W. 23rd Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10011

Today in environmental history: Earth Day founded in 1970

By Special to People's World



On this date in 1970, the first Earth Day was celebrated. Founded by U.S. Sen. Gaylord Nelson, Earth Day encourages all citizens to help protect our environment and contribute to a healthy, sustainable world.

The original message for the day was "New Energy for a New Era," paying attention to accelerating the transition to renewable energy worldwide.

In 1970, Americans were pumping leaded gas into their massive sedans, and industry belched out smoke and sludge with little fear of legal consequences or bad press. Air pollution was commonly accepted as the smell of prosperity. Although mainstream America remained oblivious to environmental concerns, the stage had been set for change by the publication of Rachel Carson's 1962 bestseller *Silent Spring*, which sold more than 500,000 copies in 24 countries. Up until that moment, more than any other person, Carson raised public awareness and concern for living organisms, the environment and public health.

Earth Day 1970 capitalized on this emerging consciousness, channeling the energy of the anti-Vietnam War protest movement and putting environmental concerns front and center.

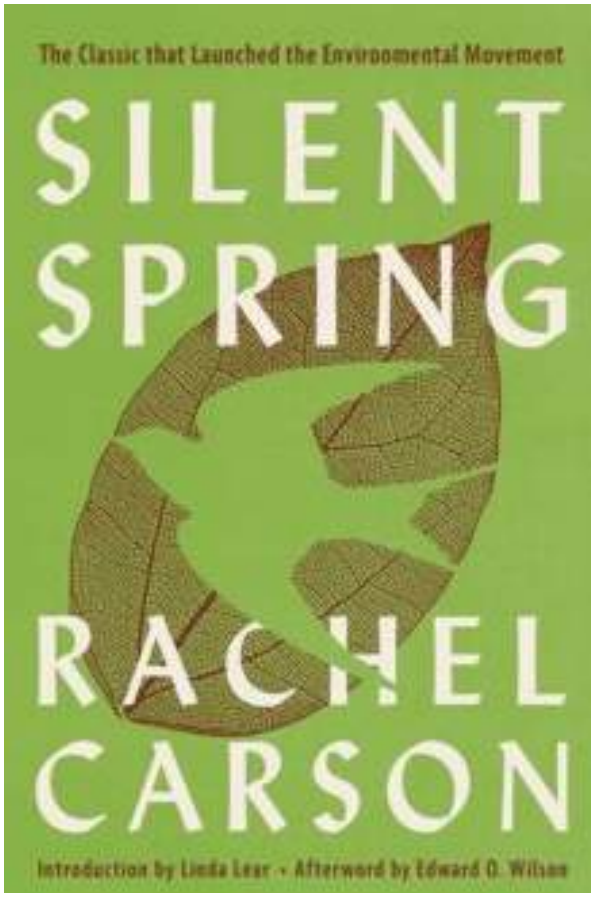
The idea came to Gaylord Nelson, then a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, after witnessing the ravages of the 1969 oil spill in Santa Barbara, Calif. He realized that he could fuse the anti-war impetus with an emerging public consciousness about air and water pollution, and force environmental protection onto the national political agenda. Nelson recruited Pete McCloskey, a conservation-minded Republican congressman, to serve as his co-chair for a "national teach-in on the environment" and hired a staff of 85 to promote events across the land.

Twenty million Americans took to the streets, parks, and auditoriums to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment in massive coast-to-coast rallies. Thousands of colleges and universities organized protests against the deterioration of the environment. Isolated groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common values.

The first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts, with bipartisan support.

The 20th Earth Day in 1990 went global, mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries and lifting environmental issues onto the world stage. It stimulated recycling efforts worldwide and helped pave the way for the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. President Bill Clinton awarded Sen. Nelson the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1995 for his role as Earth Day founder.

Environmental awareness has blossomed all over the world, meeting, of course, a strong climate change denial effort on the part of big business and well-funded efforts to dismantle environmental regulatory agencies. But each year on April 22, Earth Day remains a powerful focal point around which people demonstrate their commitment.



LABOR NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

As a result, he further commented that he has had to change his diet and habits. Living alone and needing the maximum time in the week to advance in his work at the Institute of Philosophy, he focuses on cooking during periods of the weekend when he has electricity in the house. “I have also been incorporating more products in my diet that don’t need to be reheated to consume, like spaghetti, bread, and fruit and yogurt smoothies.”

Public institutions and services, while still operating, have had to resort to reduced hours and find themselves short-staffed as workers who live farther away are not able to find transit to work.

This adds extra pressure in the life of the researcher we talked to, who noted that because his personal laptop is broken, he has to complete most of his work on-site at the Institute. Between their limited hours and the difficulties of transit, he has to leave extremely early in the morning and typically returns home quite late.

Thus, many Cubans find themselves frustrated that the landmark rights they have achieved for themselves, like universal free healthcare and education, have been gradually compromised by the externally imposed material deprivations of the cruel U.S. blockade.

part 8 of this article will appear in 2 weeks.

«No apto, enfermo, desquiciado»: la NAACP pide la destitución de Trump

By Albert Bender

La NAACP, por primera vez en su historia, ha solicitado la destitución de un presidente en ejercicio: Donald Trump. El 7 de abril, Derrick Johnson, presidente y director ejecutivo de la NAACP, calificó a Trump de «incapaz, mentalmente inestable y desquiciado». La organización de derechos civiles más antigua del país exige la invocación de la 25.ª Enmienda para apartar a Trump de su cargo, subrayando así la gravedad de la presidencia de Trump.

La NAACP, desde hace mucho tiempo una firme defensora y luchadora por los derechos de los afroamericanos, hizo un llamamiento a la «acción urgente» para responder al «deterioro de la salud y al comportamiento cada vez más delirante» de Trump. La NAACP fundamentó su postura argumentando: «La retórica y las acciones que emanan del cargo más alto de la nación han alcanzado un nivel de inestabilidad que representa un peligro directo para el bienestar de millones de estadounidenses».

Los enérgicos llamamientos para que el Congreso actúe han aumentado exponencialmente en los últimos días; en particular, desde que Trump amenazó con bombardear instalaciones e infraestructuras civiles en Irán, incluidas centrales eléctricas y puentes. El martes 7 de abril, Trump advirtió: «Toda una civilización morirá esta noche».

Tales amenazas constituyen crímenes de guerra en virtud del Artículo 51 del Convenio de Ginebra. Las amenazas de violencia cuyo objetivo principal sea sembrar el terror entre la población civil están expresamente prohibidas por el Artículo 51(2) del Protocolo Adicional al Convenio de Ginebra. Dichas acciones constituyen graves violaciones del derecho internacional humanitario (DIH).

En virtud de este Protocolo, probablemente sería calificado como criminal de guerra debido a acciones tales como la masacre de 165 niños, de entre 7 y 12 años, en una escuela de niñas iraní al comienzo de la guerra ilegal entre Estados Unidos e Israel.

Esto incluye los crímenes de lesa humanidad de deportaciones masivas en los Estados Unidos y el asesinato de decenas de personas en ataques contra embarcaciones en el mar Caribe y el océano Pacífico oriental.

En su acusación, la NAACP se centró en una combinación de acciones de política interna y exterior. «No se trata meramente de una cuestión de desacuerdo político; es una cuestión de seguridad nacional, de estabilidad global y del propio tejido de nuestra democracia».

La 25.ª Enmienda se aplica cuando un presidente es incapaz de ejercer los poderes y deberes de su cargo. En este sentido, la postura de la NAACP citó la incapacidad de Trump para «pensar con claridad».

«La 25.ª Enmienda proporciona un mecanismo crucial para abordar la incapacidad presidencial, y no podemos permitirnos ignorar sus disposiciones», declaró la organización de derechos civiles.

Sin duda, Trump y su séquito de asesores aduladores desconocían —o les tenía sin cuidado— que sus amenazas constituían crímenes de guerra. El presidente y su Secretario de Guerra, Pete Hegseth, en particular, parecen seguir empeñados en gobernar el país como si la política fuera un reality show o un negocio privado. Pero el llamado «arte de la negociación» no resulta aplicable. Es más, su desconocimiento de las convenciones internacionales no los exculpa, pues —citando un viejo aforismo— «la ignorancia de la ley no sirve de excusa».

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) declares ‘Cuba is not alone!’

The ruthless nature of imperialism stands naked today. The Israeli state’s genocide in Gaza, backed by the U.S., NATO, and the EU; attacks on Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iran; the U.S. invasion of Venezuela and kidnapping of President Maduro—all serve the economic and geostrategic interests of monopoly capital.

In this same imperialist frenzy, Washington is escalating its assault on socialist Cuba. Despite repeated UN General Assembly votes and global outcry, the U.S. not only refuses to lift the illegal, immoral embargo—it is tightening it. Under the absurd pretext that Cuba sponsors terrorism, Washington is blocking oil supplies, deliberately creating energy poverty that crushes Cuban workers’ living and working conditions.

Yet Cuba’s working class and people resist with pride and dignity. They refuse to submit to imperialist will or abandon the revolutionary path they have freely chosen.

The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), in joint meeting with Cuba’s CTC, has issued an urgent appeal: intensify solidarity actions for Cuba’s struggle for survival. The message of class solidarity must reach every factory, office, and workplace.

May Day: Made in the USA

On Oct. 6, 1886, Albert Parsons rose in a Chicago courtroom to make the last speech of his life. A labor organizer and printer, he was one of the so-called “anarchists” framed by police after a bomb explosion during a workers’ demonstration at Haymarket Square on May 4.

“The charge is made that we are ‘foreigners,’” Parsons said. “But I have been here long enough to have the rights guaranteed by the Constitution of my country.”

Then, with defiance: “I am an internationalist. The world is my country, and all mankind my countrymen.”

Why was the state determined to see him dead?

The demand for an eight-hour workday swept America as workers rebelled against 12-, 14-, and 16-hour days. On May 1, 1886, hundreds of thousands launched the first general strike in U.S. history. Chicago was the epicenter, where 70,000 workers shut down the city’s plants. At the head stood Parsons.

On May 3, police attacked strikers at the McCormick Reaper plant, killing at least one.

A protest was called for the next day at Haymarket Square.

As the peaceful rally ended, 200 police charged. A bomb exploded—no one knows who threw it. Police then fired into the fleeing crowd, killing at least four workers.

Parsons and others were rounded up and charged as “accessories to murder.” A Chicago newspaper wrote, “The labor question has reached a point where blood-letting has become necessary.”

Parsons told the court, “Socialism is simple justice, because wealth is a social, not an individual product, and its appropriation by a few creates a privileged class, enslaving the producing class.”

On Nov. 11, 1886, Parsons, August Spies, Adolph Fischer, and George Engel were hanged. Over 100,000 people followed their bodies to the grave.

In 1889, the Second International declared May 1st International Workers Day—May Day—born in the U.S.A. in honor of the Haymarket martyrs.

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MAY 2026

U.S. workers reclaim May Day

C.J. Atkins



For most of the 20th century, May Day—International Workers' Day—was largely absent from the official calendar of the U.S. labor movement. While workers around the globe marched on May 1 to honor the martyrs of Chicago’s 1886 Haymarket uprising, bosses pushed their employees to only observe Labor Day in September, leaving May Day—the original workers’ holiday—to the left, immigrant rights activists, and the occasional socialist rally.

That era is over.

This May 1, labor councils from Milwaukee to North Carolina, from UFCW locals to teachers' unions, are marching with a demand that cuts to the heart of today's crisis: Workers Over Billionaires. The scale and character of this year's mobilizations represent something new: the formal re-entry of U.S. organized labor into International Workers' Day, on a national scale, for the first time in generations.

When the people of Minnesota shut down their state to protest ICE occupation in January, the AFL-CIO, SEIU, Teachers, Unite HERE, and ATU were in the lead, showing what’s possible. In temperatures of -30 degrees, over 100,000 workers and residents marched and brought much of the economy there to a halt, forcing a partial federal retreat. That action is the model for today.

The demands workers are carrying into the streets reflect the weight of the current moment. Corporations are waging a coordinated offensive on wages and benefits even as profits soar.

The AFL-CIO has documented that working women and people of color stand to lose the most as employers race to deploy artificial intelligence—often without workers' consent—to hire, monitor, evaluate, and even fire employees.

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May Day 2026: Hit the streets for workers' power

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE Nearly 80% of those who will see their jobs erased by AI in the next decade could be earning less than $38,000 a year. Unions from the Longshoremen to the Las Vegas Culinary workers have begun writing AI protections directly into contracts, requiring bargaining before any AI implementation.

Meanwhile, corporations have raced to roll back DEI commitments and equal-opportunity programs with barely a word of public accountability. Workers and community groups are boycotting the companies leading that retreat, particularly Target.

The international dimension of this May Day cannot be separated from the domestic one. The Trump administration's military intervention in Venezuela showed that this government has no respect for the law. An oil blockade now squeezes Cuba, which has faced more than 65 years of economic siege simply for choosing to build a sovereign nation.

And the threat of expanded war with Iran—whose workers are already suffering under sanctions—makes an anti-war labor movement a necessity. With the Trump administration demanding a new $1.5 trillion military budget—paid for with cuts to our education, health care, and other services, it's clear that his wars are an attack on the entire working class, both abroad and here at home.

This May Day, labor is calling on working people to demand that elected officials—from city councils to Congress—stand up to the federal attack on working people. The movement's pledge—No Work. No School. No Shopping.—is an explicit exercise of the only power workers have ever had: the collective withdrawal of their labor.

The demands are concrete and winnable: Pass the PRO Act, tax the wealthy, fully fund public schools and healthcare, protect immigrant workers, end the wars, halt the AI free-for-all, restore equal opportunity on the job, and save constitutional democracy.

Wealthy corporations and businesses are leveraging their influence to stifle worker power and rig the rules of the economy in their favor. They want to undo the progress the labor movement has made over decades to gain livable wages, high-quality health care, retirement security, and stronger protections on the job. But history is on our side, and we refuse to go back.

May Day began in the USA. This year, it comes home.



Federal Unionists Network (FUN) endorses CBTU call for National Day of Solidarity

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists' call for a workers' march on Washington has a new endorser: the Federal Unionists Network.

The CBTU passed a resolution at its 2025 convention calling on the AFL-CIO to organize a national union day of solidarity to protest the Trump administration's anti-worker policies—a move akin to the "Solidarity Day 1981" march in response to Ronald Reagan's firing of air traffic controllers and the breaking of their union, PATCO.

The Federal Unionists Network, or FUN, agrees with CBTU that the time for stepped-up labor action is now. As momentum builds from No Kings III toward May Day 2026, workers all across the country are shifting into overtime to build the broadest possible coalitions to defeat the Trump administration's fascist policies, and FUN is at the center of the effort.

FUN began with dozens of rank-and-file federal workers across different agencies joining together on a WhatsApp group to push for a stronger Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA). Since the Elon Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) attacks and mass layoffs of public sector workers, though, FUN has been built up into a frontline fighter resisting Trump's destruction of the public sector. It has led rallies across the country and struggled to strengthen federal worker union locals.

Some 300,000 jobs were cut and over 1.3 million workers lost union protections after Trump signed a March 2025 executive order cancelling collective bargaining contracts for the majority of the federal workforce. FUN has sought to galvanize the anger of workers towards militant class struggle unionism and encourage a re-imagining of a transformed post-Trump public service.



An important factor in the fightback has been the fact that the federal government is the largest employer of African Americans. So, the mass layoffs have had a disparate impact on the Black community and its pathways to higher incomes.

FUN has now joined other labor constituency groups, state federations of the AFL-CIO, and local labor councils around the country in endorsing the CBTU's May 2025 call for a labor-led National Day of Solidarity and rally against the Trump administration's anti-labor policies.

Given the fact that federal workers have borne some of the deepest attacks of the Project 2025 assault on the public service, FUN's endorsement carries a lot of weight. Its base includes tens of thousands of federal workers around the country who belong to different agencies and different union locals, meaning its support for the CBTU's proposal could have a major impact in galvanizing the federal workforce to lead in this fight for a renewed March on Washington.

The initiative from CBTU is proving to be the spark that was needed to get the working class moving, and FUN's backing accelerates that momentum.

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May 2, 2026

Midterm election will be a referendum on the future of U.S. democracy

By Tony Pecinovsky

In roughly seven months, tens of millions of Americans will vote in the midterm elections. This election will be a referendum on the future of our democracy. This isn't hyperbole. It's a demonstrable fact.

Of course, during every election cycle, pundits and candidates say: "This is the most important election in my lifetime." Some mean it; others know it's bluster.

Hell, I've been around long enough to have heard politicians tell me "This is the most important election in my lifetime" since at least the 2000 presidential elections, when "hanging chads" in Florida decided the fate of our country. Then, it was a contest between Al Gore and George W. Bush.

Sure, there were miles of differences between Gore and Bush, especially on the environment. But I'm not going to rehash what might have been or speculate about whether Gore's response to 9/11 would have been drastically different than Bush's. Who knows?

What I do know is this: Donald J. Trump—and the vile network of racist, sexist sycophants that make up his administration—are a creature of fundamentally different stripes. In a manner unmatched by any prior administration, they are actively working to undermine the very foundations of our (albeit limited) bourgeois democracy.

Their agenda is an open and aggressive disdain for democratic norms. Their agenda is fascist. It is an attack on our basic rights and freedoms—especially, the rights and freedoms of women, immigrants, African Americans, and LGBTQ+ folks. It is an attack on higher education, freedom of the press, and the right to assemble and protest. It is an attack on workers everywhere. It's all about sham prosecutions of "political enemies" and the "disappearing" of immigrants by masked agents.

Again, this isn't hyperbole. It is an overt, unmistakable attack on the Bill of Rights.

Now, I won't say, "This is the most important election in my lifetime."



But what I will say is this: If we don't stop the right-wing, fascist assault on our democracy, we may not have elections—at least, not as we currently know them—in the very near future.

Make no mistake about it: While elections aren't our only tool, they are one of the most important tools in our democratic, collective toolbox. They frame political discourse. They challenge the political balance of power. They can help stop the drive towards right-wing authoritarianism.

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Midterm election will be a referendum on the future of U.S. democracy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

A democratic landslide—the defeat of MAGA and all the Trump-supported Republican candidates up and down the ballot—will send a clear, resounding message.

Imagine setting the Trump agenda back on its heels. Imagine Democratic control of the House and Senate making the impeachment of Trump possible—for a third time! Imagine a progressive majority defunding ICE and prosecuting those who murdered Renee Good and Alex Pretti.

Imagine Democratic and progressive majorities in state legislatures, county councils, aldermanic seats, and school boards. Imagine more progressives, socialists, and communists running for office.

Not so long ago, few would have imagined a socialist mayor of New York City. Now socialists and communists hold elected offices across the country—and more are running this fall.

Collectively, we can turn the Trump agenda into an anchor that sinks the far-right, while simultaneously offering an alternative —a socialist alternative. But we must think of this as a collective act,not an individual one.

Some people will say, "What's the point? Democrats and Republicans are the same." But this formulation is wrong-headed and individualistic. It frames elections and voting as an individual act, rather than a collective one—rather than something we do as a class.

On a philosophical level, they confuse the *substance* of struggle with its *form*. This is equally wrong-headed. Struggle can take a multiplicity of *forms*—a strike, boycott, rally, an election, etc, While all of these *forms* are important and have tactical and strategic purposes during specific political moments, they should not and cannot be confused with the *substance* of struggle. The *substance*, or content that constitutes the social relations of struggle, is an entirely different matter. And we must ask ourselves: What are the *substantive* social relations that need to be activated, organized, mobilized, and united to defeat the far-right, fascist agenda of the Trump administration?

This question strikes at the heart of how we should think about the midterm elections. A resounding defeat of the far-right this November is part of the answer. Their defeat could signal a *substantive* realignment of social relations. It can potentially alter the balance of power and put this long Trump nightmare behind us—of course, we'll still have to contend with MAGA forces for years to come (under capitalism, these forces will continue to exist), and Trump will still have two more years as a dangerous lame-duck.

However, the correlation of forces coming together to defeat Trump this November is, without a doubt, the most important, biggest, and broadest coalition I've seen in my lifetime (the "No Kings!" marches have been the biggest in U.S. history). And that tells me something. It tells me: If I believe in democracy—which I do—then I should also see this election as a referendum on the future of our democracy.

I hope you'll see it that way, too.

LGBTQ movement targets key races in election year 2026

By John Wojcik



WASHINGTON—The 2026 midterm elections are shaping up as battlegrounds to defend the rights of all variety of people harmed by Trump administration policies. Among those entering the electoral arena full force are the nation's LGBTQ people, who are putting funds, time, and work into campaigns in key battleground states.

It wasn't too long ago in American history that gay rights groups, if they entered electoral fights at all, did it quietly. These days, they openly announce their plans to replace lawmakers who oppose them with friendly faces in the new Congress.

The president of the Human Rights Campaign, Kelley Robinson, is an important example of the commitment by gay rights activists to influence the makeup of Congress. "I think that this is the election that's going to be the sea change, not only for getting to a pro-equality majority but for changing the momentum on this fight for equality," she told the press recently.

Her organization has targeted eight congressional districts in which they say a push on LGBTQ rights can result in changing the makeup of the next Congress. And they are not stopping with the House. They are extending their full support to Democrats running for the U.S. Senate in a number of states, including Georgia, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Texas. HRC is dedicating a $15 million budget to the effort.

That approach has won them strong allies in both labor and allied organizations—as well as from long-time Democratic Party activists who believe that all of the districts being singled out by LGBTQ rights activists are important to the overall battle to change the makeup of the next Congress.

Activists in the movement for LGBTQ equality are under no illusions that their efforts will yield easy results. They are well aware that, like other groups in the country, they have endured serious defeats and setbacks at the hands of the Trump administration. In addition to those defeats, they have had to contend with setbacks in the nation's courts.

President Trump's Republican administration has rolled back protections for transgender people, such as banning them from serving in the military and cutting off gender-affirming care for children. The U.S. Supreme Court's conservative majority has upheld Republican states' restrictions while striking down bans on "conversion therapy" practices even in Democratic states.

In some ways, the movements for LQBTQ rights have taken for granted that the victories won over recent decades meant that some of the big battles were over.

The mood when the Supreme Court upheld the right to same sex marriage in 2015 was euphoric. Many did not expect that the victory would be under threat only a few years later.

Likewise, civil rights activists and immigrant rights activists believed that victories won over the years would not come under threat again from powerful right-wing forces in the country. They, too, have seen massive reversals.

"I believe that our movement made ourselves believe that we were closer to equality than we actually are," Robinson told the Associated Press recently.

If the determination to enter the electoral arena during the midterms is any indication, the LGBTQ rights movements and the allied movements of labor, civil rights, and others are not going to be repeating previous tendencies to overestimate the durability of past victories and underestimate the strength of right-wing forces on the country determined to reverse them.

"This movement is ready for its next wind, its second wind," Robinson said.

U.S. billionaires buy power, Cuba's people build it

By Cameron Harrison

There's a word that gets thrown around a lot in the U.S. — democracy. The ruling class loves to wrap itself in it, especially when it's time to attack anyone who refuses to bow to Wall Street, including working-class people here at home. But lately, the target is Cuba again.

With Cuba, the Trump regime is tightening the screws, escalating the decades-long blockade, and ramping up the corporate smear machine. Their message is always the same lie: "Cuba is a dictatorship. We are the beacon of freedom."

But let's think for a moment on our democracy in the U.S. Who actually rules? Who decides what happens to our paychecks, our healthcare, our right to organize a union, our children's future?

If we look at the U.S. and then look at Cuba, we won't see "democracy" versus "tyranny." We will see two completely different systems. One is built for billionaires, the other built for the people.

One dollar, one vote

The United States runs on a simple principle: one dollar, one vote. Take for instance the 2024 election cycle where a handful of billionaire families poured more than $2.6 billion into federal races. Dark money groups, the kind where you never see the donor list, spent nearly $2 billion (that we know of). This is not democracy, it's a sealed-bid auction for the presidency and Congress.



When the Supreme Court made the Citizens United ruling, it kicked down the wall between corporate boardrooms and the halls of power. Now, if you want to run for office, your first job isn't to listen to voters. It's to dial for dollars. And who answers? The same capitalists who want massive tax cuts, stock-buy-backs, deregulation, and unions busted in workplaces.

The MAGA assault: trying to burn democracy down

And just when workers, after decades of back-room dealing between the C-suites and Washington, thought U.S. bourgeois democracy couldn't get any more hollow, along comes the MAGA regime to set what's left on fire.

Trump isn't just bending the rules of bourgeois democracy — he's shredding them.

Let's consider the record.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

Union busting on a historic scale: Over 1.3 million federal workers lost their collective bargaining rights. It was the biggest single attack on organized labor in U.S. history. And don't think it stops there. The message to every private sector boss is now: "Go ahead, break the unions. The White House has your back."

Birthright citizenship under attack: Despite the crystal-clear language of the 14th Amendment — "all persons born or naturalized in the U.S. are citizens" — the Trump regime is openly challenging the right of anyone (of color) to be a citizen and participate politically.

Deportation without due process: The Alien Enemies Act of 1798 is being dusted off and used to round up and expel people with no hearing, no lawyer, no nothing. The 5th Amendment guarantees due process. MAGA says: "Not anymore."

Privacy for sale: Elon Musk's so-called "Department of Government Efficiency" vacuumed up sensitive data from the Social Security Administration and other agencies. Millions of Americans' private information is now sitting on servers in violation of privacy laws and respect for human dignity — all in the name of "efficiency." In reality, it was a billionaire's data grab with no public, democratic oversight.

Trying to ram through anti-voter bills: the SAVE Act and the MEGA Act would disenfranchise millions of eligible voters from being able to register and cast their ballots — especially women, the LGBTQ community, people of color, and seniors. It is the most sweeping federal attack on voting rights since the Jim Crow era.

This isn't a "drift" toward fascism by the U.S. ruling class, but a sprint. And it's being cheered on by the same billionaires that benefit from a weak working class, a terrified civil service, and a public where some feel powerless, alienated, and that mass, popular struggle is "impossible."

And don't forget the place where workers spend the majority of our waking hours — on the job. In the U.S. under capitalism, our workplace is also a dictatorship. Our bosses control when and where you work, how much you are paid, what medical insurance you deserve in their eyes, and other aspects of workers' lives. They can fire us for any reason, or no reason at all, under "at-will employment." Without a union contract, we have no real say over working conditions, no control over production, and no right to challenge the boss's bottom line.

Union density in the private sector has fallen to 6% — the lowest ever recorded.

When workers do try to organize, we face captive-audience meetings, illegal firings, and endless "legal" delays. The National Labor Relations Board, crippled by Trump appointees, has become a shell of itself for worker grievances.

Cuba's socialist democracy: power in the hands of the many

Now let's turn our eyes back to Cuba — a small island that has survived over six decades of the most brutal economic blockade in modern history. We find not a dictatorship, but a democracy of a different kind — one rooted in mass people's participation, not billionaires buying elections and candidates.

Cuban President Díaz-Canel put it well in a recent interview: "If the Cuban people believed I was unfit to be president, I wouldn't be here." His comment is a reflection of a democratic system where leaders don't buy their way into office, they are elected on merit and popular support.

In Cuba, there are no political TV ads, no billionaire donors, no Super PACs. Candidates are nominated in neighborhood assemblies by the community. Cuba's 2019 Constitution wasn't written in a back room, either. It was debated in over 130,000 meetings involving nearly nine million people. Then it went to a referendum, where 87% voted yes.

When a Cuban deputy foreign minister was asked recently about the U.S. demand to "end the one-party system," he didn't flinch. He gave the journalist a lesson in real democracy: universal healthcare, free education from kindergarten through university, housing as a right, not a commodity. He noted that Cuba ranks higher than the United States in international comparisons of health and education outcomes.

A country under decades of blockade — a country the U.S. has tried to strangle — still manages to keep its infants alive at rates better than many U.S. states. The same is true for general life expectancy. It still teaches every child to read and still sends doctors to disaster zones around the world, not to profit off of them but to heal those hurt in the events.

The Cuban Revolution was a democratic revolution in the deepest sense — a breaking of the old landlord class, a seizure of land and housing for the people who worked. The 1959 agrarian reform took 70% of the country's land out of the hands of a few wealthy families and gave it to the farmers who actually tilled the soil. The Urban Reform of 1960 turned renters into owners, slashed rents by up to 50%, and ended the speculation that keeps working people trapped.

Before the revolution, most Cubans were illiterate.

Today, Cuba spends a larger share of its GDP on education than almost any country in Latin America.

These gains are the product of a system that puts people's needs above private profit. Cuba's constitution guarantees healthcare, education, housing, and food as rights — not as commodities to be bought and sold.

The contradiction imperialism can't face

So why does the U.S. government hate this system so much? Why spend decades tightening a blockade that the entire world — year after year in the UN General Assembly — votes to condemn?

Because Cuba is a living counterexample. It shows that another way is possible. It shows that you don't need billionaires and "free markets" to run a country. It shows that democracy doesn't have to mean "freedom for capital" — it can mean freedom from capital and ultimately who controls it.

The fact is that Cuba has better health outcomes, higher literacy, and is a society where no one starves, where every child goes to school, where the elderly aren't bankrupted by medical bills.

Cuba has built a democratic system with a socialist character — under very difficult conditions — where money doesn't buy power, where participation is real, and where the goal of politics is not to enrich the already-rich but to meet human needs.

Does Cuba have contradictions? Of course. It faces enormous economic pressure, and the blockade causes real suffering. However, in Cuba, the national debate is always over how to best serve the people. In the U.S., our national debate is over how to best serve the billionaire class and the interests of imperialism and how to keep the stock market high while the people go hungry.

Fidel Castro once asked: "What kind of democracy is it where the rich decide everything?" That question hangs over every U.S. election, every corporate merger, and every union-busting campaign. And it's the question that the MAGA regime — and the capitalist system it serves — can never answer.

The U.S. is not the defender of democracy. It's a defender of billionaires. And Cuba, against all odds, remains a beacon of what working people can build when they take power into their own hands.

Strike: AFSCME workers at Illinois State University hold the line

By Zach Carlson



NORMAL, Ill.—The workers of Illinois State University's (ISU) American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 1110 went on strike April 8 and are now entering their third week on the picket line as the administration has refused to negotiate after the federal mediator brought both back to the table April 15.

While the union went in ready to negotiate and had a compromise prepared, university administrators refused to budge or further negotiate. Striking workers are picketing at various locations around campus, including the dining halls and resident dorms, the Hovey Hall administration building, the Bone Student Center, and the warehouses at Central Receiving, all locations where the majority of AFSCME's 350 workers are stationed.

This strike comes after months of negotiations. AFSCME 1110 are some of the university's most critical workers. They consist of building service workers (janitorial), culinary workers, and grounds workers. They work tirelessly to ensure the university functions and are some of the essential workers required to come in when the rest of the university is closed due to weather conditions.

ISU's culinary workers serve no less than 10,000 meals a day, and the building service workers help ensure all of that is cleaned up and properly disposed of. Then there is the other trash collection and day-to-day services that 24,000 people rely on.

The strike authorization vote was March 24. Workers cast authorization votes throughout the day and were greeted by Chewbacca, the enemy of both bosses and Sith Lords, holding an AFSCME sign demanding a fair contract. Some 97% of members who cast ballots voted in favor of the strike authorization.

The vote unfortunately continued the university's recent tradition of making their workers' lives harder than that have to be. Four years ago, almost to the day, AFSCME 1110 held a strike authorization vote for their last contract, which saw a 96% yes vote.

AFSCME 1110 is not the only union on campus that faces this sort of push back from administration. As previously reported, ISU administration has pulled the same stalling tactics with the Grad Workers Union (SEIU 73), United Faculty (IFT/AFT-AAUP representing tenured and tenure track faculty), Illinois State University Education Association (ISUEA representing the non-tenure track faculty), and sister local AFSCME 3637—all within the last four years.

1110's last contract ended July 2025, and negotiations for a replacement started in April 2025. Since then, the university and union met 30 times, eventually with the help of federal mediation, as negotiations stalled. AFSCME 1110's remaining sticking points include retroactive pay between the two contracts and equal pay increases in line with their non-union coworkers.

Currently, the university is refusing to provide retroactive pay back to their last contract, which in the past has been given nearly without question. The other major sticking point is an additional protection so the university cannot punish workers for joining a union by providing non-union workers higher wage increases. Most recently, non-union workers received a 3.5% increase in October, while AFSCME workers did not.

The university's lack of movement has only added to the unease and declining trust with ISU administration. According to workers and organizers alike, it feels like this administration is looking for a fight compared to the people in charge during past negotiations.

Four years ago, AFSCME 1110 bargained with then-President Terri Goss Kinzy's administration, who had taken over from former President Larry Dietz and his staff. Dietz and his administration was well liked and respected across campus, even as unions such as the Grad Workers Union fought tooth and nail for their first contract.

Kinzy, however, abruptly left her position less than two years into her four-year contract. While her administration seemingly had little effect on staff, conversations with faculty revealed her administration did not inspire trust or provide adequate support. Her sudden and unplanned departure did not help either, as Professor Christopher Breu told the student newspaper, The Vidette.

Similarly, some students did not have much trust in her administration in regards to unaddressed hate crimes, likely referencing the murder of ISU student Jalani Day, and tension with the campus Queer community. She also left with a $144,000 payout and a silence clause.

This is the backdrop of declining trust which current President Aondover Tarhule, the former provost, inherited. He responded with his RISE ("Resilience, Innovation, Sustainability, and Excellence") Initiative.

RISE, promoted as a strategic enhancement to better the university's financial standing, sustainability, accountability, and transparency, quickly became an excuse to promote austerity measures, citing the "higher education enrollment cliff."

The university's concerns about a potential cliff are not entirely unfounded. Some universities across the state are experiencing sharp declines in enrollment and are facing crisis, as the majority of university funding now comes from tuition rather than state coffers. Western Illinois University has lost half of its enrollment since 2006; Eastern, Southern, and Northern are in similar, though not as dire, situations. ISU has not followed such declines, though, and has instead saw record enrollment for the Fall 2025 semester, an outcome that's repeated for the past 15 years.

RISE has also come with budget restructuring, departmental shuffles, new positions without new money (amounting to budget cuts), presidential hiring approvals that have left positions unfilled for months, or even years, and pauses in what the university calls "merit increases" but are really just cost of living adjustments.

RISE took such a toll on university workers that a petition was circulated in the Spring of 2025 where more than 200 faculty and staff signed on demanding an increase, later climbing to more than 300. The university then announced the previously mentioned October 2025 3.5% increase to all staff, except those in the union.

AFSCME 1110 staff were left behind, and other staff across campus saw what amounted to less than an extra dollar an hour. University administration, on the other hand, saw multi-thousand dollar increases to their own salaries, including RISE champion Vice President of Finance and Planning Glenn Nelson (a $10,500 raise). This caused many to recall when United Faculty were in their negotiations in 2024 and discovered administration's salaries, on average, increased 18.8% over the past five years, while faculty salaries only increased 10.1%, all while prices jumped about 25%. All university salaries are public.

This is what AFSCME 1110, and all unions on campus, are up against. Secretary for 1110, Tia Reese, put it bluntly, "President Tarhule makes $450,000 a year, but he's telling us we need to get by on less than $20 an hour." A living wage for a single adult in McLean County without kids is $21.49.

ISU published a negotiation status page, as it has previously, to release what it calls the "facts" of negotiations, a typical anti-union tactic. Part of that page includes contingency plans to ensure critical functions continue. Since the start of the strike, ISU has hired external workers—scabs and strikebreakers—to do AFSCME's 1110's duties. These include Chicago-based company Rozaldo Services and Bloomington company Go Green to provide cleaning services.

The university has also relied on student workers who they know they can be persuaded to do extra duties because they are in an even more precarious economic position and unsure how to respond to the bosses' demands. These students have been observed and reported to be cleaning garbage cans as part of their food service duties and operating fryers and other kitchen equipment they do not normally touch and are not trained to do. Managers and directors have been seen taking on cleaning duties, while an increasing number of bathrooms and locations across buildings like the Bone Student Center are closed.

Despite this, students and student workers remain supportive of 1110's strike and are finding ways to help by documenting unsanitary conditions, reporting issues to 1110 to showcase how much work is not being done, and making calls and complaints to various university administrators, primarily President Tarhule.

The Vidette also wrote an editorial in support of the workers, as well as positive coverage of the strike generally. Students also find their voices shared in local reporting by CIProud. Students Gracie Neal and Isabelle Lynn talk about how much more visible trash is around campus and how widespread recognition is that these workers need a living wage to keep the university running.

As reported by AFSCME Council 31, Logan Riter, a student worker at ISU, refused to cross Local 1110's picket line when his supervisor asked him to be a "replacement worker." He replied, "I'm no scab!" Managers also happen to be their own worst enemies, as it has been reported that one Waterson Dining Manager berated a student worker for daring to take a small break after trying to work through piles of dishes, made two workers cry who subsequently walked off, and is pushing others to take more hours above their 28-hour limit.

Students are also on the front lines supporting the workers. Andrew Franson, a sophomore, spoke at the strike authorization press conference: "AFSCME, like every other labor union on campus, they're my family. They are people I care about, and ISU administration has time and time again chosen—instead of giving them a contract and the fair and just wage that they deserve—that profiteering is more important to them."

Franson also spoke at two rallies for AFSCME 1110 on April 13 and 14. These rallies were also attended by United Faculty, students, and community members demanding Tarhule and Hovey Hall provide a fair contract.

Parents of students are also complaining and making it known the university's positions are unacceptable. On a parents and families page for ISU, one reported a student had thrown up in a resident hall bathroom. When students talked to the Resident Assistant, the RA stated to call down to the front desk, and the front desk then responded to clean it up themselves. Students don't have access to cleaning closets or materials. Plus, they pay room and board to have staff take care of these issues. This is something that would have been handled, quickly, by an AFSCME worker.

Another parent has shared a story of how their child got food poisoning from Watterson Dining Center and ended up at the hospital.Unions across campus and town also gave statements of support after AFSCME's announcement. United Faculty and ISUEA gave statements of support, as well Bloomington-Normal's Trades and Labor Assembly.

Jason Pascal, Trades and Labor President, went on to state: "These are the hard-working people who are the foundation of ISU. They prepare the food, clean the classrooms and offices, shovel the snow, and beautify the grounds. They deserve a living wage and a fair contract." Workers from other unions have also shown up to picket lines and remain in contact with AFSCME leadership. In expected, and welcome, fashion, Teamster drivers for UPS, DHL, and others are refusing to cross pickets and refuse to make deliveries to campus.

Public officials have also expressed their support. Illinois 17th District Rep. Eric Sorenson, State Sen. Dave Koehler, and State Rep. Sharon Chung—herself a union member—have all attended rallies and visited picket lines. Normal Township Supervisor Krystle Able expressed her support as well, and cancelled her attendance at ISU's presidential breakfast with President Tarhule until the strike is over, as did County Board President Elizabeth Johnson.

Rapid Response: Hold Big Oil accountable!

By People's World

Hold Big Oil accountable!

Call, write, or visit your Senators and Representative **to demand they reject the extremist bill introduced on Earth Day that would give immunity to Big Oil companies and nullify pending and future lawsuits to hold them accountable for worsening climate disasters like floods, fires and hurricanes.** Republican Sen Cruz and Rep Hageman's "Stop Climate Shakedown Act of 2026" shields the big profits of oil corporations from any requirements to make them pay for the disinformation and damage they have caused over decades.

Put workers and the planet over billionaires and deny immunity to Big Oil!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.



People's World Sustainer Challenge: Can you match $21.83 a month?

By People's World Editorial Collective



As we approach the historic milestone of May Day, the *People's World* 2026 fund drive is hitting its stride. We have a bold goal to raise **$140,000,** and thanks to your incredible solidarity, we've already surpassed the **$95,000** mark. We are within striking distance, but the final stretch requires a foundation that lasts long after the banners are folded and the rallies conclude on May 1.

That is why we are issuing a specific challenge today: Become a monthly sustainer.

While one-time donations fuel our immediate coverage, monthly sustainers provide the strong foundations that support *People's World* over the long term. This reliable income allows People's World to plan further than tomorrow's issue, helps expand our reporting, host special events (like the May Day Town Hall with labor leaders) and invest in the future of working-class media with the confidence of knowing exactly what our budget looks like.

Right now, the average *People's World* monthly sustainer gives **$21.83.**

It's a specific number, but it represents something massive: the collective power of everyday people keeping independent journalism alive. Today, we are asking you to look at that number and take the **"Match it or Beat it"** challenge.

- **Can you match the average?** $21.83 a month ensures we stay on the front lines of the struggles for peace, equality, and democracy.
- **Can you beat the average?** Whether it's $25, $50, or $100 a month, your extra push helps cover the gap for those who can only chip in a few dollars.

Just go to PeoplesWorld.org/DONATE, enter your information, and select **"Recurring."**

Are you already a sustainer and want to increase your monthly contribution? Just send an email to admin@peoplesworld.org.

We don't answer to corporate boards or billionaire donors; we answer to you. By signing up as a monthly sustainer, you aren't just making a donation—you are becoming a stakeholder in a movement.

Help us reach our $140,000 goal by May Day and build a permanent, sustainable voice for the working class. Will you match the $21.83 average today?

Thank you,

The Editors

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I served my country, but the Trump government is abandoning me

By James Lee

Take it from a veteran who's been homeless: Just because you see me in the streets doesn't mean I'm not working.

After their service, many veterans struggle with low-wage work, mental health issues, and challenges with their families. It's something most people don't want to talk about, but it's all too real for veterans across the country—including me.

For years, I've oscillated between stable work and transitional housing. At different times, I've slept in shelters, outside the public library, or back in the woods. I've been a volunteer advocate for veterans experiencing homelessness because I've experienced it myself.

For me (like so many others), things came to a head during the pandemic. During those difficult years, I lost contracts at work, lost my transportation, and separated from my wife. And unfortunately, I wasn't able to get the help I needed from the Veterans Administration.

My situation wasn't due simply to poor choices or a lack of fortitude—I was in the military, so I know how to be strong and resourceful. It's because our frayed social safety net isn't working, turning temporary setbacks into more enduring problems.

I'm an independent contractor. Gigs evaporated during the pandemic, which started the spiral. I've gotten back into more steady employment since then, but it's very difficult for gig workers to access government assistance programs like SNAP.

We don't often have the rigorous documentation, fixed addresses, or steady work required to jump through the complex hoops to access assistance when we need it. The GOP's new "work requirements" for SNAP benefits—which are more accurately described as burdensome *paperwork* requirements —will make this even more difficult.

There's also the problem of the "benefits cliff"—that is, the abrupt cancellation of *all* benefits if you earn even a little over a maximum allowable amount. So even when I'm able to qualify for SNAP and get some food on my table, I'm faced with a quandary the next time a gig comes in: Should I take that $400 job if it means losing my food stamp allowance?



Choices like these put working people in an impossible position. And don't get me started on trying to access more benefits through the Veterans Administration—navigating the bureaucracy practically requires a doctorate.

But as difficult as it was, the pandemic did have its bright sides. Under the last administration's American Rescue Plan, many programs were expanded, and a lot of red tape was cut. It was easier to apply for SNAP, Medicaid, unemployment, and other help.

It was a time when the government worked directly to lower unemployment rates, giving workers more power to bargain for higher wages. It kept me afloat long enough to find a temporary housing situation and to continue working.

Unfortunately, those expansions eventually expired—and under the new administration, more benefits are being cut and more red tape imposed. Unsurprisingly, poverty and homelessness have both increased. President Trump's 2027 budget proposal proposes even more cuts to antipoverty programs.

As a veteran, I served my country. As a volunteer, I served my community. Yet the structural barriers to economic security lurk behind every closed door. I'm finally once again in a transitional housing situation and praying it lasts long enough for me to finally access the V.A. benefits I'm owed.

My story isn't unique. Homeless veterans—and all people in this country—deserve access to higher-paying jobs and more affordable health care. We need robust safety net programs like Medicaid, SNAP, and public housing, with more stable benefits and less red tape. And we need to make sure there's support for people without housing to navigate these programs and get help.

I want to see the country I fought for invest more in everyday people, families, and communities, so we don't have to suffer just to get by. I served my country—I'm still waiting for it to fulfill its promise to serve me back.

LABOR NEWS

Palestine/Israel: Communist forces mobilize around Land Day and anti-war struggle

By CPUSA International Department

The Communist Party of Israel (MAKI) and its alliance Hadash have remained at the forefront of anti-war mobilization inside Israel, organizing protests in multiple cities in March against the war on Iran and the continued assault on Gaza. Party leaders, including Knesset members affiliated with Hadash, have also carried out solidarity visits to Palestinian families affected by Israeli military violence, highlighting the human cost of the ongoing campaign.

Both MAKI and Hadash placed significant emphasis on the commemoration of Land Day (March 30), organizing educational and political events marking its 50th anniversary. Statements issued during this period framed Land Day not only as a historical remembrance of Palestinian resistance to dispossession but as a rallying point for renewed joint Arab-Jewish struggle against occupation, war, and discrimination.

The Palestinian Communist Party has similarly intensified its political activity, holding a Central Committee meeting in early February that characterized the current moment as one of acute danger due to the "imperialist-Zionist" offensive against Palestine and the region. In March, the party issued solidarity statements with the Jordanian Communist Party amid repression, participated in regional coordination meetings, and released a Land Day statement emphasizing the genocidal conditions in Gaza while reaffirming resistance and national steadfastness.

La tormenta de críticas continúa por el llamado del secretario del HHS a «re-parentar» a niños negros

By John Wojcik

WASHINGTON—El tema de la retirada forzada de niños negros de sus hogares estalló la semana pasada durante un testimonio en el Congreso, donde el secretario de Salud y Servicios Humanos, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., fue cuestionado sobre sus comentarios de 2024 en los que afirmó que los niños negros que reciben medicamentos para la salud mental deberían ser separados de sus padres y colocados en nuevos hogares.

En el pódcast de 2024, Kennedy afirmó falsamente que "cada niño negro ahora simplemente es puesto de forma estándar en Adderall, ISRS, benzodiacepinas, que se sabe que inducen violencia". Dijo que la mejor manera de abordar muchos de los problemas de los niños negros es "recriar" a estos niños en una "comunidad donde no tendrán acceso a la tecnología".

La representante Terri Sewell, demócrata de Alabama, fue la primera en cuestionar a Kennedy en la audiencia. "Hay mucho que analizar" en sus comentarios, dijo Sewell. Kennedy negó haber hecho esas declaraciones a pesar de los videos que mostraban que efectivamente las había hecho.

El racismo en los comentarios de Kennedy va más allá de su insinuación de que los padres negros son de alguna manera incapaces de criar a sus hijos. Sewell señaló que la separación de los niños negros de sus padres tiene una larga historia en Estados Unidos, cuyo propósito era fortalecer instituciones y políticas que no tenían nada que ver con mejorar la vida de los niños negros.

Sewell explicó que existe una "larga y dolorosa historia de separar a los niños negros de sus familias durante siglos de esclavización de las personas negras y la era de Jim Crow", todo lo cual no tenía nada que ver con ayudar a las familias negras.

Quizás aún más indignante que sus sugerencias de "recrianza", Kennedy, en el pódcast, abogó específicamente por enviar a los niños negros a "campamentos", como uno que conocía en Italia, donde se envía a niños con supuestos problemas de comportamiento para que se resuelvan sus "problemas". Podría verse como un patrón entre las principales figuras de la administración Trump que cuando las personas tienen "problemas", ya sean inmigrantes o niños negros, lo que se hace es enviarlos a "campamentos".

El programa italiano específico al que Kennedy se refirió en la entrevista de 2024 fue el tema de un documental de Netflix, que alegaba que las personas en el programa eran mantenidas con grilletes e incluso encarceladas en jaulas.

"Los niños vivirán donde serán recriados y vivirán en una comunidad sin teléfonos móviles, sin pantallas; realmente tendrás que hablar con la gente", dijo Kennedy en esa ahora infame entrevista.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

May 9, 2026

Borrowers squeezed as Trump and Wall Street reshape student loan system

By C. J. Atkins

There's an old saying among the ruling class: A worker in debt is a good worker. They don't quit. They don't strike. They don't make trouble. They show up, they take what's offered, and they say thank you. Even the authors of The Good Book knew it to be true: As Proverbs 22:7 put it, "The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender."

And for 43 million Americans carrying the weight of student loan debt—a collective burden now topping $1.69 trillion—the Holy Scripture has become official federal policy.

That's because what the Trump administration has engineered over the past year and a half is not a student loan policy; it's a system of social control dressed up in the language of fiscal responsibility and designed to keep people in a permanent state of financial anxiety.

Before we get to where we are today, though, it's worth remembering where we were just a short time ago.

Stolen relief

When Joe Biden took office in 2021, tens of millions of student borrowers drowning under debt suddenly had a sliver of hope. His administration made a historic promise: up to $20,000 in relief for borrowers, with the most help going to Pell Grant recipients—students who needed loans most because their families had the least money to pay for college in the first place. Over $400 billion of education debt would have been wiped away.

In a 6-3 decision written by Chief Justice John Roberts, the Supreme Court's right-wing majority killed it, deploying the "major questions doctrine"—a legal theory essentially invented to strip executive power whenever that power might benefit working people. Conservative justices said that erasing these loans was a "major question" with vast economic and political significance and, therefore, a president could not make policy on it.

Biden went back to the drawing board and crafted the SAVE plan, a sweeping income-driven repayment program that slashed monthly payments and fast-tracked loan forgiveness for low-income borrowers.



Eight million people enrolled. Republican attorneys general, led by Missouri, sued immediately. Lower courts blocked the program, and the Supreme Court in August 2024 refused to revive it. Trump's Education Department announced SAVE's final death in December 2025.

The dream of relief was killed twice by a combination of Republican legal warfare and a court stacked with ideological allies of the interests that profit from keeping people in debt.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Borrowers squeezed as Trump and Wall Street reshape student loan system

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Trump turns the screws

If the Biden years were defined by the hope of relief and its systematic destruction, the Trump years have been defined by something far more aggressive: the open mobilization of government power against borrowers.

Since he returned to office, a student borrower has defaulted on a loan every nine seconds on average—an unprecedented default crisis three times worse than before the COVID-19 pandemic. More than five million student loan borrowers were in default as of the end of 2025; by March 2026, the number was nine million—around 25% of all borrowers.

The administration's response was not to provide help for these borrowers; instead, it punished them. The Office of Federal Student Aid lost 653 employees—a nearly 42% decrease—leaving borrowers with fewer civil servants to turn to for help. And by gutting the independent Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the administration also rendered the government's main student loan watchdog powerless.

Trump signed new rules empowering Education Secretary Linda McMahon to kick workers out of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program if their employers engage in activities deemed to have a "substantial illegal purpose"—a designation so vague it has drawn multiple lawsuits. The designation has essentially served as blanket label to cover any organizations that MAGA ideologues deem unacceptable. Teachers, nurses, and social workers who spent a decade making payments toward forgiveness now stand to lose those credits.

Then there was the One Big Beautiful Bill, signed July 4, 2025, which slashed repayment options and eliminated temporary tax relief for forgiven debt, meaning borrowers who receive forgiveness may now face crushing tax bills on the cancelled amount. Canceled debt ends up being counted as taxable income.

And with SAVE eliminated, millions of borrowers are being pushed toward just two options launching July 1, 2026: the new Repayment Assistance Plan (RAP), which sets monthly payments at up to 10% of a borrower's gross income for up to 30 years, and a tiered standard plan with fixed payments over 10 to 25 years.

The Trump administration claims RAP is an improvement, but analysts and advocates are not convinced: Even the poorest borrowers must make payments regardless of whether they fall below the federal poverty line, and RAP carries lower income protections, higher payment percentages, and a longer road to forgiveness.

For anyone who doesn't voluntarily choose RAP before the transition deadline, the Education Department says they will automatically be placed on the standard repayment plan—which will mean significantly higher monthly payments with no adjustment based on income whatsoever.

Debt shuffle

Perhaps the most consequential development is happening right now. The U.S. Treasury is set to take over responsibility for federal student loan operations in a three-phase transition that will eventually include management of most federal student loans as well as the student loan application process, the FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

The administration frames this as a matter of financial competence. In reality, it's part of the Project 2025 goal of completely decimating the Education Department. In a 2015 pilot, Treasury tried to collect payments from a sample of thousands of borrowers in default. Its success rate was lower than that of the private collection agencies contracted by the Education Department.

More importantly, unlike the Department of Education, the Treasury does not operate under the borrower-protective framework of the Higher Education Act of 1965—meaning the move could fundamentally strip borrowers of legal rights they don't even know they have.

The NAACP Legal Defense Fund warns that "Treasury staff are not experts on the complex federal student loan system and cannot ensure that borrowers are able to access all of the tools and programs they are entitled to under the Higher Education Act. This action will inflict real harm on borrowers and will disproportionately burden Black borrowers, borrowers of color, and low-income borrowers."

The group points to the fact that the student debt crisis does not fall equally on all shoulders. Among bachelor's degree holders, Black students are the most likely to borrow federal loans, at 82.9%, and the burden compounds long after graduation. Four years after receiving their degrees, Black borrowers owe an average of $25,000 more than their white peers for the same degree, and 48% of Black student borrowers actually owe more than they initially borrowed—compared to just 17% of white borrowers.

When the Trump administration dismantles forgiveness programs and moves defaulted loans to a Treasury Department with no knowledge of or concern for borrower protections, there are clear class and racial aspects to the decision.

The maneuver is thus not simply a bureaucratic reshuffling. The goal is to strip borrowers of legal protections while moving the portfolio closer to the private financial interests that have been circling this debt like vultures for decades.

The nation's biggest private student loan companies have been expanding their portfolios rapidly. SoFi's 2024 lending portfolio stood at $3.8 billion, up from $2.2 billion in 2022. Sallie Mae's stood at $7 billion, up from $6 billion. College Ave saw a 71% increase since 2022. Most lenders said the elimination of federal programs will continue to bolster their growth.

They are openly celebrating what the Trump administration has done. Sallie Mae's leaders have said the One Big Beautiful Bill is likely to bring them billions in new business, and the company has entered a "strategic partnership" with KKR, one of the world's largest private equity firms.

Meanwhile, the neutered CFPB quietly dropped an enforcement action against predatory student loan practices that included lying to borrowers in advertisements and contracts about their right to bankruptcy, sending harassing collection messages to borrowers who had already undergone bankruptcy proceedings, and telling borrowers that loans were not dischargeable—even while warning Wall Street investors that these same loans could, in fact, be discharged.

Debt as a weapon

Debt has always been one of capital's most powerful instruments of control. A person in debt cannot afford to take risks. They can't quit a bad job, start a business, or stand up to an abusive boss. They may not be able to buy a home, get a loan, or even afford their own kids' college.

A coalition including Protect Borrowers, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the NAACP, the Debt Collective, and Young Invincibles pushed back against the administration's wage garnishment plans and won a temporary pause. The AFT sued over processing delays threatening borrowers with massive tax bills and forced the administration into a court-supervised agreement to protect them.

Over 70 lawmakers led by Rep. Ayanna Pressley and Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders have urged the administration to abandon plans to privatize the student loan portfolio, warning it would "enrich the wealthy and well-connected at the expense of working-class borrowers and taxpayers."

Grassroots organizations like the Debt Collective—a debtors' union organized in the wake of the 2008 financial collapse—continue building power from the bottom up, reminding borrowers that a debt owed by millions is not a personal problem but rather a political one that demands government action.

The financial industry and its political allies understand that an indebted population is a controllable population. The movement fighting back—in the courts, in debtors' assemblies, in the halls of Congress—understands it, too.

Tackling the doomsday of student debt in the long term, however, will require more than affordable payment plans or forgiveness schemes. None of this debt fell from the sky. It was accumulated thanks to decades of deliberate policy choices that shifted the cost of higher education from governments and institutions onto the backs of students and their families.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, average tuition and fees at four-year public universities have more than tripled in inflation-adjusted dollars since the 1980s. The spiraling costs have been driven by state disinvestment in public universities and the explosion of administrative positions and salaries. Meanwhile, wages for young workers have failed to keep pace, turning what was once a manageable investment into a generational debt trap.

The loan industry didn't create this crisis, but it has certainly fed on it, and the politicians now dismantling borrower protections have made sure it continues.

Hundreds on hunger strike at Michigan detention center over inhumane conditions

By Jack Kelly and Eli Folts



BALDWIN, Mich.—Hundreds of detained immigrants have launched a rolling hunger and work strike at the North Lake Detention Center, the largest detention center in the Midwest, operated by the private prison corporation GEO Group in Baldwin, Michigan. They are protesting what they describe as inhumane conditions, medical neglect, and a systematic denial of due process.

The strike, which began on April 19 and escalated into a coordinated action across all facility blocks on Saturday, April 25, involves a majority of the prison population.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

Organizers with No Detention Centers Michigan report that detainees are refusing to eat and refusing to work to demand immediate improvements to their treatment and living conditions.

“We began our strike on Sunday, April 19,” said one striker who spoke with organizers via phone. “Some people involved have been sanctioned, others do not have any violations, but they have all suffered abuse... We are all committed. We want them to listen to us, not hide us.”

The North Lake Detention Center, located in rural Osceola County, has long been a focal point for immigrant rights activists. Operated by the GEO Group—one of the largest private prison corporations in the United States—the facility holds hundreds of individuals awaiting immigration hearings.

The detainees cite a pattern of medical negligence as a primary driver of the protest. According to multiple testimonies, medical appointments are routinely canceled, and the only treatment offered for serious ailments—including tooth infections, diabetes, and high blood pressure—is over-the-counter medication like Tylenol or aspirin.

“The conditions of the prison are truly deplorable,” said a male prisoner in a recorded statement. “The bathroom walls are completely yellow. The ceilings are cracking. They won’t give any medicine other than Tylenol or Advil. If you are in pain, they don’t care about your symptoms. They just tell you to take Tylenol, and that’s it.”

Beyond the physical conditions, detainees are sounding the alarm about the lack of due process. They report that federal judges are issuing excessively high bond amounts and denying asylum cases arbitrarily, while Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents cover up the strike and abuse inside the facility.

“They are lying, like always, when they say there is no strike,” the striker continued. “They never admit the truth. They hide what is happening, they abuse us. They treat us like murderers, and we are not.”

The human cost of this system was laid bare in the harrowing testimony of a female detainee who recounted her abduction by ICE in February 2026. She described being followed by men in civilian clothes carrying baseball bats, who dragged her from her car, beat her, and verbally abused her before transporting her to a detention center in Detroit.

“I was terrified,” she recalled. “They kicked me in the back. They started cursing me... The person who was telling me, ‘Shut up, f-cking b-tch,’ was an old man with a long beard. He kept screaming in my ears... pulling my hair brutally, hitting my face against the seat, repeatedly.”

She described being held for 21 days without access to a lawyer or family, denied showers for the first week, and subjected to cruel mockery by guards. Her story highlights the stark contrast between the legal protections promised to immigrants and the reality of their treatment.

Despite the isolation, the strike has sparked a wave of solidarity on the outside. On Sunday, April 26, more than 70 supporters traveled from across Michigan to the North Lake facility to show their backing. Organizers chose a side gate as the picket location because it was the only spot from which prisoners could see the crowd through their windows.

The rally featured the reading of prisoner testimonies, the playing of song requests sent from inside, and a unified message of defiance. “The picket was intended to show solidarity for the strikers and prisoners, and show them that the people of Michigan have not forgotten them,” said an organizer.

As the strike continues into the week, the detainees remain resolute. “Almost all the people inside are participating in the hunger and work strike in some way,” the striker affirmed. “None of us are bad people. We are human beings, and there’s only one God who looks down from above and can bestow justice.”

No Detention Centers Michigan, and faith leaders from across the state have planned another solidarity picket at the North Lake facility for May 17th at 3 p.m.

Organizers are also calling for letters of solidarity with the strikers. Letters can be sent to:

Grand Rapids Mennonite Fellowship

Attn: Solidarity Fast

1343 Buffalo Ave NE

Grand Rapids, MI 49505

While ICE and the GEO Group have yet to issue a public response, the mobilization of No Detention Centers Michigan signals a growing resistance to the detention industrial complex in the region. The strikers have made it clear: they will not stop until their voices are heard and their humanity is recognized.

British protesters say royal visit proves complicity in Trump's wars

By Christophe Domec

LONDON—King Charles III's visit with Donald Trump was branded a "national embarrassment" in London Monday after activists slammed Britain as "complicit" in U.S. attacks on international law and human rights.

Campaigners were joined by Amnesty International UK and political leaders in demanding the government stop its support for the U.S. president and "resist and push back" against his war of aggression in Iran and attacks on immigrants in the U.S.

The Stop Trump Coalition held a mock state visit in front of Buckingham Palace with activists wearing masks portraying the two heads of state and holding a prop missile.

They said Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer sending the King for a U.S. state visit was a "slap in the face" to those struggling to afford basic necessities following price shocks caused by the U.S.-Israeli war in the Middle East.

Activists also highlighted the government's decision to allow U.S. warplanes to use Royal Air Force bases for so-called "specific and limited operations," further implicating British forces in Trump's violations of human rights and international norms.

Stop Trump Coalition spokesperson Jake Atkinson said: "Keir Starmer sending the King to wine and dine with the warmonger-in-chief signals we are happy to green-light Trump's illegal actions around the world, no matter how much chaos they cause.

"Ordinary people across the UK are struggling more and more with the cost of living while Trump's war on Iran has driven up prices.

"Honoring Trump like this is a slap in the face to so many who are struggling, and suggests to the president he can continue violating international law and be rewarded with more pageantry."

Amnesty UK chief executive Kerry Moscogiuri warned Starmer against enabling Trump in his project to "tear up 80 years of international human rights protections."

She said it was thanks to allies like Britain that the U.S. leader had been allowed to proceed with "looking the other way when its ally Israel commits genocide, carrying out extrajudicial killings in the Caribbean Sea, or sanctioning ICC staff and human rights organizations."



Moscogiuri said the government has failed to "challenge the attacks on the international justice system the U.S. and [Britain] once helped create.

"King Charles and President Donald Trump will banquet in the White House while children continue to starve in Gaza and the Middle East spirals into chaos following the unlawful U.S.-Israeli attacks in violation of the UN Charter.

"They will have 'private tea' while immigrant families continue to be detained across the country. They will enjoy a 'diplomatic garden party' while migrants continue to be tortured in Alligator Alcatraz."

She added that Britain and "anyone representing it must stop appeasing Trump and recognize that further cowardice will only make matters worse.

"It is only by resisting, denouncing, and pushing back against U.S. attacks that we can defend international law, standards, and everyone's human rights."

The Scottish Green Party's external affairs spokesperson and former co-leader, Patrick Harvie, said Trump "is no friend of Scotland, [Britain], or the wider world.

"This visit should not be going ahead. It sends the completely wrong message at the wrong time."

Harvie further explained: "He is unquestionably a war criminal, as well as a climate denier, a racist, and a man with an increasingly weak grasp on reality.

"Trump has aided Israel in its genocide in Gaza, has had the U.S. military carry out brutal bombing attacks in Iran killing dozens of girls during their school day, bombed oil depots exposing thousands, if not millions of Iranian civilians to toxic fumes while also endangering their lives, homes, and our climate.

"The continued deference being shown by Keir Starmer's government to this profoundly dangerous man is worse than a national embarrassment.

"A royal visit to the White House only further embeds the idea that the UK is willing to align itself with this dangerous U.S. administration. It is time to stop pretending that Trump is an ally and start recognizing him as the threat that he is."

King Charles's trip to the U.S. is the first official state visit since that of Queen Elizabeth II in 2007. He and Queen Camilla arrived in Washington Monday and will continue on to New York and Virginia before leaving the country on Thursday.

Workers Over Billionaires: May Day message resonates in Detroit

By Cameron Harrison and C. J. Atkins



DETROIT—Over 500 union members, immigrant rights advocates, and working-class Detroiters converged on Roosevelt Park in the city's Corktown neighborhood Friday, marking May Day with a rally and march that drew together the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO, community organizations, and protest groups united against an agenda they say puts bosses before workers.

The event, sponsored by the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO, was billed under the theme "Workers Over Billionaires" and was one of more than 5,000 different May Day actions around the country.

"Society runs on solidarity—don't let anyone tell you different," Metro Detroit AFL-CIO President Daryl Newman said from the stage set up in front of the historic Michigan Central Station, flanked by "Workers Over Billionaires" banners.

"May Day serves as both a day of recognition and protest, where we come together to advocate for workers' rights, fair wages, and safe working conditions around the world," Newman said. "That's why we're here together today in Detroit —the beating heart of the labor movement."

The gathering aimed to lift demands around good pay and workers' rights, but the issues broadcast from the main stage and which resonated among those assembled went beyond the usual workplace justice topics.

Newman and several other speakers brought a consciousness-raising message about the class struggle and the effort bosses have expended to make workers forget about their own history of fighting back and winning.

"In 1886, the working class rose up in Chicago and got us what we enjoy today," Newman said. "Eight hours to work, eight hours to sleep, eight hours to live. May Day is our day, the workers' day, and we can never forget that."

"You know why a lot of workers don't know about May Day?" Mark DePaoli, United Auto Workers Region 1A Director, asked the crowd. "It's because corporate giants and the politicians in their pockets have been condemning May Day for 140 years."

Past struggles weren't the only topics on the agenda, though. "They just killed the Voting Rights Act, they gutted it," Newman said, referring to the Supreme Court's 6-3 ruling last week throwing out Louisiana's electoral map, which had been drawn to guarantee Black voting rights and representation. The whole working-class movement, he said, should view what happened in the case as an attack on everyone, not only the voters of Louisiana.

The rally at Michigan Central drew union leaders from across the region, with heavy representation from the UAW, one of the key movers behind May Day 2026. Vice President Laura Dickerson, who oversees negotiations with Ford Motor Co., also took up the theme of interconnected struggles, telling the crowd that workers' fights don't end with bargaining victories.

"In 2023, we had the Stand Up Strike. The workers sacrificed, and they were able to get great contracts, but it doesn't stop there—we have to continue it and have even more creative strategies and tactics for the next time," Dickerson said.

UAW Region 1 Director LaShawn English said "next time" happens in 2028. She pointed to May Day 2028 as a strategic rallying point. "We're going to actually prepare to stand up for May Day 2028, and we're getting ready," English said, referring to the campaign to align contract expiration dates to give not just auto workers, but all workers, maximum leverage against Big Business for a possible general strike.

But a general strike cannot just be declared, she emphasized, saying, "They have to be organized." Part of that work is building the connections beforehand, preparing for unity in action when the time comes.

Speaking to *People's World* after her speech, English said that May Day has special importance this year because "all workers are coming together as one, no longer separate unions." She emphasized that in Detroit, as in many other cities, unions "are all coming together to build strength and solidarity and make sure we are all showing our power for the working class."

IBEW Local 58's Justin Steenbergh, a Metro Detroit AFL-CIO executive board member and key organizer of the May Day event, said the call of the day was clear—support unions, join unions, start unions. Speaking to the media, he added that immigrant rights are inseparable from labor rights, arguing that immigration enforcement falls hardest on workers while leaving the powerful untouched. "This billionaire class can essentially operate without regard to borders," he said.

That border-crossing solidarity was on display in the march that followed the rally. Starting from Roosevelt Park, marchers proceeded to the ICE Field Office at 985 Michigan Ave. and then to the McNamara Federal Building, where chants against wars, deportations, and economic austerity echoed against the cement walls.

Em Barnes, a member of the Detroit Union Education League (DUEL) and the Detroit Club of the Communist Party USA, addressed the marchers alongside Dr. Seydi of the African Bureau for Immigrant and Social Affairs (ABISA). They both called for special attention to the attacks on labor rights, voting rights, and civil rights and implored all trade unionists to unite together with community organizations this fall to deliver a blow to right-wing reaction at the 2026 midterm elections.

Taking the workers' agenda from the streets and giving it life in the form of legislation was the May Day message shared by Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., who circulated among the crowd in Corktown, having conversations with those present.

"Detroit birthed the labor movement that has been fighting for dignity on the job for all working people," she said in a statement on the morning of May 1. "Let's thank our workers with action. It's time to increase the federal minimum wage, restore collective bargaining, and protect the right to organize."

Nationally, May Day Strong organizers reported that millions of workers, students, and families took part in actions, with the "Workers Over Billionaires" slogan being adopted from coast to coast. As in many cities, Detroit's gathering was the largest seen in years, and the message from labor was unambiguous: The movement is organizing, it is growing, and it is not done.

Michael Joseph, president of the Detroit chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and long-time member of UAW Local 600, made that point in a conversation with *People's World*. Asked about where the drive to reclaim May Day goes from here, he said, "We aren't waiting around. We meet next week to start planning 2027."

Rapid Response: Congress restore voting rights now!

By People's World

Congress: Restore voting rights now!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to **demand that Congress take immediate action to reverse the Supreme Court's outright dismantling of the Voting Rights Act.** This act was won by the courage and united action of thousands in the South and across the country, Black and white, who marched and died to overcome historic racism and exclusion and win dignity and the basic right to vote.

Our democracy depends on equality of representation for all. The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Enhancement Act was introduced to restore the enforcement measures that were removed by a Supreme Court serving the interests of white supremacist billionaires instead of the people.



Congress must now act immediately to uphold and protect these rights and pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Enhancement Act now!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Fund Drive EXTENDED: Help People's World get across the finish line

By People's World



Dear friends and supporters,

We didn't hit our goal by May Day—but we're not done yet.

The People's World 2026 Fund Drive set a May 1 target of $140,000, and thanks to the incredible generosity of readers like you, we've raised $120,000. That's an extraordinary show of solidarity. But we're still $20,000 short, and People's World needs to close that gap.

So, we're extending the drive—and we're asking you to help us finish what we started together.

Think about it: $20,000 stands between us and the finish line. We're within striking distance! With enough readers stepping up right now, we can push this over the top. Every contribution—$10, $25, $50, $100—moves the needle. None is too small, and none comes too late.

People's World exists because of you. We don't answer to corporate advertisers or billionaire backers. We answer to the working class—to the movements, the struggles, and the communities we cover every single day. That independence is only possible because supporters like you invest in it.

We are so close. The momentum is there. What we need now is a final push. If you've been meaning to give, now is the moment. Make a donation at peoplesworld.org/donate.

We've come too far to fall short—please give what you can today.

In solidarity,

Joe Sims • Rossana Cambron • C.J. Atkins • Chauncey K. Robinson • John Wojcik • Melissa Parks

P.S. Even better than a one-time donation, become a monthly sustainer and provide People's World with the steady, reliable support that keeps us strong all year long!

Go to **PeoplesWorld.org/Donate** or mail a check made out to "People's World"to:

People's World
235 W. 23rd Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10011

Tennessee students connect Indigenous culture and sustainability in groundbreaking project

By Albert Bender



FRANKLIN, Tenn.—On Wednesday, April 22, the student-produced Global Concentration Capstone Project was presented at Battle Ground Academy. The Project debuted with an impressive, far-reaching documentary film put together by Battle Ground Senior students Alison Zierdon and Victoria Blanco, ably supervised by Project Director/Teacher Lee Roberts.

The Project weas the culmination of months of hard work by students and teacher. Its main theme was “Indigeneity and Sustainability,” emphasizing the connection between Indigenous peoples and the environment. Sub-themes included “Who controls the Narrative? Indigenous Culture and Sustainability in Nashville and Beyond”; “How to Support Native American Culture”; “Support Local Native Organizations”; “Attend Indigenous-led Events”; and “Listen to Indigenous Voices.”

To provide some relevant background information, Battle Ground Academy is an independent college-preparatory educational institution. It is situated in Franklin, a few miles south of Tennessee’s state capital, Nashville. Founded in 1889, the school was first located on the Civil War site of the Battle of Franklin.

The preparation for the Project took several months, with interviews conducted in both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous community and also internationally with contacts being made with sources in Canada and the Māori people in New Zealand.

The Project began with the thesis that, despite Nashville’s ancient roots, Indigenous culture is too often overlooked here. Hence, the most meaningful sustainability demands putting forth Indigenous narratives and utilizing Native viewpoints on land, water, and cultural reality are not regularly taken into account by policymakers.

In the previous year, students in the Global Concentration Studies program at Battle Ground embarked on a tour, meeting with Indigenous activists who shared their history and cultural perspectives and visiting ancient Indigenous sites throughout Nashville and adjacent areas.

This year, inspired by Nashville’s profound Indigenous background, they delved further into contemporary Indigenous culture and its connection to sustainability and the city of Nashville in its modern-day environment.

The goal of the Project was to increase awareness of the connection Indigenous perspectives have to sustainability and to enlighten the non-Native population to this reality for the benefit of all people.

Accompanying the documentary presentation was a sculpture crafted by the Project to represent how Indigenous culture surrounds contemporary society in so many venues, often beneath layers of intrusive urbanization.

For example, Indigenous mounds have been encountered on many golf courses, but they remain unmarked. The reason given by city planners was that this provided protection against possible looters and grave robbers. As a side note, in years past, there have indeed been numerous instances of grave robbing at ancient Indigenous burial sites throughout Tennessee. Also, there have been reports of construction underway at or near some ancient sites.

It was also brought to the attention of the Project that the entire city of present-day Nashville sits atop a huge, ancient Indigenous metropolis that was known for its prodigious production of salt 1,000 years ago. This huge city had an estimated population of 400,000 that stretched to the suburban areas of contemporary Nashville in the Mississippian period of Indigenous history.

Among the many community members interviewed was Melba Checote-Eads, a member of the Muscogee Creek Nation of Oklahoma, who has long resided in Middle Tennessee. Checote-Eads was involved in the struggle to preserve the history of ancient Nashville when the discovery was made of the ancient Indigenous city that lies beneath it. This discovery was made when excavation was underway for a new baseball stadium in 2014.

The Project also visited the ruins of an early 19th-century toll bridge in Nashville that was prominently involved in Cherokee history. Information on the site was provided by Toy Heap, a Native American historian and long-time preservation advocate. Heap disclosed that this was the first bridge over the Cumberland River and was crossed by Cherokees on the tragic Trail of Tears in 1838.

It In the course of interviews with Indigenous community members, students gained appreciation of how water is an essential part of Native culture. It is seen as a living entity in Indigenous culture; indeed, it has a personified status. Without water, life on Earth could not exist.

The Project was made aware that to understand culture relationships must be built with Indigenous communities. Fieldwork requires more than just the collecting of data; it requires trust, empathy, and conversation.

What is really groundbreaking about the Project is that it did more than just study and present history—it reached out to living, breathing, contemporary Indigenous people of today.

The Project is a milestone of progress for social justice in educational institutions across the country and should be replicated across the U.S.

LABOR NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

These issues will not be solved with humanitarian aid alone. They can only be solved by state-level measures, by the achievement of Cuba's long-term plans. So how can activists and friends of Cuba help?

First—and we reiterate that while lentils, medicines and medical equipment, powdered milk, and rice constitute important and needed forms of relief—the Cuban solidarity movement should not ignore the political struggle back home. As long as the U.S. blockade is in place, Cuba will experience hardship.

Removing the embargo will require an act of Congress, and that is exactly where activists should focus their energy. We must exert pressure on congresspeople to support an end to the blockade, joining the coalition led by Representative Jim McGovern (D-MA) and others. On February 12, McGovern introduced bill H.R. 7521 to repeal the statutory basis for the U.S. embargo on Cuba. Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced similar legislation in the Senate.

Mass political mobilizations are needed as well. U.S. aggression toward Cuba is not an isolated case—it is deeply related to a (largely bipartisan) foreign policy apparatus that uses intervention and market bullying to pave the way for U.S. business interests. Besides creating misery abroad, this policy hurts the U.S. working class, as vast military resources are used to choke other nations rather than support social programs at home.

part 9 of this article will appear in 2 weeks.

Los trabajadores postales mexicanos obtienen concesiones y amenazan con ir a la huelga

By Emilio Avelar

TIJUANA — «TRABAJANDO BAJO PROTESTA», declara una pancarta del Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores del Servicio Postal Mexicano en Baja California. «¡Basta ya —exige el sindicato— de que los trabajadores paguen de su propio bolsillo las reparaciones, la gasolina y los suministros para poder atender a sus clientes!».

Pronto, es posible que los trabajadores vayan más allá de trabajar bajo protesta. Impulsados por agravios económicos, equipos inadecuados y violaciones de su contrato colectivo por parte de la dirección, los trabajadores postales mexicanos amenazan con realizar la primera huelga en la historia del servicio postal nacional (Sepomex).

Inicialmente programada para el Día Internacional de los Trabajadores —el 1 de mayo—, la huelga ha sido pospuesta temporalmente gracias a un acuerdo mediado por el gobierno. En el transcurso de los procedimientos de mediación, el Tribunal Federal de Conciliación y Arbitraje ha instruido a las partes a continuar las negociaciones y ha aplazado cualquier posible huelga hasta el 28 de mayo. Como contrapartida por retrasar el paro laboral, los trabajadores obtuvieron valiosas concesiones por parte del empleador.

Entre las concesiones obtenidas durante el proceso de mediación se incluyen la adquisición de cascos, carteras y alforjas para los carteros, así como el compromiso de comprar 3.000 motocicletas nuevas, con nuevos requisitos en materia de mantenimiento y elementos de seguridad.

Otro compromiso, consistente en la creación inmediata de 300 puestos de trabajo y un total de 2.500 nuevas plazas para el año 2030, ampliará la presencia del sindicato, el cual ha perdido terreno a lo largo de los años debido a que las jubilaciones y renuncias de sus afiliados han superado el ritmo de las contrataciones y las reposiciones de personal.

Los directivos del servicio postal también acordaron iniciar la renovación de las instalaciones, ya obsoletas e insalubres, que se encuentran distribuidas por todo el país, así como presentar una respuesta integral a otras demandas aún pendientes.

El sindicato acusa a la administración postal de negociar de mala fe al enviar a la mesa de diálogo a funcionarios que carecen de poder real de negociación. Para garantizar el cumplimiento de las nuevas concesiones, el sindicato exige a la instancia de mediación federal una confirmación por escrito de los acuerdos alcanzados, a cambio de respetar la suspensión de las medidas de huelga durante el plazo de un mes.

Una vez satisfechas diversas demandas relativas a equipamiento, instalaciones y contratación de personal, muchos trabajadores postales comentan en línea que el aumento salarial sigue siendo su preocupación «primordial» en las negociaciones.

Asfixiados por las presiones del mercado, los salarios y bonificaciones de los trabajadores se han estancado a lo largo de los años, quedando rezagados respecto a los aumentos más amplios vinculados a los rápidos incrementos del salario mínimo. Si bien el salario mínimo legal se sitúa actualmente en 315 pesos diarios, algunos carteros perciben apenas 236 pesos al día, lo que equivale a menos de 15 dólares.

Invocando el derecho constitucional de los trabajadores mexicanos a la huelga, el sindicato ha hecho un llamado a todos sus miembros para que se mantengan «unidos, vigilantes y organizados» ante la inminencia del enfrentamiento. «Que nadie se deje intimidar; nuestro movimiento es legítimo, legal y justo».

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

May 16, 2026

U.S. bullies Canada's Sherritt corporation out of Cuba

By C. J. Atkins

TORONTO—A sweeping new executive order signed by President Donald Trump has forced one of Canada's most significant foreign investors out of Cuba, drawing sharp condemnation from solidarity groups who say Washington is using financial coercion to override the sovereign economic decisions of other nations.

Toronto-based Sherritt International Corporation, the largest foreign investor in Cuba for over three decades, announced on May 7 that it was suspending all direct participation in its joint venture activities on the island and immediately bringing back its Canadian employees currently stationed in Cuba—a direct fallout from Executive Order 14404, which Trump signed on May 1.

After attacking Venezuela and kidnapping its president, Nicolás Maduro, in January, Trump said "Cuba is next." Step by step, he seems to be making good on the threat.

His May 1 order, framed as a measure to hold the Cuban government "responsible for repression" and supposed threats to U.S. national security, does far more than target Cuban officials. Legal experts say its secondary sanctions provisions—which threaten foreign financial institutions with loss of access to U.S. correspondent banking accounts if they process transactions involving designated Cuban entities—are effectively an attempt to extend Washington's domestic law across the globe.

The law firm Mayer Brown described the order as "intended to internationalize pressure on the Cuban government by deterring foreign commercial engagement with certain targeted sectors or actors linked to the Cuban government." Under the order, any non-U.S. person operating in Cuba's energy, metals and mining, financial services, defense, or security sectors can face asset-blocking sanctions.

On May 7, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced the first designations under the new authority, targeting GAESA—the Cuban military conglomerate said to control at least 40% of the island's economy—as well as Moa Nickel SA (MNSA), the joint venture in which Sherritt holds a 50% stake alongside Cuba's publicly-owned General Nickel Company.



Three decades of partnership with Cuba

Sherritt is widely considered to be Cuba's largest foreign investor, with a history in the country spanning more than 35 years. The company began purchasing Cuban nickel concentrate for its Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta, refinery in 1991, and in December 1994 formalized a 50/50 joint venture with Cuba's General Nickel Company to integrate mining at Moa, in Holguín province, with refining in Alberta.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

U.S. bullies Canada's Sherritt corporation out of Cuba

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It was also hit by the U.S.' blockade on Cuba in that era, long before Trump. The company was the first to be targeted by the 1996 Helms-Burton Act, the law which sought to strangle Cuba while its economy was in freefall in the post-Soviet period. Sherritt executives were banned from entering the United States because the industrial sites on which it operated in Cuba had been expropriated from private ownership by the socialist government decades earlier.

Canadian law, however, does not forbid trade with Cuba, and the company was undeterred by U.S. actions. In 1998, Sherritt further expanded into Cuba's energy sector, establishing Energas S.A., which operates 506 megawatts of independent power capacity—making it the island's largest independent power producer.

During the commodity boom of the late 2000s, Sherritt's market value approached $5 billion CAD. In 2025, the Moa joint venture produced 25,240 tons of nickel and 2,728 tons of cobalt, while Energas generated 799 GWh of electricity.

Sherritt had already been battered before the latest executive order arrived, though. It is reported that Cuba owes the company at least $344 million USD, and nickel production has declined from 34,876 tons in 2021 to 25,240 in 2025. In February 2026, Sherritt suspended nickel and cobalt production at Moa due to fuel shortages stemming from the U.S.' energy blockade of the island.

Still, the May 7 executive order designations appear to be a fatal blow for not only the company's business with Cuba but perhaps its very existence. Three board members—Chairman Brian Imrie, Richard Moat, and Brett Richards—resigned with immediate effect the same day Sherritt announced the suspension of Cuban operations.

The company has since filed an application with the Ontario Superior Court of Justice to allow its reduced board to continue functioning. Its Fort Saskatchewan refinery continues to operate on existing feed material inventory, but that supply is expected to run out by mid-June 2026, by which point Sherritt must make permanent decisions about its future.

Direct assault on Canada's sovereignty

The Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC), a solidarity organization, issued a forceful statement calling Trump's executive order "yet another illegal attempt to extend U.S. domestic law beyond its borders and impose Washington's unilateral sanctions regime on the entire world."

"This represents not merely an attack on Cuba, but a direct assault on Canada's sovereignty, on international trade law, and on the principle that no state has the right to dictate the economic relations of other nations," the CNC's Executive Committee wrote.

The statement calls on Prime Minister Mark Carney's government to invoke and enforce Canada's Foreign Extraterritorial Measures Act (FEMA), legislation originally amended in the 1990s in direct response to the U.S. Helms-Burton Act, which was itself designed to penalize foreign companies doing business with Cuba. The CNC warns that failure to act now would render FEMA "little more than a hollow gesture."

"If Canada accepts Washington's ability to punish Canadian enterprises for engaging in lawful commerce with a third country, then Canada ceases to exercise meaningful economic sovereignty," the network wrote. "Today it is Cuba. Tomorrow it could be any country or sector that falls afoul of U.S. geopolitical objectives."

Fred Wilson, writing for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, said on the eve of Trump's order: "For most of the 67 years since the Cuban revolution, successive Canadian governments played the 'Cuba card' to assert independence from U.S. hegemony—that is, they have refused to align themselves with the United States' hostile approach to Cuba, and used that lack of alignment to differentiate themselves from the U.S. on the world stage."

The situation has changed, however. "Today," Wilson argued, "Canada's failure to play the Cuba card stands out as a confounding failure of Canadian policy and resolve." Carney has been mostly silent on the latest U.S. aggressions against Cuba, ignoring pressure from below.

The Canadian Labour Congress—the largest federation of Canadian unions—has condemned Trump's attacks on Cuba and urged Ottawa to break ranks. It called on the Carney government to "stand with Cuba and defend the Cuban people's rights to sovereignty and self-determination." The CLC demanded that the Government of Canada "vigorously denounce U.S. aggression and defend the principles of international law," while rushing aid to the people of Cuba.

Going beyond humanitarian concerns, the CNC also highlights a particular irony in targeting Sherritt: The company operates nickel and cobalt refining capacity in Alberta that is crucial to the North American battery supply chain and energy transition. "While Washington speaks endlessly about securing critical mineral independence," the statement reads, "its policies are actively undermining one of North America's key refining operations because of its relationship with Cuba."

Broader fallout

The Trump administration has enacted over 240 new sanctions against Cuba since January 2026, which have been piled on top of the already 64-year-old blockade. These latest measures have slashed the island's energy imports by 80 to 90%. Cuba's economy is projected to contract by 7.2% in 2026, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit.

The United Nations Human Rights Office has warned that the blockade and ensuing fuel shortage have threatened Cuba's food supply and disrupted water systems and hospitals.

The extraterritorial reach of E.O. 14404 has alarmed governments and businesses far beyond Canada. Legal analysts at Bird & Bird note that European financial institutions processing transactions traceable to designated Cuban entities risk losing their access to U.S. dollar correspondent accounts, effectively cutting them off from global dollar-clearing systems.

The Morrison Foerster law firm warns that all non-U.S. companies across sectors from energy to financial services will have to review their "Cuba-related exposure" or risk being targeted by the Trump administration.

Sherritt's departure strips Cuba of its largest foreign mining partner and could reduce the island's independent power generation capacity by an estimated 10 to 15%. Paolo Spadoni, a Cuba scholar at Augusta University, told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, "With Sherritt suspending operations, the U.S. has now effectively targeted all of Cuba's main sources of hard currency."

The CNC's statement demands that Ottawa publicly denounce the executive order, invoke FEMA, provide legal and financial protections to affected Canadian firms, and coordinate with Mexico, the European Union, and CARICOM nations in resisting Trump's extraterritorial reach.

"Silence and inaction are not neutrality," the network concluded. "They amount to acquiescence."

Rev. Barber: What do we do when democracy is hijacked?

By Mark Gruenberg



WASHINGTON—In some of his sharpest language yet against the Trump regime—and its congressional and MAGA followers, too—Bishop and Rev. William Barber II is challenging the country by answering, "What do we do when democracy is hijacked?"

Joined by other ministers, victims of Trump's policies, and Samuel Epps, President of the Metropolitan Washington Central Labor Council, Rev. Barber launched into a fiery speech just a block from the White House on May 11, before leading a group of volunteers to sit down on the sidewalk in front of the Executive Mansion to be arrested in a show of peaceful civil disobedience.

There was, as usual, no immediate reaction from Trump. D.C. police monitored the rally, but kept a low profile. And Rev. Barber vowed, "We will be back."

Trump's troops—National Guards from red states and ICE agents who have been dragooning, beating, arresting, and deporting people—were nowhere to be seen.

Rev. Barber answered his own question by quoting sections of the Declaration of Independence.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men—it should now be 'all people'—are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

"That to preserve these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. But whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and institute new forms of government."

And the way to accomplish that goal is to flood the polls this fall with record numbers of voters demanding a change in government and a change in policies emanating from D.C., Rev. Barber and other speakers said.

After all, he pointed out, in the last election, the number of registered voters who did not vote—90 million—exceeded the vote totals of both Republican nominee Donald Trump and his Democratic foe, Vice President Kamala Harris. Rev. Barber did not name either.

"It is not just my right to vote. It is my duty," Rev. Barber declared. "Whenever there is a long train of abuses, it is time to turn this nation around."

"Over and over, people have come to this place to change democracy. This is hard work," he added.

Rev. Barber unveiled a list of goals the foes of authoritarians and supporters of "the tradition of non-violence, peace and justice," should stand for.

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"We say NO to denying peace, but choosing an unholy war of choice in Iran," he declared. To "denying voting rights, denying living wages, denying health care, denying freedom from poverty, denying labor rights, denying statehood to citizens of Washington, D.C., denying rights to indigenous people, denying climate change, denying gender rights."

The May 11 event Rev. Barber hosted was livestreamed on YouTube, and Repairers of the Breach—the parent organization of his New Poor People's Campaign—organized similar events and had members lobby lawmakers in various states from coast to coast.

"What do we do when democracy is hijacked? This is the question we face. This is why we got to get real serious," Rev. Barber said.

The rally and speeches were the latest Moral Monday event in D.C., and Rev. Barber promised to sponsor more every Monday until the nation wakes up and demands an end to "the U.S.-Israel illegal and immoral" Iran War abroad. "It is a war of aggression," he said.

Rev. Barber did not let the rest of the nation off the hook by putting all the blame on Trump. He described "a social schizophrenia" in the U.S. "that has been with us since the nation was born."

Trump, his followers, his congressional allies, and his MAGA legions are just the latest symptoms of that longtime national ailment, he said.

"But every so often it goes real crazy," he added.

That's manifested "in the man who occupies the White House, in a Congress that treats him as a demigod" and an Executive Branch uncontained by legal or moral guardrails.

The result is Trump and the forces behind him "think America was right to begin with" in 1776, when only propertied white men, most of them Christian Protestants, took control of the nation.

And for that caste, "everything since then has been downhill," he said, referring to the steady expansion of voting rights, civil rights, and workers' rights, first to landless white men, then to African-American men, then women, then workers, and then finally people 18 and over.

And much of the U.S. elite is complicit with that elite, Bishop Rev. Barber warned, especially in spending on Trump's war on Iran.

"We have paid for the genocide" Israel is perpetrating in Gaza, he said. He stated that $28 billion in U.S. military aid and weaponry accounts for 40% of Israel's defense budget.

"Shame on us and shame on Israel for starting this war together."

To preserve their power and their influence, the original oppressors—those white property owners, now the 1%, including Trump—are now MAGA "waging a war that is mean, a war that is angry, a war that is greedy and a war that is anti-American."

The other speakers, most of them religious leaders, were given two minutes each and asked to speak on specific topics. They ranged from the Trump wars on Venezuela, Iran, and the Palestinians, to his ICE troops and their war on migrants.

Others targeted the Supreme Court's eradication of the remnants of the Voting Rights Act—as did Rev. Barber—and Trump's abolition of measures to combat climate change.

Trump's ICE agents "are coming after people who don't look like me," one white pastor said in denouncing Trump's troops in U.S. cities, notably D.C. itself.

Trump, meanwhile, mused in a White House meeting with reporters about annexing Venezuela as the 51st state, primarily for its oil reserves.

Epps, the Metro D.C. Central Labor Council president, particularly slammed Trump's racism towards anyone who's a person of color, especially those of Hispanic descent. Trump has withdrawn some of his vicious and violent ICE and Border Patrol agents from other cities he sent them to occupy, such as Los Angeles and Chicago.

But not D.C.

"We are talking about policy violence when the people who grow our food, who pave our roads, and who care for our children are told they are not worth a living wage," he said. Other speakers on the repression of migrants pointed out that Trump wants to expel them all.

"We say 'no' to an economy that acquires wealth," that condones union-busting, and that dumps voting rights. We say 'yes' to an "economy where it is built from the bottom up, and where persons who make the least deserve the most."

Detroit's Michigan Science Center Workers win union victory under UAW

By Noelle Belanger

DETROIT, Mich.—Museum cultural workers achieved a victory on May 8 as Guest Relations and Education workers at Detroit's own Michigan Science Center voted overwhelmingly to unionize under the UAW. The victory follows a two-month campaign for the right to collective bargaining and includes demands for better access to sick leave, health insurance, livable wages, and improved, safer working conditions on the museum floor. This was the third attempt by the workers to unionize.

The Michigan Science Center has been a beloved spot for Detroit families and students to become passionate about science for decades, originally known as the Detroit Science Center from 1978 to 2011 before reopening in 2012 as "the Michigan Science Center." However, decades of company pressure on hourly museum workers accumulated into the decision to organize. Despite how many of the educators and guest relations workers are enriched by their ability to educate and interact with the public, they are still made to work in poor exhibit conditions and survive on barely livable wages, whilst the job market grows even more precarious.

Corinne Lawrence, an educator at the Michigan Science Center, expressed to *People's World* the importance of unionizing museum workers. "We are exploited just like any other worker," Lawrence explained. "We have passion and pride for our community, and in education and science, and it's being taken advantage of."

"There's an expectation by management that we just have to accept whatever conditions are put before us," Lawrence remarked, "and we want those conditions to change. We are not disposable."

Trevor Nichols, an education specialist at the Michigan Science Center, told *People's World* how the museum cuts corners to salvage its profits and how unionizing could further their demands for better pay for workers and to improve the conditions of the exhibits during their programs.

"There are things in the Science Center that have been broken for a really long time," Nichols recounted. "When kids come in, and we're supposed to educate them, show them the fun of science, we usually have to tell them, 'I'm sorry, this is broken.' That feels awful."



"We serve communities that are more at risk of impoverishment, and we want to help to relieve that," Nichols continued, "but we don't see that reflected by the Science Center."

"The more power we have as educators, the better we can serve our community."

As the voting approached a close, museum workers came on their days off to cast their YES votes as the rally outside grew in numbers. One worker came in her graduation cap and gown as Wayne State University's graduation ceremony occurred nearby.

When voting officially closed, the museum workers exited the building in unison to join their UAW siblings and supporters outside to celebrate this historic victory —lighting up the crowd with energizing speeches and chants.

Joining the celebration alongside the museum workers and UAW members was LaShawn English, the UAW's Region 1 Director and the first woman and woman of color elected to serve in the position. English had been a dedicated director for the UAW and pushed for numerous organizing and educational efforts, further paving the way for a unified union where members and leadership come together to fight for workers' rights by making the region open and accessible to all workers.

The Michigan Science Center workers' victory joins with growing museum unionizing efforts in the city of Detroit, alongside the workers at the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Detroit Public Library.

BlueGreen Alliance celebrates 20 years and tackles Trump impact

By Mark Gruenberg



WASHINGTON—As the BlueGreen Alliance, a coalition of unions and environmental groups, celebrates its 20th anniversary this spring, it can look back on acceptance of the principle it pushed ever since Steelworkers President Leo Gerard and Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope founded it: That green jobs are good jobs, that green jobs should be union jobs, and that green jobs can restore the U.S. manufacturing base.

With the help of sympathetic legislators and other advocates, the alliance, which now includes several green groups and even more unions, won not just that acceptance, but implementation of a lot of its specifics during Democratic President Joe Biden's administration.

But now the alliance and its allies must constantly tackle a new and ominous threat, the anti-union, anti- green economy regime of President Donald Trump, aided and abetted by the very fossil fuel interests the alliance tries to turn the nation away from. Those interests reap the profits, too.

Given the corporate clout and the campaign cash of the oil, coal, natural gas, and other fossil fuel-oriented firms and their magnates, that's going to be a constant battle, BlueGreen Executive Director Jason Walsh told Peoples World in an exclusive interview. Which doesn't prevent him from tooting the alliance's horn—and the need to adjust the U.S. economy away from carbon-causing pollution, which leads to global warming.

"It all boils down to a belief that we shouldn't have to choose between good jobs and a green environment," he says. "We can have both."

And those green jobs must be union jobs, Walsh declares. This was one of the alliance's greatest achievements during Biden's administration. And which Trump's legislation has undone.

Since its founding, the Alliance has grown, though the Laborers withdrew several years ago. The union felt the alliance was too green-oriented at the expense of construction workers and their jobs.

And while individual unions—the Steelworkers, the Communications Workers, the Service Employees, the Plumbers, the Painters, the Bricklayers, and the Auto Workers —are members, the labor movement as a whole is not, yet. Which doesn't mean other unions are hostile.

Even Sean McGarvey, president of North America's Building Trades Unions, vigorously endorsed green jobs as good union jobs in his recent keynote address to NABTU's legislative conference. But for McGarvey, they're part of the all-of-the-above sources of energy for the U.S., including green sources such as solar, wind, and hydropower, and traditional ones such as oil and natural gas.

So McGarvey blasted Trump for wiping out thousands of current and potential building trades jobs by shutting down leases for offshore wind farms and for paying a virtual $928 million bribe to their main European sponsor, the French petrochemical firm Total, to never build them again in the U.S. market.

That deal symbolizes what Walsh and the alliance are now up against.

Before that, there were successes under Biden, with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the law that emphasized green jobs but also deficit reduction. Walsh and the alliance take pride in convincing then-Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W. Va., a longtime recipient of fossil fuel company campaign cash, to remove his blockade on that latter bill–even if Manchin exacted concessions.

Manchin "was the 50th vote" in the Senate for both bills, Walsh explains. Get 50 votes, then Vice President Kamala Harris breaks the tie. Manchin also chaired the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, which writes both environmental and job-creation laws. "It gave him a lot of leverage," says Walsh.

"But when we focused on how important the laws would be for economic development and jobs," Manchin agreed to the measure. His state, West Virginia, suffers from the long-term decline of its dominant coal industry. It's now one of the poorest in the U.S.

"We worked intensively to get wage replacement and benefit support for those dedicated fossil fuel workers," notably the now-unemployed coal miners, Walsh says. The alliance is still working on that issue, even as Trump, the supposed fossil-fuel champion, tries to cut such aid.

It's also keeping its goal of aiding communities of disadvantaged workers, most of them workers of color, who are most impacted by both the continuing operation of fossil fuel plants–due to the pollution—or their closure, which costs jobs, and which fuels the "green" versus "jobs" debate.

"People from Appalachia had experienced economic strain, not economic gain," Walsh comments.

Both laws encouraged unionization, Walsh noted. In Biden's Build Back Better law, after the alliance and its allies presented their policies and lobbied, Biden and lawmakers inserted requirements for Project Labor Agreements in all but the smallest federally funded construction projects. "There were many people," including the alliance, "who helped shape that."

The second law mandated "green" rules for federal spending. "We got a comprehensive policy agenda" through Congress, after arguing for it since 2006. And the Auto Workers adopted the same goals in their successful bargaining with the Detroit 3 automakers. They achieved one big alliance goal: That auto plants for electric vehicles be wall-to-wall union, even in the labor-hostile South.

"We at the policy level have a consensus-based coalition" for green jobs are good union jobs, says Walsh. "It's essential to our identity." But the alliance also tackled the problems of displaced fossil fuel workers and how to retrain them for jobs of the future, in and out of the clean energy industries.

"We were very fortunate with the Biden administration," said Walsh, who served in Democratic President Barack Obama's White House before becoming the alliance's executive director.

But now times are different, with Donald Trump in the White House and fossil fuel barons in ascendance. They started accumulating such clout, Walsh says, 13 years ago–after the financial industry-caused crash during the George W. Bush administration.

"In 2013, there was [Great] Depression-era joblessness in Appalachia—and the coal industry turned that into a culture war, telling miners that green groups 'were forcing them to give up their way of life.'"

That drumbeat hasn't ceased. Under Trump, "It's on steroids."

So how does the BlueGreen Alliance combat it? By providing factual data and arguments that the transition, properly managed, could leave those hurting regions better than before.

And by shifting much of its focus to the states where it is strong: Illinois, Minnesota, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington state, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

As one example of its work in the states, the BlueGreen Alliance cites work with the Oregon legislature and Gov. Tina Kotek (D) to set environmental and labor standards for planned windfarms off the state's Pacific Coast. That bill became law in 2024.

It's "a blueprint on what is possible when you move at the pace of partnership rather than a race to be first," BlueGreen Alliance Oregon State Policy Manager Ranfis Giannettino Villatoro said then.

"Bringing offshore wind to Oregon's coast must be done correctly, including strong workforce equity provisions, robust labor standards, and ensuring that labor, conservationists, tribal leaders, and a diverse community of stakeholders are engaged to explore the impacts and benefits of offshore wind development. Today's framework moves Oregon forward through careful planning and partnership."

The new law told the state Department of Land Conservation and Development "to develop an Offshore Wind Roadmap to support Oregon's goals and policies related to communities, economic opportunity, protection of Tribal resources, offshore wind workforce development, environmental protection, and state energy and climate objectives."

It also mandated strong labor standards for any proposed wind projects and gave coastal communities and current ocean users "a seat at the table" where wind project decisions are made.

"As the Oregon economy shifts toward greener energy sources, it is essential workers are protected every step of the way," state AFL-CIO President Graham Trainor said then. The new wind project law "ensures strong labor standards for construction, operations, maintenance, and manufacturing jobs, including the highest level of worker training and earn-as-you-learn apprenticeships, living wages, and family-supporting healthcare."

But that success, which Walsh cites, also shows the limits of working state by state. Wind farms depend on federal tax credits and federally approved leases and permits. And Trump hates wind farms, because they aren't powered by the fossil fuel firms, who are big GOP campaign contributors.

Trump and his Interior Secretary, Doug Burgum, canceled all wind farm permits. The Trump-GOP "Big Beautiful Bill" removed the tax credits. And Trump and Burgum push for more oil and gas drilling on federal lands. The federal government owns 28% of all U.S. land, with the highest shares in Nevada (80%), Utah (63%), Idaho (62%), Alaska (61%), and Oregon (53%).

Trump "presents the false choice of 'Do you want to have a job or do you want a clean environment?'

Social movements are the most powerful forces against that dichotomy. But we have to develop successes" they can cite, says Walsh. "So we'll develop our own platform next year and make the case that it's good politics, too."

"We fight like hell, and it's hard, because it's not just Trump and his cronies, but a Republican-controlled Congress that has become supine and a personality cult for Trump," Walsh explains. "We're trying to hold them accountable."

Alabama and Tennessee rush to eliminate Black representation in Congress

By John Wojcik

Elected officials in Alabama, Tennessee, and elsewhere in the South are meeting Wednesday to eliminate any congressional districts in their states where it is still possible to elect African Americans or other non-white lawmakers. If they succeed, many of the states that constitute the old Confederacy will, as they did in the 19th century, have only white representation in Washington, D.C.

The racist moves, designed also to eliminate any Democrats from the state delegations to Congress, are also upending a number of primary elections currently underway. In some places, tens of thousands of early voters have already cast ballots that could end up being tossed in the trash pile by the racist lawmakers engineering the moves.

The stepped-up redistricting war was triggered last year by President Donald Trump when he put the squeeze on Texas lawmakers to redraw their lines to eliminate Democrats. It is now intensifying in the wake of last week's Supreme Court decision restricting states from drawing district lines to remediate existing racial discrimination.

The ruling, which struck down the drawing of a majority-Black congressional district in Louisiana, has unleashed "a wave of nefarious actions" across states that threatens to disenfranchise Black voters, Alanah Odoms, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana, said.

Republicans are now racing to cement in place new racially gerrymandered lines before the November 2026 elections. Until now, the Supreme Court never permitted maneuvers like this in the leadup to elections.

An extraordinary legislative session to redraw lines aimed at eliminating minority representation began Monday in Alabama and started Tuesday in Tennessee. Louisiana lawmakers, who were already in session, are also moving to redraw their congressional districts.

Civil rights activists, Democrats, labor unions, and others are fighting back with everything from marches and protest rallies to actions in the courts.

Hundreds are descending on state capitals in the South condemning the efforts. At mass rallies in front of the Alabama Statehouse this week, demonstrators carried signs declaring "We fight back, Black Voters matter."

From the moment the Supreme Court issued the Louisiana ruling, which effectively killed the Voting Rights Act, the AFL-CIO stepped up its ongoing campaign against racist gerrymandering. The labor federation issued a statement in the name of President Liz Shuler and Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond that called the ruling an "outright attack on the fundamental freedoms of all working people.



"The Voting Rights Act came out of a triumph of organizing and activism, a victory the people of the civil rights movement, with labor standing shoulder to shoulder, fought and died for over decades. But from the moment it was signed into law, there has been a concerted effort to reverse that progress.

"Voting rights are worker rights. When working people have a real voice at the ballot box, we can elect leaders who will respect our right to join a union, fight for fair wages, ensure safe workplaces, and retire in dignity," the federation said.

Continuing the opposition to voting rights mentioned by the AFL-CIO, Trump is cheering on the wave of racist redistricting sweeping the South. He is bragging that Republicans are working to gain at least 20 House seats with the measures being considered in various states.

He's also actively taking retribution against GOP state lawmakers who don't go along with him. In Indiana Republican primaries this week, he backed people who opposed lawmakers who would not go along with his demands for new racist district lines.

Five of the seven state candidates he backed won their primary races. This will turn the Republican legislature in Indiana, if the party wins a majority of seats in November, into even more of an extremist MAGA-dominated body than it already is.

One of the ways Democrats are fighting back includes an effort to redraw lines favorable to them. U.S. House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries pointed to redistricting in New York as an example.

New York law, however, will not allow those lines to take effect until 2028. To adopt new districts, New York lawmakers must pass a constitutional amendment twice in two years, and voters would also have to approve it.

Florida, on Monday, added itself to the list of Southern states enacting new discriminatory district lines. Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis announced he had signed a redrawn map passed by lawmakers last week that could help Republicans win as many as four additional House seats.

The new map was immediately challenged in court as a partisan gerrymander that violates a state constitutional provision against drawing districts that favor one political party over another.

In Louisiana, tens of thousands had already early voted as the state legislature began moving to delay its May 18 primary election. The Republican aim is to re-draw the lines in an even more discriminatory fashion than they have been drawn thus far.

At the very least, the moves in Louisiana have caused mass confusion, which is, in itself, a major aim of Republicans determined to suppress the vote in an election cycle during which they are expected to lose seats in Congress. The Democrats have encouraged people to continue early voting in the current districts in Louisiana in the hope that courts, later on, will allow those votes to be counted.

In Alabama, Republican Gov. Kay Ivey called legislators into a special session to consider contingency plans for special primary elections in hopes the U.S. Supreme Court will let Alabama switch congressional maps ahead of the November midterms.

Federal judges previously ordered Alabama to use a court-selected map—with a second district that has a substantial number of Black voters—until a new map is drafted after the 2030 Census. Alabama appealed that decision and has asked the court, in light of the Louisiana ruling, to let it revert to a 2023 map drawn by Republican state lawmakers. That map would substantially alter the district now represented by Rep.Shomari Figures, a Black Democrat.

In Tennessee, Republican Gov. Bill Lee announced a special session designed to eliminate the state's only Democratic House district which is largely in the majority Black district of Memphis.

"This latest attempt at redistricting is not just about lines on a map, it is about misrepresentation," said the Rev. Earle Fisher, a pastor at the Abyssinian Missionary Baptist Church and the founder of Up the Vote 901, referring to the Memphis area code. "It's about whether the voices of Black people in this state will be heard or hidden."

Trump-Xi summit: Chance for a reset in the new Cold War

By People's World Editorial Collective



As U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping sit across from one another at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, the eyes of working people around the world are fixed on this two-day summit with both urgency and hope.

The relationship between the United States and China has deteriorated badly in recent years. Reckless tariff wars have disrupted global supply chains and squeezed workers and consumers in both countries with inflation and layoffs. Military posturing in the Asia-Pacific and the signing of new war pacts like the AUKUS nuclear submarine scheme have raised the specter of catastrophic conflict.

A "new Cold War" framework—driven by Washington's bipartisan foreign policy establishment—has pushed the two largest economies on earth toward confrontation rather than cooperation. That path leads nowhere good. This summit is an opportunity to step back from the brink and push the reset button.

President Xi, in his opening remarks, posed the right question: Can the United States and China avoid the "Thucydides Trap," the historical pattern in which a rising power and an established one blunder into war?

That question deserves a serious answer, and it demands more than diplomatic pleasantries. It demands concrete commitments.

On trade, the two sides must move beyond the destructive cycle of tariffs and retaliation launched by Trump that has benefited no one but arms dealers and certain sectors of big capital. Working people in Detroit and Shenzhen alike pay the price when commerce becomes a weapon. Expanding fairly negotiated market access, stabilizing supply chains, and building genuine mutual benefit—not zero-sum competition—must be the goal.

On technology, the potential of artificial intelligence and other emerging fields is too great, and too consequential for humanity, to be squandered on a race for military and economic dominance. With the jobs of millions at stake, dialogue about how each country addresses questions of a just transition would be to the benefit of all. The same goes for the environmental impacts of data center construction. Frameworks for cooperation, not walls of restriction, are what workers and communities need.

On Taiwan, Xi was direct: Mishandling this issue risks "clashes and even conflicts." This publication has long held that military adventurism in the Taiwan Strait would be a catastrophe for the peoples of the entire region. Dialogue, restraint, and respect for the One China principle are the only responsible course.

On the Middle East, both powers have agreed that energy waterways must remain open and that nuclear weapons proliferation is undesirable. These points of agreement should be the foundation for broader diplomatic engagement, not new pretexts for confrontation.

As *People's World* regularly said during the last Cold War: Détente is not surrender, peace is not weakness. The people of both the U.S. and China—and the world—have everything to gain from leaders who choose cooperation over conflict.

LABOR NEWS

Middle East and Mediterranean parties fight the Iran War

By CPUSA International Department

A teleconference of Communist and Workers' Parties from the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East, and the Persian Gulf was held March 12 at the initiative of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE). The meeting, which brought together representatives from eleven parties including the Communist Party of Israel (MAKI), the Tudeh Party of Iran, the Palestinian Communist Party, AKEL (Cyprus), the Jordanian Communist Party, and the Sudanese Communist Party, focused on coordinating action against the imperialist war launched by the U.S. and Israel against Iran.

KKE General Secretary Dimitris Koutsoubas delivered the introductory speech, emphasizing that the attack is driven by the competition of monopolies to control energy resources and reshape the region. Participants condemned the ongoing genocide in Gaza, the attacks on Lebanon and Syria, and expressed solidarity with the people of Cuba and the communists of Jordan. The parties agreed to intensify the struggle against their own governments' involvement in imperialist plans and to strengthen internationalist solidarity, particularly in the face of the escalating conflict and its dangers for the entire region.

Belgium: general strike shakes country

On Thursday, March 12, 100,000 people joined a national demonstration and strike in Brussels against the anti-worker reforms of the so-called Arizona coalition government. Trade unions, feminist networks, and international solidarity organizations took to the streets to oppose plans to finance militarization at the expense of workers' salaries and pensions. The strike was the latest in a year of sustained action against the government's attempt to force people to work until age 67 by penalizing early retirees with pension cuts of up to 5% annually.

The Workers' Party of Belgium (PTB-PVDA), which has been one of the parties at the forefront of the resistance, noted that the broad mobilizations have already won important breakthroughs. According to the party's pension expert, the overall impact of the reform measures has been reduced by a quarter, sparing some 20,000 workers from penalties.

MAGA desmantela los derechos de voto

By Partido Comunista de los Estados Unidos

En una decisión de 6 votos a favor y 3 en contra, dividida según líneas partidistas, la Corte Suprema de los EE. UU. desmanteló la Sección 2 de la Ley de Derechos Electorales, la última disposición poderosa que quedaba de la ley de derechos civiles de 1965, la cual prohíbe la discriminación racial en el voto. La Sección 2 ayudaba a garantizar, en ocasiones, que los votantes pertenecientes a minorías recibieran un trato justo en los procesos de redistribución de distritos electorales y en el acceso a las urnas.

Continuando con su ataque a la democracia —y con su apoyo inconstitucional y contrario a los trabajadores hacia el racismo, bajo el pretexto de la "ceguera racial"—, el juez Alito escribió, en nombre de la mayoría de la Corte Suprema:

"Permitir que la raza desempeñe cualquier papel en la toma de decisiones gubernamentales representa una desviación de la norma constitucional que rige en casi cualquier otro contexto. Por consiguiente, el cumplimiento de la Sección 2 no podría justificar el uso, por parte del Estado, de una redistribución de distritos basada en criterios raciales en el presente caso. El intento del Estado de acatar el fallo del tribunal del distrito medio, si bien comprensible, constituyó un *gerrymandering* racial inconstitucional".

Actuar para abordar los efectos materiales del racismo sistémico es, en opinión de Alito y de la mayoría, un acto racista. La lógica es circular y está desconectada de la realidad. La "ceguera racial" —dentro de un sistema económico construido sobre el racismo y la opresión de la clase trabajadora— se utiliza como justificación para perpetuar políticas y conductas racistas. Desde la época de Ronald Reagan, esta endeble lógica se ha empleado para justificar ataques racistas contra las comunidades negras y morenas.

La ceguera racial es un argumento utilizado para justificar el ataque continuo a los derechos de voto, así como a todo intento de reparar las disparidades raciales reales y existentes en cuanto a quién tiene voz en la vida política y económica de los Estados Unidos. El capitalismo es sostenido por la clase multimillonaria, la cual difunde ideologías racistas de división y discordia entre la clase trabajadora. Estas ideas —y su implementación tanto en la legislación como en las normas de conducta— deben ser cuestionadas, y de hecho lo están siendo.

Las personas trabajadoras —incluyendo a personas blancas, negras, morenas, asiáticas, miembros de la comunidad LGBTQ+ y mujeres— se enfrentan al desafío de considerar cómo incorporar, como elemento central de las luchas de todos los pueblos, la lucha por la democracia, por la diversidad, la equidad y la inclusión, así como por un sistema político que haga llegar las voces de las masas a oídos de los ricos, sin las distorsiones provocadas por la manipulación de distritos electorales (*gerrymandering*), las leyes de identificación de votantes y otras tácticas de supresión del voto.

Debemos unirnos y luchar —personas negras y blancas, y de todas las razas, juntas— para ampliar el liderazgo laboral y comunitario en la batalla por una economía, una sociedad y un sistema político justos; un sistema que funcione para todo el pueblo, en lugar de hacerlo únicamente para los multimillonarios. Trabajando juntos, podemos lograr la aprobación de la Ley de Derechos Electorales John Lewis y comenzar a restablecer algunas de las protecciones necesarias para el derecho al voto.

¡Pongan fin ahora mismo al horror de la «ceguera racial»! ¡Resistan!

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
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May 23, 2026

Trump Education Department targets trans students at Smith College

By Katie Wright



NORTHAMPTON, Mass.—The Trump administration's investigation of Smith College is premised upon a fundamental misreading of Title IX law, argues Carrie Baker, a professor in the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Program at Smith.

Smith College is a private, historically women's college located in Northampton, Massachusetts; the college began admitting transfeminine students following a policy change in 2015, prior to which it had admitted only applicants whose educational records consistently reflected a female identity. Trump's Department of Education (DOE) alleges that this policy change—including consequent admission of trans and nonbinary students into so-called "women's only" spaces, such as restrooms, locker rooms, and dormitories—may constitute a violation of Title IX law.

The DOE's May 4 press release reads:
Title IX contains a single-sex exception that allows colleges to enroll all-male or all-female student bodies—but the exception applies on the basis of biological sex difference, not subjective gender identity. An all-girls college that enrolls [transgender] students professing a female identity would cease to qualify as single sex under Title IX.

The press release fails to make clear the nature of the alleged violation—likely because no violation actually occurred. Title IX does not include a single-sex exception, as Trump's DOE claims. Title IX prohibits exclusionary discrimination on the basis of sex, but Trump's DOE wages precisely the opposite complaint against Smith College:

namely, that the school doesn't discriminate on the basis of assigned sex in admissions. The allegation that Smith has thereby violated Title IX is patently incoherent.

What's more is that, contrary to the language of the press release, there is no process by which private institutions of higher education "qualify" as single-sex under Title IX. Public institutions that have "traditionally and continually" admitted only a single sex from the time of their establishment are exempted from the anti-discrimination law in 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a)(5)—but the admissions practices of private institutions like Smith are never subject to it in the first place:

...In regard to admissions to educational institutions, this section shall apply only to institutions of vocational education, professional education, and graduate higher education, and to public institutions of undergraduate higher education.

In other words, Title IX does not determine the conditions under which any institution, whether public or private, may identify itself as a women's college or a men's college.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Trump Education Department targets trans students at Smith College

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

It merely permits the existence of sex-discriminatory admissions, supposing that they belong either to private institutions or to public ones that were historically sex-discriminatory by the time of Title IX in 1974.

The press release continues:
When an institution holds itself out as being an all-women's college, it is not just promising to deliver female-only dorms and bathrooms, and single-sex athletics; it is also committing to maintain a student body that makes possible a particular form of sorority and camaraderie.

But again, Trump's DOE is either misunderstanding or intentionally misrepresenting what the law actually says. 34 CFR § 106.33 states that institutions that receive federal funding *may* provide sex-segregated facilities—not that they *must*. The same is true of athletics, as federally funded institutions are permitted, but not required, to maintain single-sex athletic programs. Smith College nevertheless announced that it would abide by the National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) decision to bar transgender women from competing alongside cisgender women in sport in 2025, much to the dismay of Smith students, faculty, and staff.

In this case, too, an action purportedly taken to protect the interests of cisgender women appears to be at odds with what cisgender women themselves want. Indeed, cisgender Smith students were largely responsible for the policy change 11 years ago, which came on the heels of a pressure campaign devised by student group Queers and Allies (Q&A)—comprised, at the time, exclusively by students assigned female at birth.

Q&A took action in response to Smith's denying admission to transgender applicant Calliope Wong, who was denied two times over: first for having male gender markers on her FAFSA and again for having male gender markers on her high school transcript.

Wong had already been living openly as a transgender woman when she applied to Smith and had, in fact, taken the necessary steps to correct her transcript's gender markers in advance of submitting her application; the remaining male gender markers were a result of a clerical error.

Unsurprisingly, the federal investigation into Smith was prompted not by a Smith student, but by an external complainant wholly unaffiliated with the college: a conservative nonprofit called Defending Education, which claims to "fight indoctrination in classrooms and on campus to promote the reestablishment of a quality, non-political education for all students."

Smith students immediately showed their support for the school's trans-inclusive policies following the DOE press release, chalking across the campus, "Trans Smithies belong," and speaking publicly against the investigation.

"The Trump administration has launched attacks against immigrants, pro-Palestinian activists, and Black women leaders in unions and the government from its inception," said Lisa Armstrong, also a professor in the Program for the Study of Women and Gender. "The villainizing of trans women is part of a larger pattern of fear-mongering to shrink the public sphere and sow fear."

Considering the plain unfeasibility of the DOE's claim that Smith has violated Title IX in its admissions policy, it becomes difficult to see the federal investigation as anything more than a piece of political theatre. Smith makes a particularly attractive target to that end: it is a women's liberal arts college located in the historically progressive city of Northampton, which declared itself a sanctuary city for transgender and gender-diverse people in 2024.

A source at Smith reports that the school's President, Admissions Director, and in-house legal counsel have advised that there will be no changes to admissions, curriculum, or non-NCAA athletic programs in response to the investigation.

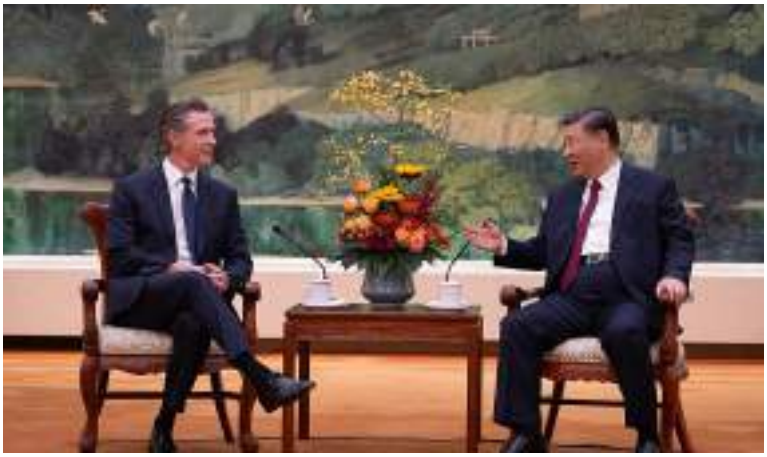
Gavin Newsom's autobiographical 'Young Man in a Hurry': More and less

By Eric A. Gordon

It's been the standard practice for at least a generation that any serious contender for the American presidency must come out with a book.

For those whose campaigns fizzle out sooner rather than later, such volumes in short order occupy the remainder shelf.

For those who command a certain interest, voters, journalists, and other politicians will hie to the book for guidance on where the prospective candidate stands on any number of policy issues.



A near-universal narrative arc for these books (many of them ghost-written or "with" a co-writer) is an inspirational come-up-from-behind story that shows how the candidate overcame adversity, learned their lessons well, and achieved an elevated sense of moral commitment to do the right thing by the American people.

California Governor Gavin Newsom's autobiographical *Young Man in a Hurry: A Memoir of Discovery*, published in 2026, is much more than that—and at the same time, much less.

In mid-March of this year, obviously in the wake of the release, or impending release, of *Young Man*, Donald Trump told reporters, "Gavin Newsom has admitted that he has learning disabilities, dyslexia. Honestly, I'm all for people with learning disabilities, but not for my president." (Look who's talking!)

Newsom's early childhood struggle with undiagnosed dyslexia is a major theme in his autobiography. Advised to accept the fact that he would only ever be "average"—such was the thinking at the time—it took Newsom years to adapt to his condition and hone a variety of techniques and protocols for reading, thinking, learning, and speaking. The recounting of that arduous work is part of the "discovery" in his subtitle. Today, for the most part, he does not stand out in public as someone who is greatly diminished or incapacitated. Quite to the contrary, he's far more articulate than many who occupy such high positions in our democracy.

Dyslexia aside, Newsom has the reputation of being the child of privilege, for whom entitlement was built into his social status. Most people know that he was informally adopted into and raised by the ultra-rich Getty family in Northern California and Montana, owing to the prominence of his father, William, a judge. We are privy to the pricy vacations, the introductions to famous and powerful people, and the upper-class culture of affluence.

Yet Newcom also introduces us to the other side of his unique equation, the poorer side—his mother's—and the deep veins of troubled personalities in several generations of his family. While on the surface a prospective reader might assume this book is a political autobiography, an overwhelming majority of its pages are devoted to parsing out the peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of his strange relatives. His maternal grandmother, Jean Addis Menzies, was "a Red…a true bohemian, a beatnik before beatniks were a thing," who took off for Soviet Russia in the 1930s for a time. His mother, Tessa, worked three jobs to support Gavin and his sister, Hilary. The writer devotes several pages to the various jobs he held as a boy—home newspaper delivery on a bicycle is one.

Newsom has plumbed every available source for his genealogical research, and we readers are the beneficiaries of it, in excruciating detail, going back as far as his great-great-grandfather on his neighborhood rounds as a San Francisco cop 150 years ago.

The more Newsom uncovers of his family history, the deeper he is driven to go. "Who were they, truly? I began to tunnel backward, the questions more lucid in my head. I might have stopped at the first painful revelation, but my obsessive gear kicked in, and I kept on boring deeper into the past." (If I were his editor, I might have advised against using the word "boring.")

If that's what floats your boat, well, there's a lot of it here. I suspect the eyes of many a reader will glaze over at the sheer amount of anecdotal minutiae he has dredged up. In the final words of his Acknowledgments, he calls the book his "testament to the love my parents, William and Tessa Newsom, had for their children, and the love we have for our children…. This book, after all, is for them." So very gracious to invite us, readers, into the intimacy of that tight circle, but let it be noted that in that sense, Newsom overfulfills our expectations.

Say the name Gavin Newsom and many, perhaps most, will recall how, in 2005, only a year into his mayoralty of San Francisco (following in the footsteps of his mentor Willie Brown), he ordered City Hall to start conducting same-gender marriages. Seen at the time, by the political establishment, as an impetuous move not backed by any traditional interpretation of the law, it's the one passionate policy decision he most dwells on. He also devoted considerable attention to climate change, containing the spread of plastics, mental health care, and gun laws, but a reader would likely have to go elsewhere for a full-bodied exposition of just what he did and how he got it done. As Governor, he campaigned on the logic and necessity of single-payer healthcare for California, but he has—charitably—slow-walked away from it once in office. I don't recall the subject even being mentioned in the book. Nor, curiously, is the 2021 recall election, which he won handily.

The memoirist does not shirk from discussing his early, disastrous marriage to Kimberly Guilfoyle, who later wound up in the arms of none other than Donald Trump Jr. And he is a faithful recorder of the far more successful marriage he embarked on in 2008 with Jennifer Siebel, admitting his discomfort, as a man, pulling his weight in the baby-care department. The narrative stops short of the 2024 presidential election, but before that, in November 2020, there was the dust-up around Newsom patronizing an upscale restaurant in Napa Valley with a dozen friends at a time when his office was issuing orders for people to stay home during the Covid epidemic. That episode goes unmentioned.

To me, the most memorable passage in the book is his recall of President Trump's whirlwind visit to California at the time of the ravenous Paradise fire in 2018, which, as Lieutenant Governor (under Jerry Brown), Newsom accompanied. His description of those hours, which included a flight on Air Force One, as well as another on a Marine One helicopter, is a gem of first-person reportage. We are exposed to the pettiness, the ignorance, and insensitivity of this emotional monster that in their pithy essence borders on the sickly hilarious.

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As for the 2028 election, toward which Newsom is clearly heading, there's no speculation on it, even though *Young Man* is in many aspects his way of introducing himself sympathetically to the American public. In passing, he twice names Kamala Harris, "my longtime friend," but who can say if a couple of years from now they won't be contesting one another for the nomination.

If you love reading political memoirs, this is that, plus more than you're ever likely to want to know about the history of the Newsom clan. If you're looking for a bold statement of the kind of America Gavin Newsom would like to usher in once moving into the White House, you'll probably find this introduction wanting. Clearly, however, this is not his last word.

Psst: What no one will tell you about the national debt (but I will)

By Robert Reich



The U.S. national debt just crossed a once-unthinkable threshold on the way toward breaking the record set in the wake of World War II: It now *exceeds 100 percent* of America's gross domestic product.

As of March 31, our publicly held debt was $31.27 trillion, while America's GDP in 2025 was $31.22 trillion. This puts the ratio at 100.2 percent, compared with 99.5 percent when the last fiscal year ended September 30.

That 100.2 percent figure will likely climb, because the federal government is running historically large annual deficits of nearly 6 percent of GDP, which add to the debt. The final tally will depend on Iran war spending, tariff refunds, and the strength of the economy.

Should you worry? Well, it's not as if we're heading into a depression. Passing the 100 percent threshold won't suddenly cause the world to lose confidence in the dollar.

The real problem is that an increasing portion of our nation's budget — and your tax dollars — is dedicated to paying *interest* on this growing debt. That's money we *don't* spend on education, healthcare, roads and bridges, social safety nets, or (if we actually needed more spending on it) national defense.

As the debt continues to grow, interest payments continue to soar. We'll soon be paying more in interest on the federal debt each year than we spend each year on Medicare.

So, who exactly *receives* these interest payments? This is an issue you hear very little discussion about, because the wealthy and powerful of this country would rather you didn't know.

You probably *do* hear that a chunk of our debt is held by foreign governments and foreign investors. That's true, but they hold only about 30 percent of our debt. The rest — roughly 70 percent — is held *domestically*. That is, we pay the interest to *ourselves*.

And who, exactly, is the "ourselves" who receive these interest payments? The Federal Reserve holds part of this debt, state and local governments hold part.

But the *biggest* chunk — nearly half — is held by mutual funds, pension funds, insurance companies, and banks. And who owns *them?* The Americans who invest in these funds — and who thereby, directly or indirectly, hold Treasury bills.

And who, exactly are these Americans — the Americans who are directly or indirectly collecting a large amount of the interest we're paying on the national debt? It's the people at the top.

The richest 1 percent of U.S. households hold about 35.6 percent of all financial assets — shares of stock, corporate bonds, and Treasury bills — so it's safe to assume they hold at least a third of all Treasury bills.

What's wrong with this picture?

Here's where things get really interesting.

Decades ago, wealthy Americans financed the federal government mainly by paying taxes. Their tax rate was far, far higher than it is today. In the 1950s, under President Dwight Eisenhower, the richest Americans paid a marginal tax rate of 91 percent. (Tax deductions and tax credits meant that the top effective marginal rate was lower than this.)

Fast forward. Now, wealthy Americans finance the federal government mainly by lending it money and collecting interest payments on those loans.

Interest payments on the national debt *this* year are expected to reach $1 trillion.

There are roughly 128 million households in the United States. Dividing $1 trillion in annual interest among U.S. households would amount to $650 per household per *month*. (This is a simplified average, of course; actual burdens vary based on tax status, income, and spending.)

The point is that a big chunk of the growing interest payments American taxpayers make on the federal debt is going to wealthy Americans.

Keep following the money. One of the biggest reasons the federal debt has exploded is that tax cuts — starting with the George W. Bush administration in 2001 and extending through Trump's 2018 and 2024 tax cuts — have reduced government revenues by $10.6 trillion.

Most of the *benefits* from those tax cuts are going to the wealthy. Since 2000, 65 percent of the benefits from tax cuts have gone to the richest fifth of Americans — 22 percent to the top 1 percent.

So, you see what's happened?

The wealthiest Americans *used* to pay higher taxes to finance the government. Now, the government pays wealthy Americans interest on a swelling debt, caused largely by lower taxes on wealthy Americans.

Which means a growing portion of everyone *else's* taxes are now paying wealthy Americans interest on those loans, *instead* of paying for government services everyone needs.

So, from now on, whenever you hear someone say how huge, horrible, and out-of-control the national debt is, explain to them that it's because of tax cuts to the wealthy — who are also the major recipients of interest on that debt.

America's wealthy have never been wealthier. If they paid their fair share of taxes, we wouldn't have such a huge federal debt. *And* we wouldn't be paying them so much interest on that debt.

Know what's happened, and pass it on.

Clear and present danger: U.S. health officials, not hantavirus

By John Wojcik

Current U.S. health officials could not be doing a better job than they are now of exposing us to future pandemics. The hantavirus may be bad news, but for now, it is one of the lesser problems Americans face on the healthcare front.

First, on the hantavirus itself, it is helpful to know that the strain infecting and even killing people around the world has thus far not been seen in the U.S. and is still relatively contained. Known as the "Andes" variant, it has, until the outbreak on the cruise ship this month, been confined to South America. Doctors have said that rodent feces and saliva, not human contact, are the main transmitter.

The confinement of the virus thus far to South America and to the people from the ship, who are now in isolation in their home countries, including the U.S., does not mean, in and of itself, that people in the U.S. are "safe." Since the early 1990s, there have been around 1,000 identified cases in the country, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an agency that—it's worth noting—has been severely hobbled in recent years.

While it is important to track things like the hantavirus as soon as we learn about them, the prominence of the hantavirus story in the news should trigger more serious and immediate concerns.

The real problem we face is that the Trump administration has dismantled the entire apparatus we have had in in place to shield the country from any epidemics and pandemics and to deal with them if they do occur.



That means that should an immediate and deadly threat arise due to a new or mutated pathogen, we could be in for disaster that would make the COVID-19 pandemic look like a mild annoyance.

When coronavirus hit years ago, we had in place a system to mobilize the entire economy and nation to fight the pandemic—even if President Donald Trump had been reluctant to activate it in 2020. In his second term, Trump and Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., have ensured that is all gone now.

What we have now with the hantavirus is a chance for a practice run on how to handle a potential pandemic.

As unlikely as that outcome may be right now from this particular strain, it could eventually happen, and this is an opportunity to see how our public health system is able to react.

That practice run should be run by competent people like Dr. Anthony Fauci, who was director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and took a leading role in the battle against COVID-19 under first Trump and then Biden.

There is no such qualified leader or team in place today. In charge now are Kennedy at the Health Department, Dr. Jay Bhattacharya at the National Institutes of Health and the CDC, and Russell Vought at the White House Office of Management and Budget. One would be hard pressed to think of a less competent team to head up plans for and implementation of the required defense against any potential pandemic.

One has only to look at what these men have done to see how big a danger we face—not necessarily rom hantavirus—but from them.

The White House offices for preparedness activity have been emptied and shuttered. The agencies that study the transmission of dangerous pathogens from animals to humans have been shut down. The CDC has been gutted and left only with a string of acting directors.

These "leaders" have pulled the U.S. out of the World Health Organization. All the closures and unfilled vacancies have been imposed upon operations that were crucial in fighting the COVID pandemic. In short, they have left the country wide open and vulnerable to any pathogen that might have an epidemic or pandemic potential.

In stripping away our protection against infectious disease, these men come to their jobs armed with Kennedy's idea that the environment is really the only thing that makes us sick. Infection from pathogens, he believes, plays no major role at all.

Most competent people in the field of health understand that both of those factors play a role in our collective and individual health and that both must be taken into consideration when we fight pandemics and work to prevent future outbreaks.

Vought's approach to fighting pandemics brings a different ideological mindset to the table. In his version of white Christian nationalism, an apocalyptic collapse of society from epidemics or from anything else will best be dealt with by the rising up of Christians, which will get the world back on a solid path to Heaven.

Agencies like the Food and Drug Administration have also played a crucial role in determining and enforcing policy designed to battle infectious disease. Just recently, Marty Makary—who did an ineffective 13-month stint as leader of that agency—was forced out.

During his tenure, drug companies got almost anything they wanted out of the FDA, while the protection the agency offered the public was minimal. Makary was a Trump favorite when appointed but grew out of favor as his incompetence became increasingly evident. Even RFK, Jr., advocated for his ouster.

The point is that agencies that head up the battle against infectious disease, agencies like the CDC and FDA, are being led by people who last only a short period of time. They are put in their posts by an administration that sees those jobs as rewards for loyalty rather than positions requiring expertise that provide the public protection from dangerous pathogens.

So, while the health news is focused on this or that version of the hantavirus right now, the real story should be that the people leading us in the battle for a healthy nation are taking us down a path we really don't want to go. Getting rid of these people and those who put them in place is the task in the midterm elections. If we fail in this, we could end up in the apocalyptic nightmare some of them seek and expect.

Mass rally in Montgomery battles racist gerrymandering

By Combined Sources



MONTGOMERY, Ala.—Thousands rallied in Montgomery, Alabama, Saturday, May 16, to build support for voting rights as Republicans work overtime to diminish those rights across the South and elsewhere.

The demonstration happened under the banner of "All Roads Lead to the South, National Day of Action." Civil rights leaders, activists, and politicians gathered to protest recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings and subsequent efforts by GOP-run states to redraw congressional districts that threaten Black political representation.

The loss of that Black representation sets back all the pro-labor and progressive battles for economic and political justice across the nation because it is Black and other minority lawmakers who have been in the forefront of all battles important to the labor movement and its allies.

The day of demonstrations, Saturday, included specific, localized events mirroring the historic 1965 Selma to Montgomery voting rights marches:

The morning began with a prayer service at the historic Tabernacle Baptist Church and a silent walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the site of the infamous "Bloody Sunday" violence.

Demonstrators traveled by bus to Montgomery, converging on the Alabama State Capitol for an afternoon mass rally that drew over 5,000 attendees.

The National Voting Rights Day of Action occurred on May 16 against a background of a race in Republican "red" states to redraw congressional district lines, as white nationalist and anti-labor GOP President Donald Trump demanded.

"It is time for New York to go up to Alabama," Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., declared at a rally in front of the state capital building in Montgomery, following a morning march across the Edmund Pettis bridge in Selma, site of the white nationalist assault on peaceful civil rights marchers in 1965. Montgomery was the capital of the Confederacy.

"It is time for all of us to go to Georgia, to Louisiana, to Tennessee, to Mississippi and let them know what they have uncorked with this injustice. They think they can draw us out of power," she stated about the redistricting. "They do not know the sleeping giant they just awakened."

"This is one of those moments where we understand that our blessings come with obligation," said Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J. "There is no liberation without obligation.

Because if we in our generation do not now do our duties, we will lose the rights and the liberties that our ancestors think they afforded us."

Ocasio-Cortez may have to add South Carolina, the first state to secede from the U.S. in December 1860, and where the South fired the first shots of the Civil War in 1861, to her list.

Gov. Henry McMaster, R-S.C., called the GOP-run state legislature back into session the week of May 18 to force the GOP-run State Senate to approve a remap to obliterate the district of influential Democratic Rep. James Clyburn, an African-American who has used his clout as a House party leader to steer millions of dollars in federal aid statewide.

The state Senate had rejected that House-passed map. Majority Leader Shane Massey, R-Edgefield, broke with Trump and led five Republicans to join all the Democrats and defeat it. Massey said remapping the state to eliminate Clyburn's district could weaken the party's hold on the other six Carolina districts.

Before that, Tennessee's GOP-gerrymandered legislature split the majority-Black city of Memphis into thirds, forcing veteran Rep. Steven Cohen, the sole Democrat in the state's congressional delegation, to retire. Cohen, a Jewish white progressive, now represents Memphis.

Two Black Democrats from Memphis, State Rep. Justin J. Pearson and State Sen. Justin Lamar, will run in the new 9th District. It's heavily Republican, and State Sen. Brent Taylor, R-Memphis, and State Rep. Todd Warner, R-Lewisburg, are running for the GOP nod. Memphis urban voters in the new 9th will be drowned in a sea of rural and suburban GOP whites in a district that stretches halfway across the state to the Nashville suburbs.

RAPID RESPONSE: Fund people's needs, not ICE and wars

By People's World

Call, write, or visit your Senators and Representative to demand Congress fund people's needs, not ICE or wars, in the reconciliation budget 3.0.



Stop Trump and MAGA from robbing working-class families of healthcare, nutrition, child care, education, and housing in order to give $1.5 trillion to the Pentagon for illegal wars and $70 billion to ICE and Border Patrol for inhumane detentions.

Act on behalf of your constituents' urgent basic living needs, not on behalf of war profiteers. Vote NO on the Trump and MAGA proposed reconciliation package.

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative.

Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Waffle House workers: 'We work, we sweat, put $25 on our check!'

By Erica Meade

ATLANTA—"We work, we sweat, put $25 on our check!" These were the words bouncing off buildings in downtown Atlanta on Friday during the 2026 National Jobs With Justice conference. Waffle House workers, flanked by labor allies, descended on the company's Centennial Park location to raise the demand for higher wages and respect for workers' organizing.



Since 2023, the Union of Southern Service Workers has been waging a campaign against the Southern fast food staple. The union's three key demands are $25/hr for all workers, 24/7 security at all locations, and an end to mandatory meal deductions. Waffle House takes $3.75 from workers' paychecks every day to offset meal costs, whether workers actually eat or not.

The rally came exactly one month before the June 15 kickoff of the FIFA World Cup in Atlanta. The first match will be played at Mercedes-Benz Stadium, only half a mile from the Centennial Park location. According to *Atlanta News First*, hotel prices are shooting up by 300% during the World Cup. This is coming at a time when more than 4,600 people are living in hotels long-term in neighboring DeKalb County, including 1,635 children.

Rally attendees gathered before the Olympic rings in Centennial Park to listen to speakers addressing the rampant poverty all too common for low-wage service workers.

One of these speakers was Atlanta City Council member Kelsea Bond. Bond connected the workers' struggle to the fascist administration in Washington, DC. According to Bond, defeating MAGA will require a coordinated effort between Waffle House workers on the shop floor and voters at the polls to bring down the administration and its billionaire backers.

Another worker addressing the crowd was South Carolina-based USSW Worker Elected Representative Harmoni Harmon. Harmoni, a former Waffle House worker, delivered testimony inside the store to management during the rally to let the company know the workers' demands.

The union is still waiting for a response addressing its demands and statements.

Waffle House workers taking action against the company is nothing new.

Just a year ago, workers in Marietta, Georgia, went on a three-day strike to protest the company's lack of security for the workers.

However, the action this weekend was different. In contrast to the dozens of supporters present at previous actions, this action had hundreds of allies marching behind the Waffle House workers' banner, reading: "Our Dedication Deserves Dignity. PAY US $25!"

One of those workers was Billy, a server and grill operator for the company for the past year and a half. He is one of many Waffle House workers protesting the company's wages and treatment of workers. "The conditions that Waffle House workers are under are deplorable and horrible," he plainly told supporters asking him about his job.

Billy wasn't the only one fired up. Workers with Jobs for Justice and unions like IUPAT and Teamsters raised their voices and fists to let the billion-dollar company know that the current wages for their workers are unacceptable.

The rally ended with the group circling back around past the Waffle House. As the protestors marched under the yellow sign, they chanted "We'll be back!"

And workers like Billy hope to come back with even more workers and allies. Workers "need to get involved in the movement," he told *People's World*. For him, the reason to do so is simple. "Solidarity brings organization, organization brings change."

Poverty wages are no longer acceptable to workers, and according to the union, change is certainly coming.

Democratic progressives score victory in Philly primary May 19

By Mark Gruenberg

PHILADELPHIA— Democratic primary voters on May 19 leaned heavily in favor of pro-labor, progressive politics, while President Trump retained and even strengthened his grip on Republican party politics.

In Philadelphia, anti-machine Democratic State Rep. Chris Rabb, a self-proclaimed Democratic Socialist who ran with strong backing from the Working Families Party and from two area AFT/ Teachers locals, is headed to the U.S. House next year from Philadelphia. Democrat Jon Ossoff handily won the Democratic Senate primary in Georgia and will face a Republican opponent in November.

Going down to defeat in Republican primaries were Kentucky's Rep. Thomas Massie, who had opposed Trump on his refusal to release the Epstein files, and Republican Sen. Tom Cornyn of Texas, who Trump said "crossed me when I needed him most." Those results, plus the third-place finish in Georgia's gubernatorial primary by Brad Raffensperger, who refused a phone call from Trump in 2021 asking him to change votes, displayed Trump's continuing hold on his party despite its shrinking popularity in the polls.

With 87% of the votes counted in Northwest Philly's 3rd congressional district, Rabb had 44.2% of the vote and a 20,400-vote lead over his nearest foe, Sharif Street, who had 29.5% in a four-candidate race.

That guarantees Rabb a seat in the next Congress, because there's no GOP candidate at all. The 3rd District was open because Democratic Rep. Dwight Evans retired.

Rabb drew campaign backing from the Working Families Party and from prominent progressives. Campaigning for him in the race's closing days, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., brought the pro-Rabb house down by smilingly calling him "Rep Rabb."

The Working Families Party endorsement was important. The WFP has scored its most notable successes in Philadelphia. The city charter reserves two at-large council seats, out of four, for non-majority party members. For more than a century, Republicans have held both in what is now the nation's sixth-most-populous city. In the last two elections, the WFP knocked out both GOPers.

"The power of the people is more important than the people in power, and this is a people-powered campaign," Rabb proclaimed in a campaign video. "I don't take any money from corporate PACs, and I will continue to remain independent of corporate interests as I take office next year," he added.

"That's because I remain unbought and unbossed, and that's important to passing fundamental bills that corporations don't care for, like Medicare For All."

Rabb also picked up backing from the Congressional Progressive Caucus's campaign arm, from the Justice Democrats, the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, a campaign finance committee of Muslim Americans, Jewish Voice for Peace, the Sunrise Movement, and others. Besides AOC, progressive Reps. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., Ilhan Omar, DFL-Minn., and Summer Lee, D-Pittsburgh, backed Rapp. Lee is a former Democratic Socialist.

All the candidates took similar positions on the issues, including strong opposition to the abuses and policies of the Donald Trump regime in D.C. But Rabb was the most outspoken foe of U.S. weapons sales to the Israeli military, which uses them to kill thousands of civilians, first in Gaza and now in Lebanon, besides waging war on Iran—with Trump doing so, too.

Rabb wasn't the sole notable winner in the slew of primaries on May 19.

Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky., who defied Trump on the Iran War, spending bills, and opening up the Epstein files—including Trump's close ties to the millionaire now-dead serial sexual predator—lost 45%-55% to a little-known former Navy Seal, Ed Gallrein. Gallrein's credentials were the Trump endorsement, plus campaign appearances by Trump VP JD Vance and War Secretary Pete Hegseth.

Gallrein also benefited from a slew of outside spending, and the total for both men plus the outsiders combined to set a national record for a U.S. House race: $40 million. The campaign finance arm of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee put in millions for Gallrein because of Massie's opposition to the Iran War. Individual wealthy GOP backers, notably casino owner Miriam Adelson, also backed Gallrein.



The other notable Trump foe who lost was incumbent Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, who sought the GOP gubernatorial nomination in the "purple" Peach State. Raffensperger stood up to Trump's try to steal Georgia's electoral votes in 2020.

The then-president called the secretary, who was Georgia's top election official, and demanded Raffensperger "find" 11,780 more popular votes for Trump so the president would win Georgia by one ballot. That, on its face, is attempted election fraud. Raffensperger refused–and recorded Trump's damning 45-minute phone call. Raffensperger finished third in the gubernatorial primary.

The two leaders, Lieut. Gov. Burt Jones and billionaire Rick Jackson head to a runoff. Trump backed Jones, while Jackson pumped millions from his own fortune into the race. The winner will face Keisha Lance Bottoms, the African-American former mayor of Atlanta. She romped in a Democratic primary where 140,000 more Georgians voted than in the tighter GOP tilt.

Voting rights activist Stacey Adams said today, "Although I am glad that Raffensperger did not commit treason (by going along with Trump's demand for more votes), we must remember that on all the issues, he was a total Trump backer."

The Texan Senator who went down to defeat in the primaries yesterday was GOP Sen. John Cornyn, a pro-business conservative locked in a tight runoff race with state Attorney General Ken Paxton. With a week to go before the balloting, Trump endorsed Paxton, a right-wing firebrand, charged with fraud and other legal violations, and impeached by the GOP-run Texas House, but not convicted by the GOP-run Senate. Paxton won yesterday and will face Democrat James Talarico in November.

That race could be a key to whether Trump retains Senate control. Right now, Paxton faces tanking ratings and the fact that he can't redistrict senators out of their chairs.

"As I said on primary night, it doesn't matter who wins this runoff," Talarico said after Trump backed Paxton. "We already know who we're running against: The billionaire mega-donors and their corrupt political system.

"Our movement to take back Texas for working people rises above party politics—because the biggest fight in this country is not left versus right, it's top versus bottom."

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

It is also a policy trend that leads to more offshoring of jobs, more environmental destruction, and less positive international cooperation (on, say, public health or environmental issues).

Here Cuba has a lot to teach as well. Cuba is a coveted international partner, with a record of helping other nations recover from climate disasters and bolstering their health and education systems. Cuban internationalism, based on cooperation and mutual respect, exists symbiotically with its history of anti-imperialist struggle.

In January, the streets of Havana saw two major expressions of Cuban political will, manifesting as strong rejections of U.S. imperial aggression towards themselves and their sister nation, Venezuela. On January 16, half a million Cubans marched down the Malecón, past the U.S. embassy in Havana, in defense of their sovereignty and to honor the 32 Cuban combatants who were killed while completing their bilaterally coordinated service in Caracas.

The sentiments of participants ranged from solemn determination to pain and sadness to anger. One woman raised her middle finger at the U.S. embassy as she walked past, while speeches condemned the criminal actions of the U.S. government in Venezuela and the threats against Cuba.

part 10 of this article will appear in 2 weeks.

¡Manos fuera de Castro! ¡No a la guerra contra Cuba!

By Partido Comunista de los Estados Unidos

El Partido Comunista de los EE. UU. (CPUSA) condena los cargos con motivaciones políticas presentados contra Raúl Castro como un ejemplo más de la tiranía y la hipocresía de los Estados Unidos. Utilizar la fachada de la «justicia» para abordar el derribo de dos aviones que invadieron el espacio aéreo cubano en 1996 con el fin de acosar e intimidar al pueblo cubano —aviones a los que se les advirtió en múltiples ocasiones que se detuvieran y se marcharan— no engaña a nadie. Este acto de un pueblo soberano defendiendo su espacio aéreo no está sujeto a la revisión de los EE. UU. El único propósito de estos cargos es proporcionar una excusa para perseguir la política de cambio de régimen, vigente desde hace décadas, contra la Cuba socialista.

La estrategia imperialista del «Corolario Trump» en todo el hemisferio occidental busca destituir del poder a cualquiera que los EE. UU. no pueda controlar y tomar lo que desee de cualquier nación soberana de la región. Intentar criminalizar a la dirigencia cubana mientras se ignora la violencia y el sufrimiento infligidos por el imperialismo estadounidense no refleja un compromiso con la justicia, sino más bien los actos desesperados de un sistema en crisis que intenta recuperar su dominio global perdido. El mismo gobierno que da lecciones al mundo sobre derechos humanos ha incurrido repetidamente en actos militares de agresión, golpes de Estado respaldados por la CIA, bloqueos comerciales paralizantes y sanciones económicas que han devastado y aterrorizado a los trabajadores de todo el hemisferio y, de hecho, del mundo entero.

El CPUSA entiende que es el pueblo de Cuba, y solo él, quien tiene el derecho de determinar su destino.

Nos solidarizamos inquebrantablemente con ellos y con la Revolución Cubana. Ellos se erigen como un faro de esperanza para las luchas de todos los pueblos alrededor del mundo. Nos unimos a todas las fuerzas progresistas a nivel mundial para exigir la autodeterminación de Cuba, la eliminación inmediata de Cuba de la falsa lista de «Estados patrocinadores del terrorismo» de los EE. UU., el fin del bloqueo y la detención de la acusación espuria y políticamente motivada contra el expresidente de Cuba, Raúl Castro.

Nos solidarizamos con el pueblo cubano y rechazamos los esfuerzos por demonizar a la dirigencia socialista revolucionaria de Cuba, mientras se excusan convenientemente las consecuencias destructivas de la política imperialista estadounidense. Durante generaciones, Cuba ha enfrentado el bloqueo económico, el aislamiento y el acoso constante, simplemente por defender su derecho a la soberanía y por construir una sociedad socialista donde todas las personas tengan derecho a una vida digna.

El CPUSA hace un llamado a los movimientos progresistas, pacifistas y antibélicos para que participen en movimientos regionales por la paz, sindicatos y coaliciones de base contra las crecientes amenazas de guerra dirigidas contra Cuba.

La Revolución Cubana y el pueblo cubano están bajo ataque por parte de los Estados Unidos; debemos exigir: ¡Manos fuera de Castro! ¡No a la guerra contra Cuba! ¡Saquen a Cuba de la lista de Estados patrocinadores del terrorismo y pongan fin al bloqueo estadounidense!

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

May 30, 2026

Unite, Fight, Win: What's at stake in the Midterms

By Joe Sims



Keynote to the CPUSA National Elections Conference, May 23, 2026.

Today we're gathered together to discuss our participation in the upcoming midterms. And clearly, this will be one of the most important conversations we've had in a very long time.

It's important because our goal is to unite the party in the fight against MAGA. It's important because we're also tasked with building the party in the process. And by now, we know that neither of these two goals can be taken for granted.

Not hardly. It's not a secret, comrades, that some of us remain more than a little skeptical of the big "D" Democratic opposition, given their track record, and that's impacted our participation in electoral work in some places. And with regard to party-building, it's also not a secret that our lack of fielding communist candidates greatly reduced our public presence and also our ability to recruit and grow.

However, there is good news on both counts. First, the anti-MAGA coalition is gaining strength daily. No Kings 3 and May Day are cases in point. A mass, democratic, and anti-fascist movement of tens of millions has re-emerged to challenge the MAGA forces.

And importantly, the labor movement is playing a bigger and bigger role in it.

And that is vital because politics in this country cannot be left to the bourgeois politicians and their parties. As we've said many times before, without mass pressure, centrists and liberals will always move to the right. Fortunately, over the last year, the people's movement has vocally expressed its discontent with how many of our elected officials were responding to the MAGA crisis, and it's had an impact. There's no question about that. And in this regard, we say, "Keep the pressure on," because without that pressure, all bets are off.

Now I'm happy to say that there's other good news as well. And that news is that our party is increasingly a visible public force in anti-MAGA movements and coalitions around the country. And we can proudly say our clubs and members have been there from jump street in marches and rallies across the country.

But that's not all: we are also acknowledged members of sponsoring coalitions in a number of major cities, among them DC, LA, Chicago, and NYC.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Unite, Fight, Win: What's at stake in the Midterms

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

And that's big. There's been some red-baiting, but the truth is, it's fallen flat on its face. Anti-communism has less and less of an impact. In fact, we may have even reached a turning point.

Here I want to pause and give special recognition to our younger Party and YCL comrades who are proudly wearing our colors and keeping the red flag flying. They are developing ties with elected officials, union leaders, faith leaders and community organizations. They're inviting them to address our meetings, and these forces are accepting! In one big metropolitan city, council members speak at YCL meetings; in Philly, candidates for Congress pose in front of our bookstore; in DC, they address our club conference. And then there's Brother Fred Redmond's address to the People's World May Day Town Hall.

Comrades, we have to think deeply about what this suggests in terms of shifts in mass thought patterns among our class and people. And what it might portend in terms of the mass growth of the party. If, as they say, politics is the art of the possible, well, a whole lot more might be possible than we have realized so far.

And it is in these circumstances that party clubs and members have taken our convention's call to run for office, and they are running with it and getting elected! In fact, some of our comrades got elected last Tuesday. Again, congratulations. You're doing us proud. And where we're not running ourselves, we're involved in struggle-oriented campaigns, and we're helping win some of those as well. And even when you're not winning outright, you're winning by the example you're setting. Here I want to single out the work of the New York YCL and the party that linked a campaign to save public housing with the upcoming November elections. And comrades, that fight is not over.

Comrades, we have a helluva fight in front of us. The fascist danger is stalking the land. And they're taking big strides. Giant steps really. And as last Tuesday's election demonstrated, they're brooking no opposition. And they've been given carte blanche by the ruling class to do whatever they want. Total immunity. And it's not just the Supreme Court. It's the IRS as well. Not only will there be no further investigation of Trump and his family, but they created a $1.6 billion slush fund of taxpayer money to enable the fascist right to wage legal and political warfare against Trump's enemies. And this includes the January 6th coup plotters.

And then there's the decision by the Supreme Court to cancel African American representation in the Deep South, effectively disenfranchising millions of Black voters.

Some 20 Congressional districts are at stake. With the overturning of the doctrine of disparate impact – addressing the results of discrimination, not intent – from the ruling class' point of view, the civil rights counter-revolution is complete. The right to equal representation is gone; affirmative action is out the door; abortion rights are finished. And mark my words, the right to collective bargaining is next.

Look: make no mistake: this is an attack on the entire working class. When 20 African American seats are lost in the U.S. House, that means 20 fewer votes for the PRO Act, 20 fewer votes for Social Security, and 20 fewer votes for health care or enforcing the Voting Rights Act. That is 20 fewer votes for civil rights for children. And yeah, they got rid of that too with the dismantling of the Department of Education. That's the domestic piece.

And then, of course, there's the lawlessness of MAGA imperialism: its wanton murder of people on the high seas, its kidnapping of presidents, the waging of war against 11 countries, its support for the Gaza genocide, and now the indictment of Raúl Castro.

This is what is at stake in November. You know, a few minutes ago, I spoke about a turning point in anti-communism. If you think about it, that may reflect a deeper turning point in the effort to inflict a decisive defeat on the far right. Everything is pointing in that direction, whether it be local elections, the drop in public approval ratings, or the price of gas. But nothing is guaranteed. We don't even know if the MAGA forces will honor the election results.

And this is why we cannot stand aside. In fact, standing aside is capitulating to fascism. What did the great Dimitrov say? "Those who do not fight fascism in its preparatory stages, in fact, facilitate its growth."

I'm not in the mood to facilitate the KKK and neo-Nazis.
I'm not in the mood to stand by while Black folks are lynched and trans people are murdered.
I am not in the mood to sit on the sidelines while voting rights, union rights, and abortion rights are trampled.
I am just not in the mood. And neither are you.

Let's unite and fight! Let us use the workers' and people's might to finally defeat the MAGA fascist right.

White rule hurts America

By Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove

At the statehouse in Nashville, Tennessee, Republicans acted decisively on May 7 to restore white rule to the former Confederate state.

Emboldened by the Supreme Court's *Callais* decision, Governor Bill Lee called a special session of the Tennessee legislature to redraw their Congressional map in a way that splits Black voters in Memphis across three Congressional districts, diluting their impact in any one district and denying them the right to elect a representative of their choice—or, at least, clearly intending to. In this case of racial gerrymandering, the representative whose seat they aim to steal is a white man, Steve Cohen (TN-9). The map that Republicans passed draws Cohen out of the new 9th Congressional district, but goes out of its way to include the home of Brent Taylor, the Republican state legislator who has already filed to run for the seat.

U.S. Senator Marcia Blackburn, who is running to follow Bill Lee as governor next year, claims in the language that the Supreme Court majority has endorsed that the point of this is to "keep Tennessee a red state." In plain Southern English, that translates as "keep Tennessee in the trusted hands of good white people."

State representative Justin Jones met protestors in the gallery of the Tennessee Capitol and burned a Confederate flag to demonstrate how the majority's move harkened back to worst of the state's secessionist past.

But this reminder that the racist gerrymander is a Confederate tactic should also prompt us to recall that white rule has never been good for most Americans – especially for poor white citizens of the South. When the Confederacy was defeated and formerly enslaved people became US citizens following the ratification of the 13th amendment in 1865, they joined hands with white people in the North and South who were willing to see one another as allies. Within four years after the end of the Civil War, white and Black alliances controlled every state house in the South. Together, they elected new leaders—some white, many formerly enslaved African-Americans. Almost all of the Southern legislatures were controlled by either a predominantly Black alliance or a strong interracial Fusion coalition by the end of the 1860s.

These new fusion coalitions enacted new constitutions that promised a better identity for all Americans. They also built the first public schools and gave all persons a constitutional right to public education—something that to this day has not been done in the federal constitution. In our home state of North Carolina, the new constitution stated that "beneficent provision to the poor, the orphan, and the widow is the first duty of a civilized and Christian state." It also guaranteed labor rights and a right for all workers to the "enjoyment of the fruits of their own labor."



When Black and white people came together as fellow citizens for the first time in American public life, they understood that labor without living wages is another form of slavery—not just for Black people, but for *all* people. They expanded access to the ballot and wrote a new fairness into the criminal justice system.

This is the Southern history that today's advocates of white rule want us to forget.

By playing to racial fears through lies about immigrants, "woke culture," and DEI, the MAGA movement has worked to consolidate power for the billionaires who are the heirs of the South's plantation owners. They have called the South's majority minority districts "racist" in an appeal to white people who have been told that they are "losing their country." Their last great hope is to try to hold onto a Republican majority in Congress by getting rid of every Representative that the Voting Rights Act made possible for Black and Brown communities in the South. But they don't want people to know that this will hurt most of us.

With the help of our friends at the Institute for Policy Studies, we asked after the *Callais* decision what the policy impact would have been for poor and low-income people if the Voting Rights Act had not been there to shield against actions like those of the Tennessee legislature for the past four decades. It's important to note that, until a revision to the VRA in 1982 that made Black-majority districts possible, Black voters from the South were not able to elect representatives of their choice. So we've really only experienced about four decades of Black voters in the South having representation in the US Congress. In every case, those districts elected Democrats to represent them.

Since those members came to Congress, there have only been three two-year periods when Democrats controlled the White House, Senate, and House: 1993-1994 under Clinton; 2009-2010 under Obama; and 2021-2022 under Biden.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

In the first two, the Democratic majority in the House was enormous – 258 Democrats to 176 Republicans in the 103rd Congress under Clinton; and 257 Democrats to 178 Republicans in the 111th Congress under Obama. Most of the legislation that passed both of those Congresses passed by a margin greater than the number of seats that Southern legislatures plan to restore to white rule. But the single largest legislative achievement of the 111th Congress – the Affordable Care Act, which expanded access to healthcare to more than 45 million Americans – passed by a vote of 219 to 212 in the House of Representatives. Without representatives of Black voters from the South, there would be no ACA.

The 117th Congress, elected during the COVID crisis along with Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, passed more legislation to benefit poor and working people than any Congress since the 1970s. None of those bills could have passed without the Representatives Black voters sent to the 117th Congress from the South. They helped pass the American Rescue Plan that provided $1.9 trillion in economic relief, including direct cash payments to poor and working people. They cast decisive votes for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which put $1.2 trillion into infrastructure improvements, including roads, bridges, and broadband, and added stipulations that workers get paid living wages and contractors have fair access to bidding. Without them, the 117th Congress could not have passed the Inflation Reduction Act, which further expanded access to healthcare and focused on reducing healthcare costs and addressing climate change, with significant investments in clean energy.

We protested and even when to jail during the 117th Congress because its leadership, particularly in the Senate, was not willing to do nearly enough with the power they had at that time – including taking action to defend voting rights when it was clear to anyone paying attention what the Supreme Court and Southern legislatures intended to do.

But it is also true that the good they did with the votes of members elected by Black voters in the South made a real difference for tens of millions of Americans. Those people have felt over the past year what it means for the social safety net to be ripped out from under them. We know the difference that representation makes, and we know it impacts all of us.

This is why our response to the assertion of white rule in the South must be a movement of Black, white, brown, Asian, and Native people from all walks of life coming together to build a new electorate that will overwhelm MAGA's efforts to subvert the will of the people. They would not be fighting this hard to gerrymander every last district they think they possibly can if they did not know that the overwhelming majority of Americans oppose them. They only have power now because, for far too long, more than a third of the electorate hasn't even been engaged in what we call "historic turnout" elections.

We've talked to poor and marginalized voters across America, and they have told us why they don't participate: no one speaks to them. They are not wrong. Both parties have ignored poor people for far too long. But our faith teaches us that the stones that have been rejected must be the chief cornerstone of a reconstruction effort. We must build a movement that lifts the voices of everyone who's hurting because of the policies that white rule enables – policies that take from the poor, extract from the land, wage wars of choice to benefit billionaires, and harm immigrants and vulnerable neighbors. If everyone who's been harmed by the policies of the 119th Congress can join hands with a moral resistance and push together for representatives who will stand up to the abuse of power, then real accountability is coming in 2027. And a Third Reconstruction is in reach when the 121st Congress convenes in 2029.

It won't happen because heroes ride in to save us. It will happen when we build a movement to demand it. That's work that each of us can do today, wherever we are – and every day until we win the government we want for every child of God.

Canadian labor movement declares its solidarity with Cuba

By Cam Scott

WINNIPEG, Manitoba—Canada's unions spoke as one at the recently concluded 31st convention of the Canadian Labour Congress, voting almost unanimously in support of an emergency resolution in solidarity with Cuba.

The resolution passed with Deputy Head of Mission of the Cuban Embassy in Canada, Dany Tur de la Concepción, in the room to hear the proceedings as chants of "¡Cuba Sí, bloqueo no!" rose from the floor.

Compiling language from several resolutions submitted from across the country, the CLC resolved to demand immediate action from the Canadian government to support the people of Cuba through solidarity aid, to push for an end to the ongoing U.S. blockade, and to publicly affirm Canada's commitment to "the principles of sovereignty, non-intervention, self-determination of peoples and human rights."



Beyond these lobbying commitments, the CLC also committed to deepen its affiliates' practical working relationships with the Cuban people through pertinent bodies on the island and in Canada. These include the Workers' Central Union of Cuba (CTC) and the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC), which comprises over two dozen member groups across Canada and works with the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) on its political and material aid campaigns.

Cuba's salutary role in the world was clear from the debate, where delegates spoke of Cuba's medical assistance to the Caribbean and beyond. Multiple speakers were freshly returned from labor brigades to the island, where Canadian trade unionists have witnessed firsthand what a society outside the profit system can accomplish for itself, even under decades of economic pressure.

To this end, delegates spoke powerfully against Donald Trump's new sanctions and the unfinished anti-Cuba vendetta of the U.S. right, pledging tens of thousands of dollars to the CNC's ongoing material aid campaigns from the convention floor.

No war on Cuba

This emergency resolution builds on a number of high-profile campaigns for Cuba. On May 8, Member of Parliament Alexandre Boulerice presented a parliamentary petition initiated by the Canadian Network on Cuba to the House of Commons. At present, the Canadian government has one month to respond to the more than 12,500 signatories who have called on Ottawa to refuse participation in military and economic aggression against Latin America, reaffirm the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, and actively oppose the U.S. blockade of Cuba.

The CNC originated these demands against the backdrop of the illegal kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and First Lady Cilia Flores on Jan. 3. But after Trump's executive order of Jan. 29 declaring Cuba "an unusual and extraordinary threat" and preventing any fuel from reaching the island, the petition quickly became a tool for urgent solidarity with the Cuban people under renewed threat.

These sequences are closely related, and one predicts the other.

By all accounts, the U.S. continues to entertain the idea of a military operation against Cuba, and as the blockade pushes Cubans to the brink, U.S. Sec. of State Marco Rubio and his hawkish conspirators continue to search for the right pretense. Last week, for example, the U.S. Department of Justice moved to indict former President Raúl Castro for his involvement in the 1996 downing of two planes associated with the anti-Cuban terrorist group Brothers to the Rescue.

Not only did this event take place 30 years ago, but General Puente of the Cuban Air Defense Force and the pilots responsible were already indicted without extradition in 2003. If anything, the arbitrariness and outdatedness of the case against the 94-year-old Castro only speaks to the blamelessness of Cuba on the world stage. But Trump and Rubio's eagerness to duplicate their Venezuelan heist in Cuba still requires a tenuously legal target.

As this proceeds, Axios has claimed that 300 Cuban drones are hovering over the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay, preparing to attack at any moment. Any competent student of the region knows that the base at Guantánamo is in fact an illegal U.S. occupation of Cuban soil, for which the revolutionary government has refused a modest rent since 1959. Even so, Cuba has largely left the base alone, and these scarcely believable stories of Cuban aggression clearly intend to pave the way for a military operation or outright invasion.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney has so far had a non-response to U.S. aggression in both Venezuela and Iran, and more importantly, has been deafeningly silent on Trump's collective punishment of the Cuban people. As Canadian travel advisories and cancelled flights to Cuba conspire to deprive the island of badly needed currency and concerned eyewitnesses, it's fair to say that the Canadian government is passively participating in the heightened U.S. blockade.

And while Canadian companies like Sherritt corporation withdraw from Cuba under threat of new sanctions, Carney's meek endorsement of the U.S. plan for Cuba appears more cowardly still.

Unconditional defense

The Canadian government continues to neglect the situation of the Cuban people. But this indifference cannot be imputed to the working class, here or anywhere. The global trade union movement has long stood with Cuba, including Canada's trade unions and their international counterparts.

In a February statement, the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (to which the CLC affiliates) clearly identified Trump's exaggerations of the Cuban "threat" as a maneuver to justify "an illegal naval siege (and to impose) new sanctions against those countries or companies that trade oil and other energy derivatives with the island."

Not only did the TUCA name access to energy as a fundamental human right; its statement was equally clear that aid cannot be used to extort changes in a country's political system.

While the CLC offers a stage for the urgent solidarity Cuba needs, the resolution at the convention still lacks this fundamental clarity. From now on, every overture of friendship and each container of aid, solidarity activists say, must be accompanied by unconditional support for Cuba's sovereignty and backed by comprehensive opposition to U.S. imperialism.

Trump's redistricting wars are an attack on every worker

By C. J. Atkins

The electoral districts being redrawn across America right now aren't just random lines on state maps. They're blueprints for a Congress that answers to no one—certainly not to working people, of any color.

It started in Texas last summer, when Donald Trump ordered Gov. Greg Abbott to redraw the state's congressional districts mid-decade, outside the normal post-census cycle, with the explicit goal of flipping five House seats to the Republican Party. Texas dutifully complied.

A federal court later ruled the new maps an illegal racial gerrymander, finding that Republican mapmakers targeted Black and Latino communities specifically to dilute their political power. The Supreme Court, over that ruling's objections, let the maps move forward anyway.

Then the dominoes fell.

Missouri followed. After that, North Carolina. Florida's Ron DeSantis pushed through maps that could reduce Democratic House seats in that state from eight to four. Tennessee's GOP-controlled legislature split majority-Black Memphis into three pieces, stretching the fragments into rural Republican territory—and when two Black lawmakers showed up to object, they were physically removed from the hearing room. In South Carolina, the governor called a special session just to obliterate the district of a prominent Black Democratic congressman.

This is, as *People's World* has reported, the fastest rollback of Black representation since the end of Reconstruction. The racial targeting is real, it is documented in court findings, and it is consistent with a century-long tradition of using the mechanics of democracy to suppress the political power of Black America. That history cannot be softened. When the Brennan Center's Michael Waldman warns that these maps will "bleach the halls of Congress, state legislatures, and city councils," he is describing what can only be called a white supremacist project.

But that framing, as true as it is, is also incomplete. And the incompleteness serves the people engineering these maps just fine.

Here's what often gets lost in the coverage: When a progressive congressional seat disappears—whether the representative who held it was Black, Latino, white, or anything else—legislation dies with it. Not eventually, not theoretically. Now.

Every seat that flips means fewer votes for raising the federal minimum wage.



Fewer votes for the PRO Act, which would be the most significant expansion of workers' right to organize in decades. Fewer votes for student debt relief, for expanding ACA subsidies, for protecting Medicaid, for infrastructure funding that creates union jobs.

It also means more votes for privatizing Social Security. More votes for eliminating prevailing wage requirements on federal projects. More votes for eliminating student aid (what's left of it). More votes for making abortion illegal nationwide and for prosecuting women. More votes to eliminate marriage equality. More votes for eliminating minimum wage.

The House is currently divided 218-212 with five vacancies, three of them Democratic-held. It's a margin so thin that a handful of flipped seats, courtesy of rigged maps, could lock in a Republican supermajority capable of passing anything and blocking everything.

That means the white factory worker in rural Tennessee, already watching his union contract get clawed back, loses a vote in Washington. The white nurse in suburban Ohio fighting for safe staffing ratios loses a vote. The white retiree in Pennsylvania depending on Medicare—she loses a vote, too. Gerrymandering is a targeted weapon, but the shrapnel hits everybody.

This is, at bottom, a business decision by capital. The donor class that funds Republican redistricting efforts—the Chamber of Commerce money, the corporate PACs, the billionaires who showed up to celebrate Trump's tax cuts—understand exactly what they are buying. A locked-in congressional majority isn't just about what the media calls "cultural grievance politics" or "rolling back DEI."

It's about making sure that labor law stays weak, that health care remains tied to employment, that the minimum wage never catches up with inflation, and that tax cuts for corporations and the super wealthy never get reversed.

Stoking racial division among working people is how you keep them from noticing they have common interests. The gerrymander is just the latest, most surgical version of a very old strategy.

None of this is abstract. In Missouri, where Republicans gerrymandered Kansas City's Black community out of representation, over 300,000 people—union members, churchgoers, community organizers—signed petitions demanding the Republicans' new maps be put to a public referendum. The coalition is multiracial and working-class, not because anyone issued a diversity mandate, but because the people being hurt are multiracial and working-class.

Missouri's state Secretary of State is sitting on those signatures to please the man who occupies the White House, and the fight to force a referendum continues in court. This is what solidarity in action looks like, and also what obstruction in action looks like.

In California, voters overwhelmingly passed a remap that shifted five GOP seats there to the Democrats. Virginia voters narrowly approved a shift of four, but the Republican majority on the state Supreme Court overruled them.

The Redistricting Reform Act of 2025, introduced by Sen. Alex Padilla and Rep. Zoe Lofgren, would ban mid-decade redistricting nationwide and require independent commissions in every state. It has no chance of passing the current Senate, which is dominated by the GOP. But that doesn't mean it's irrelevant; it becomes the standard to demand, the legislation to organize around, the baseline for what a 2027 Congress could do with a different majority.

So, what can people do right now, beyond showing up for the midterm elections in November?

Get into your state legislature fight. Redistricting is a state-level process, which means state legislative races matter enormously. Contact your state legislators—Republican or Democrat—and register your opposition to mid-decade gerrymandering on the record.

Support the legal fights. Organizations like the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the Brennan Center for Justice, the ACLU, and the Campaign Legal Center are in court right now challenging illegal maps. These fights need resources.

Join or support signature-gathering campaigns. The Missouri "People Not Politicians" model works—when it isn't being sabotaged by partisan officials. If your state has a ballot initiative or referendum mechanism, use it.

Talk to the white workers in your life about this. Not with a lecture. With the practical question: Do you want a Congress that can raise your wages and protect your health care, or not? Because the maps are being drawn to make sure that such a Congress is never elected.

The people drawing these lines are counting on one thing above all else: that the Black and Latino workers and the white workers who are also losing representation will never see themselves as being in the same fight. But that bet has failed before—in the union halls of the 1930s, in the civil rights coalitions of the 1960s, in the multiracial labor campaigns winning living wage fights today.

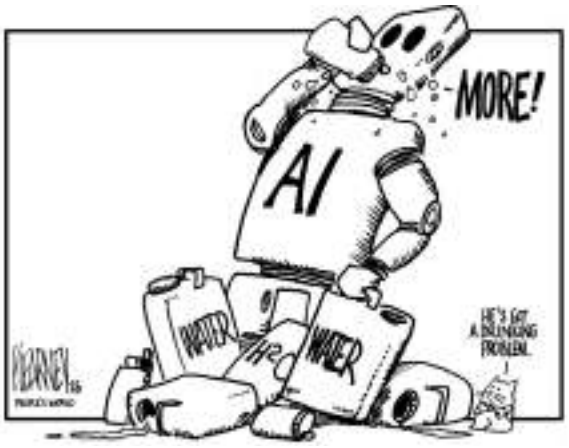
When working people organize across racial lines around shared interests, they can win.

By Greg Kearney

Sh*thole: Forest Service cuts will impact facility maintenance



AI is about to collide with the West's water crisis



Voucher programs hurt rural schools



The need for Supreme Court reform is clearer than ever

By Paul Gordon



To preserve our democracy, we must reform the Supreme Court.

In its recent *Louisiana v. Callais* decision, the Court's Republican majority completed its years-long campaign to neuter the Voting Rights Act. Not coincidentally, they dramatically tilted the electoral playing field in Republicans' favor.

The case came in the context of drawing congressional districts. The Court "interpreted" the Voting Rights Act to let legislators openly target minority communities and dilute their political influence if they do it for "partisan" reasons.

Before the ink was dry, Republican politicians in Southern states went into action. In Louisiana and Alabama, they cancelled congressional primary elections that had already started so that they could redraw the lines and get rid of majority-Black congressional districts. Tennessee split up the state's only majority-Black congressional district (Memphis).

South Carolina also held a special session to target that state's Black voters in time for this year's midterm elections. Though the effort ultimately didn't succeed, the lead sponsor openly admitted that the purpose was to ensure that national Republicans retain their majority in the House of Representatives.

The Callais decision was a political gift to Donald Trump, whose popularity is plummeting.

Before Callais, political observers expected Trump's party to lose the House of Representatives.

Republicans still appear likely to do poorly in the midterm elections. But now, it could take a much larger supermajority of Americans for the congressional results to reflect the will of the people and actually vote them out of power.

It gets worse. Callais empowers Republicans to decimate Black representation and undermine democracy in state legislatures, city councils, and school boards, not just Congress.

The justices have undermined decades of work to enfranchise people who had been locked out of power.

This is a red-alert moment for our democracy. And it goes far beyond this latest ruling.

This Court let corporations spend unlimited money buying our elections. They took away women's access to safe abortion care. They let big companies force you to sign away your right to sue them when they cheat you or find other ways to violate your legal rights. They made it harder for working people to organize for better wages and benefits.

Again and again, this Court has given the most powerful people in our country even more power over the rest of us. And they make it harder for us to do anything about it. The far-right majority has broken our democracy so their friends and allies can take money and power from us with impunity.

Here are three ways to fight back.

Amazingly, the most powerful federal court in the land is the only one without a binding code of ethics. So Justice Alito can fly a flag associated with Trump's "stop the steal" movement after the 2021 insurrection, then sit on cases involving Trump's role in that insurrection. And Clarence Thomas can get away with voting for Trump's position in January 6 cases even though his wife Ginni had urged Trump not to concede the 2020 election.

Congress should make the justices adopt a binding code of ethics.

Second, having justices routinely stay in office for decades is not what the nation's founders intended. Some presidents don't appoint any justices during a four-year term, while others appoint two or three. Too much depends on random events such as an unexpected death, or carefully timed retirements to ensure replacement by a like-minded justice.

The Court has become wildly imbalanced. The Constitution lets Congress set term limits for justices. It should do so.

Finally, the next time there is a pro-democracy president, Congress should expand the number of justices. Otherwise, no law that Congress passes to protect our rights is safe from being neutered or completely struck down by the current rogue Supreme Court majority.

Because ultimately, the power in this country belongs to us.

Final Fund Drive push: Help People's World over the line

By John Wojcik



This is an urgent proposal for how we can deal with both the national and international emergencies our people are facing.

Never before have we realized, as much as we have this week, the power of the corrupt criminal gang that is running this nation from the White House. They have focused their fire on every single manifestation of democracy that they can get their hands on.

Human rights, voting rights, working-class rights, immigrant rights, every single form of civil rights and more are being thrown into the trash pile so they can increase their profits and the profits of the billionaires backing them.

This cannot stand if we are to survive.

On the world scale, the people in the White House are orchestrating war and international violence that threatens to plunge the world into an unimaginable situation.

If they are not stopped, we will end up with no right to a union, no right to collectively bargain for our wages and livelihoods, no health care, no Social Security, and with a dismal world of poverty for the majority here at home. What the planet Earth itself will suffer is not something we even want to think about.

Yet people like Trump and his enablers have been defeated before, and they can be defeated again. That is where you, the most loyal readers of *People's World* come in. Please, in these last days of our annual find drive, make just one more contribution (or become a monthly sustainer) to get us to our goal of $140,000. We're almost over the line, and you can get us there.

It is the most concrete thing you can do in the next few days to bring an end to the madness orchestrated by the White House.

You can make this country and this world a better place by doing so. Thank you for everything you have done so far, and thank you for what you do in these last days of our fund drive.

Make this country your country! Make this world your world!

RAPID RESPONSE: Shut down the detention centers

By People's World



Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand that ICE detention centers be shut down and no further funding for ICE and border patrol be allocated. The illegal denial of access to elected officials for oversight at Delaney Hall, a private for-profit mass detention center in Newark, NJ, is an alarming abuse of power. Growing reports of inhumane conditions imposed at these prisons on immigrants with no criminal records is unacceptable and requires they be closed.

Vote NO on the $71 billion for ICE and CBP in the reconciliation bill under consideration. Instead, allocate those funds to the basic needs of working-class and immigrant communities to benefit everyone.

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. Please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

LABOR NEWS

Africa: Continental forum declares solidarity with Cuba

By CPUSA International Department

The African Left Networking Forum, convened by the South African Communist Party (SACP) on March 13, adopted a powerful statement condemning the U.S. inclusion of Cuba on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list. The statement, signed by dozens of organizations including the CPUSA at the invitation of the SACP, recalled Cuba's "gallant historic mark" on the African continent, from its decisive role in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale that broke the back of the apartheid South African Defence Force to its ongoing medical brigades and educational programs.

"Today, in Cuba's hour of need, we the people of Africa embrace our historic Internationalist duty to stand firmly shoulder-to-shoulder with the people of Cuba and its government against the war mongering of the United States," the statement reads. The forum called on African governments to strengthen diplomatic and economic cooperation with Cuba, urged the African Union to provide tangible support, and demanded the immediate lifting of the illegal blockade. The signatories further reaffirmed their solidarity with the people of Palestine, Sudan, Venezuela, and Iran, declaring: "All those who profess to be democrats are equally bound to do likewise."

France: Communist Party holds ground against far-right in municipal elections

The French Communist Party (PCF) fended off challenges from the far-right Rassemblement National (National Rally) in the first round of municipal elections on March 15, with leader Fabien Roussel winning outright in the working-class industrial town of Saint-Amand-les-Eaux. Running on a platform of decent wages, accessible public services, and affordable housing, Roussel defeated his neofascist opponent 51% to 26%. Communist mayoral candidates won over 200 first-round victories across the country.

The elections revealed a fractured political landscape, with the far-right making gains in rural areas but hitting an urban ceiling. Roussel warned that low voter turnout is a symptom of a "sick democracy" and called for the broadest possible popular gatherings against the far-right and against the liberal policies of President Emmanuel Macron.

Los Premios Better World de People's World honran a líderes de la clase trabajadora

Por Jacob Buckner

NUEVA YORK—El 16 de mayo, *People's World* celebró sus premios anuales Better World Awards, en los que se honra a líderes activistas que han contribuido al movimiento por el cambio social. Esta ceremonia, en la que participaron músicos, organizadores y organizaciones comprometidos con el cambio social, tuvo lugar en el Winston Unity Center. Mientras la administración Trump continúa amenazando a las comunidades de la clase trabajadora tanto dentro como fuera del país y las fuerzas reaccionarias siguen atacando nuestros derechos fundamentales, estos líderes han inspirado la continuación de nuestro trabajo. Representan ejemplos dentro de la clase trabajadora de personas que luchan por un mundo nuevo.

Este año, los homenajeados de los Better World Awards fueron cinco personas y un grupo:

Leslie Cagan, una activista legendaria, organizadora socialista y feminista. Durante muchos años fue la coordinadora nacional de United for Peace and Justice y ex copresidenta de Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism.

El miembro del Concejo Municipal Chris Marte, quien ha continuado trabajando en favor de los intereses de la comunidad, incluida la organización contra el sistema de privatización RAD/PACT.

Hannah Stauss, codirectora de Hands Off NYC. Esta campaña, que representa a más de 250 grupos comunitarios de base, sindicatos, organizaciones sin fines de lucro y líderes religiosos, lleva a cabo capacitaciones sobre el conocimiento de los derechos, protestas masivas y coaliciones comunitarias para fortalecer a las comunidades frente a la amenaza del fascismo.

Tamika Mallory es la cofundadora de Until Freedom, una organización interseccional de justicia social que aborda la injusticia racial sistémica. Con Until Freedom, Tamika ha liderado esfuerzos para luchar por la justicia para Atatiana Jefferson, George Floyd y Breonna Taylor, junto con otras víctimas de la violencia policial y la opresión.

La Coalición Stop FEC Demolition ha estado luchando para detener la demolición de las viviendas de NYCHA Fulton y Chelsea Elliott, ubicadas en Chelsea, Nueva York. Esta coalición ha logrado enfatizar la importancia de financiar y mantener las viviendas de NYCHA, al mismo tiempo que amplía su coalición en la lucha por todos los neoyorquinos de clase trabajadora.

El evento concluyó con un discurso de Leslie Cagan, quien infundió confianza en la clase trabajadora, enfatizando que el trabajo aún debe ser realizado por personas comprometidas a continuarlo. Los Premios Better World honran a estos organizadores. Este premio reconoce a quienes desean construir una sociedad basada en los intereses de la gente, y no en los intereses del lucro.

People's World is a voice for progressive change and socialism in the United States. It provides news and analysis of, by, and for the labor and democratic movements to our readers across the country and around the world.
Visit the daily paper on the web at peoplesworld.org, or scan QR code.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

June 06, 2026

Getting Ready for the Midterms

By Joelle Fishman

Editor's Note: Below is the summary of CPUSA Elections Conference by Joelle Fishman, Chair of the Political Action Commission.

Thank you so much to the panelists and moderators on behalf of the entire conference committee and the Political Action Commission for all the inspiring stories and experiences that we can draw lessons from and build upon in the work of our own clubs across the country.

Thank you to the tech crew and the interpreters who made this presentation possible.

And thank you to our national co-chair Joe Sims for framing the political moment we are in and the necessity and possibility for a much larger Communist Party as we build unity in this moment for multiracial democracy, equality, and peace.

The stories we have heard on each panel underscore the reality that when we organize on the basis of working class unity and solidarity, and when we fight together, we win together.

The stories show that as scary and horrific as these times are, the rising resistance and growing working class consciousness as capitalism is exposed, give us hope and strength.

165 days of struggle until the midterm elections

It is 165 days until the midterm elections. Every working class and democratic gain we've ever won and are fighting to expand is on the line. Our right to vote and have representation, the right to health care, housing, education, Social Security and a sustainable environment. The right to a job with a union. The right to protest and stop the wars and deportations. These issues have majority support.

MAGA candidates have lost all year in special elections. They know they stand to lose ground in November so they are trying to steal the election.



We have 165 days to turn the tide and end white supremacist MAGA control of Congress! To elect working class champions locally, tax the rich on the ballot in California and Michigan! And lay the basis for bigger demands and victories including across the South as the movement for voting rights rises on the shoulders of the freedom fighters who have gone before.

Last Saturday thousands came to Alabama and launched Freedom Summer and Freedom Fall to involve the entire nation.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Getting Ready for the Midterms

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
The attack on voting rights and representation in the South for Black people and people of color is an attack on all voters everywhere.

It is an attack on our ability as the entire working class to win funding for survival needs not billionaire greed and to advance toward socialism.

Historic battle demands historic voter turnout
This historic battle requires a historic voter turnout for dignity, respect and justice. The elections are not the end, they are the beginning.

Today we launch our CPUSA 165-day Solidarity Summer pledge campaign to engage our entire Party membership and allies in this epic fight.

Let's plan out local Solidarity Summer boots on the ground campaigns to talk with the people, for voter registration in club concentration areas, participation in labor walks, door knocks, phone calling, postcard writing, tabling, mass actions, People's World distributions and more to Repel Fascism and Build for Our Future. As Joe said, anything less is capitulation.

We carry with us the passion and determination that no one should go hungry or without and that everyone should have the right to equal representation and a full and productive life free from exploitation, racism and war. We carry with us our socialist vision and our understanding that the broad democratic people's front we are building is part of getting there.

The mission
Our mission in this conference is to begin to map out community by community, workplace by workplace, how we are going to help bring the growing resistance from the streets to the polls in the biggest election turnout ever. And run more candidates of our own.

Leading up to today have been readings and discussions and door knocking and community outreach.

Congratulations to the 35 gatherings across the country. The crescendo of this virtual program is the in-person discussions each of our gatherings will have. The ideas that come forward will inform the decision-making of our leadership bodies.

Every community has its own political dynamics, election rules, and local issues.

But we are all connected in our collective effort to turn back MAGA devastation at every level of government and bring forward a bold working class agenda.

Vote Out MAGA Resources packet
You should have before you the Vote Out MAGA Resources packet to help in your deliberations. It includes links on voter suppression and defending the right to vote; links on Grassroots Organizing including a chart of pro-worker candidates and ballot questions; a section on CPUSA candidate guidelines and campaigns; and a section with materials for distribution including how to order the 2026 bilingual print edition of Immigration Myths v Facts (at cpusa.org) and the book Lessons from Revolutionary Organizing (at International Publishers).

Questions for participant discussion
All 35 gatherings will discuss the same three questions to help develop concrete plans for the next 165 days. They are:

1. What are highlights from the panel discussions that relate to your work and experience?

2. What ideas do you have about helping clubs concentrate in specific neighborhoods or election districts that will continue after the election? What labor and community organizations do you want to collaborate with? What election campaigns and ballot initiatives are priorities to defeat MAGA and build a working class agenda?

3. What ideas do you have about how to work in such a way that lays the groundwork for more Communists to run for public office with coalition support?

Please ask someone at your gathering to take a few notes and send back any of the main ideas from your discussion so the Political Action Commission can put them all together.

Educate, mobilize, organize
I am confident we are up to the challenge to educate, organize and mobilize the historic vote that can begin to turn the tide if we use every organizing toolbox and refuse to be divided or discouraged or diminished. Let's move forward with pride, determination and all boots on the ground, with confidence in our Party and the working class. Let's join with our labor and community allies to register and turn out every voter in their own interests. And then keep the movement going and growing.

From the Streets to the Polls! Si Se Puede! Yes We Can!

Taxpayers robbed: Critics call Trump's $1.8B 'settlement' with IRS a fraudulent 'sham'

By Chauncey K. Robinson



WASHINGTON—The Justice Department, under President Donald Trump, has recently announced that it is establishing a $1.776 billion "Anti-Weaponization Fund" as part of a settlement with Trump related to the dismissal of his $10 billion lawsuit against the IRS over his leaked tax returns.

If that sentence sounds confusing to you, or rather, like the president sued himself to then settle with himself to give himself and allies billions of taxpayer dollars, then you are not alone. Critics, including government officials and legal professionals, are railing against the DOJ's move, calling the nearly $1.8 billion a "slush fund" aimed at lining the pockets of Trump's allies, including those who attacked the Capitol building on Jan. 6, 2021.

An invalid lawsuit?

In a case filed in Miami federal court in early January, Trump, his two eldest sons, and his family business sued the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Treasury Department over alleged leaks by former government employee Charles "Chaz" Littlejohn in 2019 and 2020 of their confidential tax information. The Trumps sought $10 billion in damages.

After filing the lawsuit, a spokesperson for the Trump family claimed that it was an effort by the president to continue "to hold those who wrong America and Americans accountable." Littlejohn is already serving a five-year sentence after having pleaded guilty in 2023 to the act.

A recent *New York Times* article reveals that several IRS officials wrote a 25-page memo outlining how to fight Trump's suit, but these defense strategies were not implemented. Instead, it has been reported that Trump will voluntarily withdraw his $10 billion suit "in exchange" for a settlement that includes the creation of a nearly $1.8 billion fund.

But the term "settlement" is facing pushback from critics, who argue that a settlement can only be concluded if a case actually reaches a court.

That did not occur, as this agreement between Trump and his own DOJ was finalized before the administration needed to meet the court deadline for proving the case against the IRS should actually be heard.

Many of these same legal experts and critics assert that had the Trump administration brought its IRS case to court, it would have been dismissed by U.S. District Judge Kathleen Williams, who was set to hear it.

In April, Williams questioned the validity of the initial suit, saying that the case can stand only if there is "adverseness" between the parties. As in, if Trump is in control of both the DOJ and the IRS, can they really be seen as two opposing parties? Williams wrote that Trump "is the sitting president and his named adversaries are entities whose decisions are subject to his direction." It was with this questioning that Williams set a May 20 deadline for both parties to explain why the case should be heard. Instead of meeting that deadline and possibly proceeding to a May 27 hearing, Trump and his DOJ reached a "settlement."

A possible blank check for Trump allies

The DOJ, under Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche—Trump's former criminal defense lawyer—announced that the fund was a "systemic process to hear and redress claims of others who suffered weaponization and lawfare" from the government. The settlement agreement says that the Anti-Weaponization Fund shall "have the power to issue formal apologies" and "monetary relief" to claimants.

Blanche would later say that those applying for compensation could be anyone and not just those seeking retribution from the Biden administration. The commission to decide who will receive these payouts would be composed of five members: four chosen by Blanche and one chosen by Blanche in consultation with Congress.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

Also included in this agreement is an amendment added by Blanche that the Defendants (the IRS and the U.S. Treasury), along with the United States, are "FOREVER BARRED" and "PRECLUDED" (his capitalization) from prosecuting and pursuing any charges against Trump, his family, and his businesses related to all tax filings or audits that precede the agreement.

With creation of the fund, focus has fallen on Jan. 6 rioters who stormed the Capitol in 2021 and the money they may be compensated for breaking the law. During the Biden administration, many of the rioters were tried and convicted for their crimes. Yet, when Trump took office, he pardoned a majority of them, maintaining the narrative that they were peaceful protestors.

The question has now emerged whether these same rioters will be paid for committing those acts with taxpayer dollars at the same moment that millions of Americans face an affordability crisis.

During his recent testimony before the Senate Appropriations Committee, when asked about Jan. 6 rioters receiving taxpayer dollars, Blanche claimed that while anyone can apply, "Does it mean they're going to get money? No." But Jan. 6 rioters and their lawyers are telling a different story. NBC News reports that two lawyers representing more than 400 Jan. 6 participants said they expected their clients to apply for the fund rather than continue with litigation.

Vice President JD Vance, during a press conference defending the fund, claimed that Jan. 6 rioters aren't shown enough compassion. "You know who never, ever gets an ounce of sympathy when it comes to that disproportionate sentencing is people who voted for Donald Trump and participated in the January 6 protests," Vance said.

Aside from the rioters, other Trump allies are coming out of the woodwork to claim millions of dollars for what they allege was persecution by the government.

Longtime Trump ally Michael Caputo has filed the first known claim for the fund. Caputo, who worked at the Department of Health and Human Services during Trump's first term, is seeking $2.7 million. He claims he was the target of an FBI investigation known as "Crossfire Hurricane" that looked into whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Russia to interfere with the 2016 presidential election. Caputo claims that "the machinery of government was clearly politically weaponized against my family from July 2016 to December 2025."

Other Trump allies, like MyPillow CEO—and election denier—Mike Lindell, are also considering making claims.

"Real fraud coming from the White House"

The settlement and, by extension, the Anti-Weaponization Fund have sparked resistance both in and out of court.

Saying that it "raises the specter of corruption unparalleled in American history," a group of 93 House Democrats filed an amicus brief in federal court in the Southern District of Florida to block the fund's creation.

Joe Sims, political analyst and Co-Chair of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA), asserted that "Trump and MAGA have been given carte blanche by the ruling class to do whatever they want. Total immunity. And it's not just the Supreme Court. It's the IRS as well. Not only will there be no further investigation but they created a $1.8 billion slush fund of taxpayer money to enable fascists to wage legal and political warfare against Trump's enemies. And this includes, the January 6 coup plotters. You can't make this stuff up!"

Former Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn and Metropolitan Police Department Officer Daniel Hodges, who were present during the Jan. 6 attack and suffered injuries at the hands of rioters, filed a lawsuit on May 20 aiming to halt the fund. Their lawsuit argues that the fund violates the 14th Amendment's prohibition on use of federal money to "pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States." The suit also asserts that the DOJ has no legal authority to create the fund in the first place.

Rep. Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee, moved to subpoena individuals involved in the creation of Trump's $1.8 billion taxpayer-funded "slush fund" this week. He also introduced the "No Taxpayer-Funded 5 Settlement Slush Funds Act of 2026."

In his opening remarks, Raskin gave a scathing rebuke of the fund and the Trump DOJ settlement, calling it a "fraud" that "will be used to reward Trump's friends, lieutenants, and foot soldiers." Pointing to the official role of Congress, the representative noted that "Trump doesn't establish federal programs and then authorize and appropriate money for them. We do. That is the power of the purse, which belongs exclusively to Congress.

"The Acting Attorney General and everybody who thinks they are getting a big jackpot payoff this week should understand any such payment to people who participated in Trump's insurrection on January 6, for which he was impeached for inciting by the House of Representatives, is illegal and void, meaning that this money belongs to the taxpayers of America, the people of the United States, and we will get that money back."

He also declared, that "the real fraud is coming from the White House."

Who pays?

This agreement between Trump and his DOJ turns a personal "settlement" for Trump into a government program that is not obligated to disclose to the public information about who will get money or where the funds will go. This is despite it being funded by the very public it is not required to report to. The decisions of Blanche's five-member commission reportedly cannot be appealed or challenged in court, either.

And while Trump has publicly claimed he had no part in creating the fund, many may find that hard to believe, given that the department that created it is under his leadership. Some have argued that Trump was allowed to assume the roles of plaintiff, defendant, and arbitrator in his own case, calling into question the very system of checks and balances that is supposed to be at the heart of democracy.

The news of this fund also comes at a time when the cost of living for working people is on the rise—including the high cost at the gas pump related to the war on Iran, for which Trump has given no clear end date. So, while many Trump allies may be on their way to receiving large payouts, working-class people will seemingly be the ones footing the bill, despite struggling to pay their own.

Justices rule for union and in favor of trans student rights

By Mark Gruenberg



AUBURN, Calif.—A small National Education Association union local, the Placer County (Calif.) Teachers Association (PCTA), won a big deal pro-trans rights ruling at the U.S. Supreme Court on June 1. It triumphed against a local school board that demanded teachers "out" trans kids.

Without comment, the justices denied the appeal of the Rocklin Unified School District board, backed by far-right groups, defending its decision to force teachers to out trans kids to their parents. Placer County is a 400,000-person mostly rural county, part of the greater Sacramento Metro Area, but stretching all the way to Lake Tahoe.

The PCTA had challenged the ruling and lost, 4-1, the day after a contentious four-hour school board hearing in September 2023 on the outing rule. The board's four Republicans voted to out the trans kids. The one independent, moderate Michelle Sutherland, voted "no" and said her colleagues engaged in "fringe political aims."

"You should be ashamed for even discussing this policy," local union President Travis Mougeotte told the school board at the evening hearing, which stretched until 12:15 a.m., the Fresno Bee reported. Most of the speakers vigorously opposed outing the trans kids. The school board majority turned a deaf ear, however, claiming it had heard from parents favoring the move.

Forcing educators to involuntarily out transgender students not only violates kids' right to privacy in the classroom, it can expose them to numerous risks, according to social scientists. When schools mandate parental disclosure without the student's consent, the dangers rise of violence at home, housing instability, and family rejection. Deprived of a supportive educational environment, some of these students see a profound toll on their well-being, leading to sharply increased rates of psychological distress, severe depression, and suicidal ideation.

In public testimony in Placer County, supporters of trans kids said the school board's outing rule made many of these same points, saying it was not only discriminatory but also opened the kids to the possibility of anti-trans violence. Letters to the board ran against the outing rule, 184-22, the Bee reported.

The National Education Association, the parent union of the Placer County Teachers Association, did not immediately respond to an e-mail informing them of the win by their local. Barbara Anderson, executive director of Pride@Work, the AFL-CIO's constituency group for LGBTQIA+ people, was elated. It came as the group prepared for its convention, June 2-4 in Minneapolis.

While the union and the trans kids lost at the school board, they won everywhere else, all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court. That includes the state legislature and Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom. They enacted a law, which took effect Jan. 1 this year, banning outing by local school systems.

After the local school board's anti-trans ruling in 2023, the union filed an unfair labor practices complaint with the state's Public Employment Relations Board. The ULP charged the school board failed to bargain with the union beforehand about its anti-trans stand.

Before the PERB session, local union President Mougeotte issued a statement saying he was confident the state board would side with the union, as siding with the school board not only violates the state constitution but also threatens teachers' certification.

"We are confident the PERB will agree this district's forced outing policy violates the law," Mougeotte stated.

"The California Education Code requires educators to take an oath to support the Constitution and laws of California, and any violation places our teachers' credentials in jeopardy of being suspended or revoked by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. A local school board does not have the authority to change or violate state laws."

The state Public Employees Relations Board's administrative law judge sided with the union and so did the state board, so the local school board appealed the pro-trans decision to the U.S. Supreme Court—and lost.

The High Court's decision was timely, as the pro-trans ruling came on the first day of Pride Month.

"What began as a commemorative march surrounding the 1969 police raids of the Stonewall Inn, Pride Month has evolved into a global movement filled with opportunities for education, community-building, advocacy, celebration, and the joy of the LGBTQIA+ community," the Communications Workers Human Rights Committee said in a statement.

"Solidarity means showing up for one another, and we are all committed to the fight because when one group is under attack, we are all under attack."

The justices also ruled in the face of a party-line 217-198 U.S. House vote last month for an anti-trans GOP "messaging" bill, part of its "social issues" agenda. The bill, HR2616, would use the lever of federal rules to order local schools to out trans kids.

That measure, which has little chance of Senate approval, is more red meat for the GOP's MAGA base. As might be expected, it came out of the ideologically polarized House Education and the Workforce Committee, sponsored by panel chair Rep. Denny Walberg, R-Mich., on May 21, on a party-line vote.

"Many schools are engaged in systematic attempts to erode parental rights," Walberg alleged then. "Schools are facilitating gender transitions or encouraging students to change their names and pronouns without telling parents."

How to win friends and fight a detention center

By Greg Kearney

ROMULUS, Mich.—A couple of black unmarked SUVs sit watching us from a parking lot.

"These are ICE agents," someone tells me, gesturing to the car. Pointing to one: "That's an ICE agent." Pointing to another: "That's an ICE agent, they're all federal employees, and they're out here every week watching us."

A protester shouts in their direction: "Get a real job!"

We're standing next to a tan, nondescript building in Romulus, a small city just west of Detroit. People have been coming out here every Saturday for weeks to protest the site's proposed use as an ICE detention facility.

As one of the organizers explains, they first started doing this after attending a Romulus city council protest, where they received a flyer for a mass meeting to talk about the possible center.

"A bunch of us showed up, no idea what we were there to do, we just knew that this warehouse had been bought by DHS, and we did not want it to be a detention center.... I've never done this kind of organized activism before, most of us haven't."

From that initial start, they formed the Coalition to Shut the Camps and have worked hard—not only to connect with groups all over the state but to come up with novel approaches to fighting this facility.

"One of the things that's fundamentally different about our strategy is we're not asking the federal government for anything," says Chris Boyd, a coalition organizer who first began structuring some of the methods used.



"In order for a warehouse to be turned into a concentration camp," he says, the local government has to approve all the permits and conversions needed, because "surprisingly, there are actually design standards for a concentration camp."

He explains to us how they calculate the impacts of the facility: water, energy, sewage, medical needs. And from there, they can find the mismatch with what local infrastructure will support.

For example, the current facility has a sewer line that can accommodate 4 to 6 toilets, which was plenty for a warehouse, but in order to be able to accommodate all the sewage generated by the showers, toilets, and food processing for a prison, there would need to be major infrastructure upgrades.

"[These] are local decisions to say yes or no. Is that where we want to invest our infrastructure upgrade money? Well, no, that's not where we want our money to go.... So, why would a local government use taxpayer dollars to facilitate that?"

The city and Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel seem to agree. They've filed a federal lawsuit to block the building's conversion. The suit argues that DHS and ICE ignored environmental requirements, failed to consider existing facilities, and violated local zoning ordinances.

As Nessel puts it: "The Romulus Warehouse is simply not, and never will be, an appropriate place for a large-scale detention center."

But Boyd points out this kind of messaging ignores any connection to broader issues. "Some of the other resistance to detention camps doesn't make the connections.... [They say] this is a non-partisan issue, this isn't about Trump vs. not-Trump, this is just about the appropriateness of where you build concentration camps. So that's fucking bullshit, there is no appropriate place for a concentration camp."

Avoiding this kind of narrow focus is one of the reasons the coalition has "Solidarity Saturdays," where organizations in the coalition bring their members to the Romulus protest to educate one another about other aspects of the effort to combat ICE and support immigrants.

Past Saturdays have included groups that do incredibly practical interventions, like CAFE (Community Aid For Empowerment), a group that drives to the Baldwin detention center to bring people home who have been released. The goal in connecting with these groups is to try and build a better understanding of how the proposed center connects with the other issues of deportation and militarization.

On May 5, Melody Simmons, a lead organizer in the coalition, attended a city council meeting in Taylor to ask about some of those connections. She spoke during the open discussion period to question the council about how its prospective cooperation with ICE will negatively impact the community.

While she persistently asked Mayor Tim Woolley why he would work with ICE, he responded only by saying he would talk with her after the meeting. She was then forcibly removed from the session by three police officers. During our interview, she still had very visible, deep bruising on her arms.

As one protester put it: "It trickles down to everybody. Minneapolis was supposed to be about getting Somali immigrants...but really, they're just going after anyone that doesn't fit their racist agenda."

We asked different people why they came out to protest. Some didn't want higher property taxes, others didn't want to see their neighbors taken away. But as one protester boiled it down:

"The deportations are illegal and violate the constitutional rights of people in our country. And they take the country in the wrong direction, you know? This country was built on the backbone of immigrants and if we want a future, we need to include all members of our community."

Coalition of Black Trade Unionists: Labor rights and civil rights are one fight

By Cameron Harrison



ATLANTA—Hundreds of mostly Black trade unionists from across the country packed the Hyatt Regency downtown Thursday as the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) opened its 55th International Convention with a sober assessment: The labor movement is under its most severe attack in a generation, and no one is coming to save them but themselves.

At this year's convention, the CBTU is dedicating itself to building its own political roadmap that is rooted in the understanding that labor rights and civil rights are one fight. And, according to the workers here, they are not waiting for permission.

"Workers today are facing some of the worst conditions imaginable," CBTU President Rev. Terrence L. Melvin declared from the main stage. "The rising cost of living has priced many out of obtaining basic necessities. Health care has become unavailable for millions. The price of gas has bled many of our bank accounts. Yet somehow there is always enough money to enrich the richest few."

Melvin said the Trump administration is "demolishing unions with the stroke of a pen and a deaf ear to the workers"—a reference to executive orders that have shredded union contracts and canceled bargaining rights for more than a million public service workers.

"Now is not the time to bend," he said. "Now is not the time to forget the obstacles we have hurdled and the victories we have achieved. Instead, we need to lean on those victories to help pave the way for new accomplishments."

'This country has never been great'

Melvin devoted a significant portion of his keynote to attacking the white nationalist framing of the MAGA movement.

"This country has never been 'great,'" he said. "It wasn't great under Jim Crow and it wasn't great even under Barack Obama.

Because they were planning to bring us right back down to where they wanted us to be—and hell no, I am not going back."

He pointed specifically to the Supreme Court's recent ruling in *Louisiana v. Callais*, which struck down Louisiana's congressional map and effectively gutted Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act—the primary legal tool for challenging racist voter discrimination.

"The MAGA movement put a dagger right to the heart of the 1965 Voting Rights Act," Melvin said.

He noted that Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry declared a "state of emergency" before the primary elections—not because of floods or power outages, but because, in Melvin's words mocking Landry, "'I need to stop these Negroes from having seats and I need to redistrict.'"

Despite the ruling, Melvin sees a political opening. "In order to dilute our votes in our districts, they are putting us in some of the white majority districts," he said. "But guess what? What MAGA does not understand is that some [working-class white voters] don't like MAGA anymore.

"Some of the former MAGA folks are now saying, 'You said you weren't going to war and now you started three,' and 'You were going to release the Epstein files but you're still holding onto them.' These former MAGA voters are either not going to vote or they're going to vote the other way. So, we say, dilute your ass off, because we're all coming after you!"

Labor rights as civil rights

"Freedom is justice beyond just the union halls and workplaces," he said. That means defending voting rights is not a separate struggle from defending collective bargaining rights; they are two sides of the same coin.

Everett Kelley, president of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), drove the point home from the convention floor. "The CBTU has been onto something since 1972 that the rest of the labor movement is just now catching up to," he said. "It's that labor rights and civil rights are not separate issues but are one and the same."

The 2026 midterms

With the November midterms looming, Melvin made clear that CBTU is not waiting for the Democratic Party establishment to lead the opposition.

"The Democrats have not called us about anything," he said. "They haven't called us about the war. They haven't called us about DOGE. They haven't called us about the budget, and so on, unless they want us to vote for them."

His response drew sustained applause. Targeting the Democratic National Committee and corporate leadership, Melvin emphasized the independent role that organized labor must play in electoral politics.

He said "when we get in power, don't call them about a damn thing. They can stay home, I don't care. CBTU and Black workers will put their own roadmap together for 2027 and 2029."

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler was unable to attend in person but sent a video address. She announced a labor-led voter protection operation for the 2026 midterms in response to threats that ICE agents could be deployed at polling locations to suppress voter turnout.

"What we've seen this past year, the past few weeks alone, are the most heinous attacks in a generation on working people, and especially against Black workers in this country," Shuler said.

"Gutting our federal workforce, firing tens of thousands of Black women who were doing the critical jobs, the ones our communities count on. Rolling back DEI and anti-discrimination programs that were making all of us better."

Shuler called the Louisiana Supreme Court decision "an attack on Black workers, Black communities, and every worker in this country."

In response, she said, "We're going to mobilize in communities that don't always turn out to vote in the midterms because labor has the trust that no one else has. And come Nov. 3rd, we're gonna have the largest voter protection operation the labor movement has ever done."

Shuler added a note of caution about over-reliance on elections. "We know that an election isn't going to change everything we need to in this country. But that's where we start. Rejecting this division and authoritarianism, and starting to rally people around a better vision for the future."

The challenge of voter disillusionment

The Black Opposition Project, a coalition of labor and movement organizations including SEIU, presented polling data highlighting both the challenges and opportunities in the 2026 midterms.

Two main issues motivate Black voters, the data showed: economic justice and racial justice. But younger Black workers expressed deep disillusionment, with one focus-group participant saying, "DEI and voting rights didn't get me a job."

They said that finding points to the need for more political education among young workers and Black youth. He also noted that the slogan "defend democracy" polls poorly because, as many Black voters put it, "What democracy is there to defend?"

To combat disillusionment, Melvin emphasized that labor education programs are essential to building the labor movement, developing consciousness, and winning power.

We did it! People's World reaches $140,000 fund drive goal

By People's World

It took a few extra weeks, a few more pushes, and a whole lot of you—but on June 1, People's World crossed the finish line on our spring fund drive, reaching our goal of $140,000.

This was not the work of any one person or committee. It was collective—exactly the kind of collective action that *People's World* has covered and championed for over a century. Every donation, every event organized, every phone call made, every email forwarded, and every social media post shared helped get us here.

To each and every reader, sustainer, and organizer who contributed: **THANK YOU.**

Completing this drive wasn't easy. We didn't quite make the original May Day deadline, so we extended the drive, determined to go for as long as it took to hit the goal. The *People's World* community answered the call—again.

The stakes for why this fund drive mattes couldn't be higher.

We are heading into the 2026 midterms in the middle of an economic storm. Working people are absorbing mass layoffs driven by reckless tariff policies and corporate restructuring. Budgets for housing, healthcare, and schools are being slashed while billionaires consolidate power. Voting rights and civil rights are under coordinated attack. Black Congressional representation is being erased. The ICE deportation machine is still rolling across the country. Wars and international crises are escalating.



In this environment, an independent, progressive news source—one that centers the labor movement and the voices of everyday people—is a necessity.

People's World covers the strikes the mainstream press ignores, the legislation that affects your workplace, the movements building power in communities from coast to coast. As we head toward November 2026, readers need journalism that tells the truth about who has power, who is fighting back, and what is actually at stake.

That journalism exists because you fund it.

So, as we close this chapter of the fund drive, we carry forward not just a number on a thermometer—we carry the energy and commitment of a movement. Together, we made this happen. Together, we keep going forward.

With gratitude,

The People's World Fund Drive Committee

Rapid Response: Pass the Transgender Bill of Rights

By People's World



Call, write, and visit your U.S. Senators and Representative as we recognize Pride Month to support the Transgender Bill of Rights H.Res.1058 (Rep. Pramila Jayapal and 107 co-sponsors) and S. Res. 604 (Sen. Edward Markey and 9 co-sponsors).

The organized attack against transgender, nonbinary and LGBTQ+ people is part of the overall attack on human and democratic rights for everyone.

Pass the Transgender Bill of Rights to protect and codify the rights and dignity of transgender and nonbinary people under the law and ensure their access to medical care, shelter, safety and economic security.

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

LABOR NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

Recent mass marches in the U.S. are powerful and large but need to grow exponentially in numbers and develop a more unified message, as well as a sharper anti-imperialist critique that connects domestic issues like job loss and inflation with a wasteful and violent foreign policy entrenched in the military industrial complex.

By linking an end to the embargo with a general call to build a peace economy rather than a war economy, activists can articulate a working-class vision of international relations. Our demand, fundamentally, should be to leave Cuba in peace and instead invest resources in our own social services and economic development.

Sustainable Solidarity for Cuba
Our struggle for basic rights and economic improvements in the U.S. is fundamentally linked to the struggle against worldwide imperialism. Cuba understands this, too. This is why their internal struggles focus on energy independence and growing their productive capacities. This is why solidarity work, when it includes bringing aid, should consider what kinds of aid will directly contribute to this long-term goal in addition to bringing much-needed short-term relief in the form of food and medicine.

Essentially, the wisdom here follows the old saying: if you give a man a fish, he'll eat for a day, if you teach him to fish, he'll eat for life.

part 11 of this article will appear in 2 weeks.

Al fracasar la fiesta de cumpleaños de Trump, los sindicatos y sus aliados intensifican las protestas

Por Mark Greunberg

WASHINGTON — Tras fracasar el concierto previsto para el 14 de junio —financiado con fondos públicos— con motivo del cumpleaños del presidente Donald Trump, diversos activistas (encabezados por sindicatos, el movimiento "No Kings" y el grupo 50501) intensificaron los preparativos para organizar actos de oposición a su agenda esta semana.

Una de las organizaciones, "Seven Days In June", se adelantó a las demás. Está promoviendo vigilias con velas, campañas masivas de llamadas telefónicas al Congreso y manifestaciones en decenas de ciudades, contando con la participación de líderes sindicales. Estas acciones comenzaron el 1 de junio y se desarrollarán a lo largo de toda la semana.

Uno de los actos más destacados de la programación es una vigilia nocturna con velas prevista para el 5 de junio en la zona norte de Chicago. La iniciativa cuenta con el respaldo de *Gay City News*, una publicación dirigida a la comunidad LGBTQ que ha luchado contra los ataques dirigidos a los colectivos a los que pertenecen muchos de sus lectores.

El evento principal de No Kings, que tendrá lugar el 14 de junio, será el Concierto por la Primera Enmienda (*Concert for The First Amendment*); se transmitirá en vivo desde el auditorio del Town Hall en Manhattan (Nueva York) esa misma noche a las 7:30 p. m. No Kings está promoviendo —y publicando en su sitio web— iniciativas para organizar reuniones de visualización y eventos similares en todo el país.

Entre los participantes figuran las veteranas activistas y artistas Bette Midler, Jane Fonda y Julia Roberts, así como la corresponsal de MSNBC Joy Reid, la Rude Mechanical Orchestra y Singing Resistance.

El objetivo es «celebrar las libertades garantizadas por nuestra Primera Enmienda —de expresión, religión, prensa, reunión y protesta— y el poder popular que no solo impulsa estos derechos, sino que resulta esencial para garantizarlos», señalan los organizadores.

Esto cobra especial relevancia dados los continuos ataques del régimen republicano de Trump contra la libertad de expresión y de prensa. Entre las medidas más recientes de la administración Trump figura la exigencia de acuerdos de confidencialidad a todos los empleados federales, actuales y futuros, para obligarlos a «sentarse y callarse», tal como Trump ha ordenado a los periodistas en las ruedas de prensa al abordar temas relacionados con su administración, sus excesos y sus prácticas corruptas.

«Mientras los autoritarios intensifican sus ataques contra nuestras libertades y comunidades, vemos ejemplos en todo el país de personas que se alzan unidas, pasan a la acción y hacen retroceder a esas fuerzas», declaran los organizadores de No Kings.

Lin-Manuel Miranda, la estrella de *Hamilton*, afirma que él y su familia «han visto de primera mano lo que sucede cuando las personas no pueden recibir la atención y el apoyo que necesitan».

«Este es un momento para que nuestras comunidades se unan y hagan oír sus voces. La salud afecta a todas las familias, a todos los barrios y a cada uno de nosotros».

Trump había planeado un gran concierto de celebración de su cumpleaños en el National Mall para el 14 de junio y había invitado a decenas de artistas. Sin embargo, tantos de los que aceptaron inicialmente se retiraron al descubrir que se trataría de un acto partidista, que él se vio obligado a cancelarlo. En su lugar, pronunciará un gran discurso.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

June 13, 2026

'Natchez' review: Beautifully haunting exploration of America's complex history with slavery and racism

By Chauncey K. Robinson



The documentary *Natchez* is one of those rare films that is beautiful and welcoming while simultaneously gut-wrenching and powerful in the way it explores its subject. It draws you in with the Southern charm of exquisite antebellum dresses and scenic landscapes of Natchez, Mississippi, but that's just preparation for a brutal journey. It then starts peeling away the layers of this small town's complex history with slavery, racism, and how the townsfolk—and the tourists who visit—grapple with it. The people you meet and the stories you hear stay with you long after the credits roll.

Natchez is a documentary film directed and produced by Suzannah Herbert. As its name implies, it explores the town of Natchez, which relies on antebellum tourism to survive. This reliance on such a pivotal and divisive part of American history—the pre-Civil War American South—often has the townsfolk reckoning with their past as they deal with an uncertain future. The tourist industry is waning, and the people here ultimately have to figure out what the town truly owes to descendants of slavery. For the latter, the antebellum South is not a time or place they feel nostalgic about. The doc features a host of interesting and, at times, quirky characters who each bring their own complexity while living in a town at a cultural crossroads.

The film comes at a time when education is under attack in the United States. While there have always been those who push against teaching the complexities of history when it comes to slavery, the Civil War, the Confederacy—and race relations in general in the country—there has been a growing movement to pass laws and regulations that outright remove parts of this history from school textbooks, libraries, and museums. This is often done under the guise of not perpetuating so-called "white guilt."

As one education professor put it, if history is taught by the victors, the Civil War is a rare exception in which the South/the Confederacy was somehow allowed to eventually dominate the narrative.

This push and pull of narrative and facts is what we witness in *Natchez*. In a way, the town becomes a microcosm of a broader battle unfolding across the country.

Many tourists visit the town to see the extravagant plantations with elaborate homes and gardens. The people who own them are often descendants of the original (white) owners. They dress up in antebellum fashion and hoop dresses while giving tours of the preserved estates.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

'Natchez' review: Beautifully haunting exploration of America's complex history with slavery and racism

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

These tours often present a glamorized version of the times in which these estates thrived, and for years, often glossed over the very reason that they thrived—slavery.

The labor that kept those beautiful gardens maintained, kept the fields producing, and kept the mansions immaculate for decades was slave labor. And, interestingly enough, it was after the Civil War, when many of these estates were losing money because they no longer had free slave labor to pick cotton, that they began offering antebellum tours to make money. The very existence of this tourist industry in the town leads back to slavery and the fallout of its abolition.

The strongest aspect of the film is the people who tell their stories in it. The cast is so open about their lives and thoughts that it's not until the end of the film that viewers realize there was no omnipotent narrator speaking throughout. The documentary doesn't have to rely on this often-used device to tell Natchez's story because the people of Natchez provide more than enough commentary on their own.

The film's grounding force and heart are showcased through Tracy "Rev" Collins. Collins is a community leader, pastor, and historian. His tour business, Rev's Natchez Country Tours, focuses on Black history, enslavement, and the Civil Rights Movement. The history he explains to his customers on his bus tours is interwoven with the other townsfolk, often putting on full display some of the contradictions of the glamorized version presented in the house tours. Collins, along with some others in the film, is shown as seeking to present a more honest depiction of Natchez and the history of slavery, but they face pushback from others who would rather stick to the way they've always presented it.

Moments of racism, both out of ignorance and malice, are on full display in the film. There are times when you see members of the community sincerely grappling with what the "correct" way to present history is—such as needing to take Confederate soldier hats out of the gift shop or being more direct about slavery's role in the town's development. Then there is perhaps the most contradictory figure in the film, who will no doubt cause strong reactions from viewers: David Garner, the elderly white and openly gay owner of the Choctaw Hall.

Early in the film, we see Garner as someone proud of his Southern heritage and family estate. He's boisterous, funny, and charming during his tours. He has no problem speaking about his husband, and we even see him attending a charity drag event as he makes large donations to the foundation.

In this same scene, we see protesters outside condemning those who are part of the LGBTQ community.

Garner is part of a community that has been persecuted simply for who they are. Director Herbert ingeniously puts this on display, knowing that later in the film, Garner will show another aspect of himself that sharply contrasts this part of his identity. For you see, Garner is extremely racist, and some of the most vitriolic and overtly racist rants will come from him later on in the film.

He unabashedly slings around derogatory names for Black people, while making the case that the country went down the toilet (and how Hilary Clinton lost the presidential race) when "everyone" started catering to "the blacks." Perhaps some of the most haunting aspects of Garner's scenes are when he uses these derogatory names about Black people in front of some of his white tour guests—and many of them laugh along with him.

Herbert provides no commentary in instances like these, instead letting them stand on their own, allowing the audience to grapple with their meaning. The whole film is emotionally weighty moments like this dressed up in a pretty package of Southern "hospitality."

The fantasy of the antebellum South is nothing new. For decades, Hollywood has made classics of films that push the narrative of a white South where slavery was more of an afterthought than the very institution that kept the white wealthy afloat. The film *Birth of a Nation* comes to mind, considered one of the highest-grossing movies of all time, and screened at the White House during its release, setting the tone for presenting white supremacy as protecting "heritage" and not hate. *Natchez* is a film that powerfully challenges this fantasy.

As another standout figure in the film, National Parks ranger Barney Schoby, put it, "Natchez swallowed a master narrative about the old south." And in all reality, Natchez isn't the only place that has embraced that narrative, nor is it the only place where there are people who want to actively keep it firmly in place. That's what makes the doc so relevant beyond the town it focuses on. *Natchez* is a must-see film, perhaps one of the most evocative documentaries in recent years.

Viewers can watch Natchez in its entirety for free at PBS.org.

How to talk to people where they are

By John O.



This is the first article in a planned series called We The People: 250+ Years of Working Class USA.

We do not arrive at our political understanding because we were raised in the perfect household. We have a journey behind us, and somewhere along that path, we asked questions. For me, questioning isn't just a habit, it's my greatest strength. "What is written on his shirt?" I asked myself, "I've never seen glasses like those." I would think, "Hi, my name is John, what's yours?" These moments of curiosity crack open opportunities that a speech never would. It can feel embarrassing, but embarrassment is something we underexplore. Use it to create the chance to make genuine connections.

Asking questions is only half the challenge. Once you ask, you have to listen. Humans are very good at sensing intentions; we can rarely slip past it, so don't try. Be genuinely curious about the person in front of you. Listen to their answers. If you want to teach them, persuade them, or simply be heard by them, you first need to know where they're starting.

Reading the room (and the gas station)
Public interaction happens within a context. Are you at a gas station? A bus stop? A community meeting? Understand what the other person is doing, where are they going, where have they been, what are they in between. Ask yourself: how much time do they actually have? Not everyone has the bandwidth to stop for ten minutes. Just ask directly "How much time you got?" and respect the answer. It's just a question, it shows them you are respectful of their time. Instead of using complex terms that can be difficult to understand, use plain language that simplifies your message and helps you stay accessible.

Managing cognitive load
The availability of short-form media has caused people to listen in a passive manner rather than pay attention. People are used to information that's quick and easy to process.

To use this in our work, we can use a few tools, like chunking, highlighting, and the rule of three.

Summarizing: "Bite, Snack, Meal"
Breaking information into understandable pieces. The "bite" is a starting point, the simplest takeaway. The "snack" is a relatable example or a short explanation that illustrates the point. The "meal" is a fuller explanation, offered only if you think the person is ready for it and they have the time for it. You'll never cram a full meal down someone's throat at a street corner, especially if they are not willing.

Verbal highlighting
This is the technique of placing emphasis on certain ideas to better convey something they should remember or pay attention to. Just as you'd bold text in an article, in speaking you would emphasize the core idea(s). Saying things like, "Here's the thing to remember..." or "If you take one thing from this, it's..." hints to the listener that what comes next they might want to remember.

Repetition
People retain information best when it comes in threes. Form your message around three central ideas or repeat an important point three times in different ways. This rhythm makes your words stick.

A healthcare example
Instead of ranting about the insurance industry profiteering off of a captive market, you might say:

Bite: "Healthcare should be about keeping people healthy, not about profits."

Snack: "My friend works full-time but still can't afford the insulin she needs, insurance denied her again. That money is going to shareholders, not patients."

Meal: (when they want to know) "So, under a single-payer system, we'd eliminate that middleman. Everyone pays in, everyone gets care. Here's how it's worked in other countries..."

Verbally highlighting can come before a bite or used to summarize a meal or snack after the interaction is done: "If you remember one thing, it's this... no one should go broke because they got sick."

Notice how none of that required the word bourgeoisie. These techniques keep us in line with people's learned understanding, without patronizing them. Not every recommendation will fit in each type of conversation. You shouldn't strive to use every technique. Instead, you should strive to be understood — not just checking a list.

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The shame barrier and U.S. individualism

Sometimes, people feel ashamed about not understanding politics or economics. This is by design. Power that's complex and difficult to understand prevents us from talking about it, thus keeping us away from that power. A plain-language approach invites people in, instead of making them feel left out. It allows them to ask questions knowing you are not looking down on them for being different. The goal is never to prove you're the smartest person in the room. It's to connect over shared material realities, like wanting to buy a house, access to healthcare, and a good-paying job. "It's not about being right, it's about being able to afford a house."

We live in an individual-focused culture. While within that culture we must use it to frame systemic problems away from the individual and towards the collective needs. Individual pride is your ally, not an obstacle. Tap into it. Frame systemic problems in terms of individual dignity: "We work big every day but get small pay. Why can't we afford housing?" That's a question anyone can understand, regardless of political leaning.

It centers their lived experiences while pointing to a failure of the economic system.

Much like understanding and analyzing material conditions, you have to assess a person through observation which, like the scientific method, requires observation, interviewing, information collecting, and other skills.

Building our speaking

In my experience, we must be consistent with those we speak to and give them time to process. You build your own model through practice; it takes time and consistency. Start with the social circles you're already comfortable with: your workplace, your family, your religious or community group. Use that comfort to hone the questions and skills. As you grow, and as you earn people's trust, you will gradually educate them. Then it will spread to others. Once they teach someone else what they learned, the practice becomes unstoppable. When we genuinely meet people where they are — wherever they may be — we no longer just give speeches; we become comrades with the working class. And that shift changes everything.

Primary voters tell MAGA: We're coming for you in November

By Mark Gruenberg and John Wojcik

Primary elections on Tuesday, June 2, reflected the determination of the nation's anti-MAGA forces to strike a blow against the authoritarian Trump regime in races ranging from the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to state governorships, mayoralty contests, and local legislative posts.

One of the best turnouts by "progressive" voters happened in Los Angeles, where Democratic incumbent Karen Bass garnered 37% of the vote, and one of the two main challengers, Democratic Socialist city council member Nithya Raman, got 21%, giving progressives a clear majority, assuming Raman's voters rally behind Bass in November.

The vote this week also reflected the possibility that President Trump could be losing his grip on what is an ever-shrinking extreme right-wing voter base. In a Republican U.S. Senate race in Iowa, for the first time, President Trump's choice in a GOP primary contest failed to win the election.

Primary battles

In the California governor's race, Democratic candidate Xavier Becerra finished just slightly behind right-wing Republican Steve Hilton. "Progressive" billionaire Tom Steyer, who backs Medicare-for-All, came in third. He hasn't conceded, and if his vote and Becerra's were combined in the now-necessary runoff, the Republican would go down to defeat. Becerra got 26% to 28% for Republican Hilton and 20% for Democrat Steyer.



The final vote could take days to tally.

Progressive San Francisco city council member Connie Chan finished second to State Sen. Scott Weiner, who spent $10 million in the race to succeed retiring former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D). She campaigned for Chan in the deep-blue 11th District, and the two Democrats advanced to the fall election.

The two top finishers advance to the November election under the Golden State's "jungle primary" system, where all candidates from both parties run on a single ballot, and the top two keep going. So in the L.A. mayor's race, for example, Bass will face the second-place finisher, far-right talk show host Spencer Pratt, whose rhetoric is like Trump's, only more incendiary.

The flip side of that came in the Sacramento-based 7th Congressional District. There, Sacramento City Councillor Mai Vang, 41, Republican Zacariah Wooden, and others challenged 81-year-old 18-term incumbent Doris Matsui, who led with 30.7%. She's the establishment candidate, having succeeded her husband Robert in that district. Yang had 26% and Wooden 24%, but that order could change as mail-in ballots are counted.

And in California's new 22nd District, reconfigured after anti-Trump redistricting, GOP incumbent David Valadao—one of the last two sitting Republicans who voted in 2021 to impeach Trump—won just over 40%. Two Democrats split the rest, with progressive Randy Villegas finishing second. Villegas will face Valadao in a seat the party has put on its "red-to-blue" list.

In Iowa, longtime activist Joe Henry reported that VoteVets, a PAC allied with Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., spent $10 million supporting wheelchair-bound war veteran Josh Turek. He beat insurgent Zach Walls, who openly said he would not support Schumer—whom many progressives consider weak—for another leadership term.

"Turek's message was about the struggles he went through" after being injured in war, said Henry. He also appealed to Iowa's growing Latino/Latina population, as his spouse is Latina and he speaks Spanish. "But his positions" on issues "were pretty much the same as Walls'," Henry added.

In Iowa, the hope is that a unified fight now to elect Turek will help shift control of the U.S. Senate out of the MAGA column.

With campaign cash playing a major role in so many races, there was at least one case where money didn't talk, but progressive stands and shoe leather did, Henry said: A Democratic primary race for a county supervisor's seat in Polk County, Iowa, which includes the state capital of Des Moines.

There, "moderate" Joe Gatto outspent progressive Heather Jones-Brown, Henry reported. The dollar margin was $180,000 to $12,000. Jones-Brown had the ground game and "was walking the neighborhoods," Henry reported. Jones-Brown won, 3,124-3,082.

New Jersey had a number of key congressional primaries. In the 12th District, where Democratic Rep. Bonnie Watson-Coleman is retiring, 12 Democrats competed for the party's nod. Watson-Coleman—along with Reps. Robert Menendez, Jr. and LaMonica McIver, Sen. Andy Kim, and Newark Mayor Ras Baraka—have led the crusade against ICE's huge detention center in Delaney Hall, reports veteran activist Lee Dlugin.

They've battled arrests, pepper spray, and other attempts to stop them from scrutinizing conditions in the facility. The Trump administration is so incensed against McIver that it's trying her on trumped-up assault charges, and she's had to spend $1 million on legal fees, Dlugin says.

The Democratic winner in the 12th District race was Army veteran and surgeon Dr. Adam Hamawy, "who has a very good position on immigration, defending Medicare, and stopping the genocide in Gaza," says Dlugin.

She also hailed the win of incumbent Congresswoman Analilia Mejia in the 11th District, who took 81.5% of the Democratic vote and will go up against Joe Hathaway, who was unchallenged in the Republican primary. Mejia, who is affiliated with the Center for Popular Democracy, "comes out of the trade union movement, was a leader in the Fight for $15, on child care, and more," Dlugin says. Mejia has held the seat since an April 2026 special election following former Rep. Mikie Sherrill's resignation after being elected governor.

"The big disappointment was in the 7th District," added Dlugin. "There were two good candidates who split the progressive vote," handing the nomination to former Navy helicopter pilot Rebecca Bennett. Bennett kept emphasizing her military experience.

The 7th District is also one that national Democrats are counting on in their bid to retake control of the U.S. House on Nov. 3. Incumbent GOP Rep. Tom Kean, Jr., running on his family name—his father was a progressive Republican governor—and incumbency, was unopposed.

He's also been unseen. Kean, Jr., hasn't voted in the House since March. His office says he's recovering from a serious illness and promises he will reappear soon. But even his closest associates are baffled by the lack of information. And if Kean steps down now, the county chairs in his district—not the voters—will get to choose his replacement, Dlugin points out.

"All this makes the (national) Republicans very nervous," she adds.

The results this November, anti-MAGA forces further hope, will help them undo major gains the GOP has made in recent years across the entire Midwest.

Trump's fading power?

In just the last five weeks, the power of Trump's endorsement helped end the political careers of two senators—John Cornyn of Texas and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana—and one congressman, Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky. Trump was unable, however, to bring Rep. Randy Feenstra in Iowa to the winner's circle in Iowa's Republican primary for governor. Even though the president jumped in with his backing last week, Feenstra narrowly lost to Zach Lahn.

The result was a blow to Trump, who has bragged about his ability to control the vote among Republicans with his endorsement. Many Democrats now consider Iowa offering them the best chance to pick up a governorship.

Democrats in Iowa nominated Rob Sand, who ran unopposed in the primary. He has the rural roots Democrats want to emphasize in places like Iowa. Republicans have often accused Democrats of being uninterested in issues that affect rural voters, but Sand is a proven winner in a Republican-leaning state, having been elected twice as auditor in Iowa.

When it comes to issues important to rural voters, the role of Trump and his backers in cutting crucial services, especially healthcare, is something MAGA opponents are stressing.

Lahn was not well known in Iowa politics when he launched his campaign in November, but he built support among conservatives. He championed right-wing policies, including a total ban on abortion and keeping so-called "liberal ideology" out of public school classrooms by backing varieties of censorship schemes.

The independent factor

Another interesting development after the votes this week is that it became clear that if Democrats want to end MAGA control of the U.S. Senate, they may have to throw support to independents rather than their own candidates in some states. Independents running for U.S. Senate did very well in states that are now represented by Republican senators.

That was a conclusion after voters on Tuesday finalized general election matchups in Montana and South Dakota, where little-known Democrats earned their party's nominations. In both states, however, higher-profile independent candidates also qualified for the general election ballot.

Things were similar in Idaho and Nebraska, which held Senate primaries last month.

Democratic leaders in Nebraska are openly endorsing independent Dan Osborne over their party's nominee, who has promised to drop out to make it easier for Osborne to win.

In Montana, independent Seth Bodnar, a former University of Montana president, looks like a strong opponent to Republican Kurt Alme. Bodnar raised more money than all of the five Democratic primary candidates combined. He has even significantly outraised Trump-backed Alme.

In South Dakota, Sen. Mike Rounds won the Republican nomination on Tuesday. He will face Democrat Julian Beaudion, a former highway patrol trooper and small business owner. But it's a former Democrat now running as an independent, military veteran Brian Bengs, who some Democrats believe may be the tougher challenger.

Another result of this week's elections is the possibility of history being made in New Mexico, where former Interior Secretary Deb Haaland won the Democratic nomination for governor. She would be the first Native American woman in the U.S. to be elected to the office.

She celebrated Tuesday night at a historic plaza in Albuquerque's Old Town neighborhood, where supporters gathered for a mariachi band, traditional hoop dancing, and a prayer in Tiwa, one of many Native languages spoken among tribes in the state.

Against Fascism & Hate: Pride 2026

By Communist Party USA



The Communist Party USA joins with the LGBTQ+ community and people's movements to celebrate Pride Month. We recognize the revolutionary history of this celebration from the Mattachine Society, to the Gay Liberation Front, to Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries, to Lesbians and Gays Against Intervention, to ACT-UP. We take this time to renew our commitments to LGBTQ+ liberation during this celebratory month, which is tragically marred by the ongoing violence toward the transgender community at the hands of vigilantes and MAGA fascism.

The Party rejects all anti-LGBTQ+ social trends and legal actions. We reject all violence and discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community, which is deeply entwined with racist violence. Anti-LGBTQ+ bigotry, whether from the far right or the so-called Marxist left, is bigotry.

We demand that the dignity and humanity of the LGBTQ+ community be recognized and upheld as key to the struggle against Trump and MAGA fascism, and for socialism. We stand for humanity, empathy, and the solidarity of all peoples with the LGBTQ+ community.

The transgender community is enduring what some organizations have warned are the beginning stages of genocide. Multiple transgender community members have been murdered in the past three months alone. But this violence also has a racial character. Since 2013, Black transgender women have comprised 63% of all recorded victims of anti-transgender hate crimes. The victims have been "overwhelmingly Black, under 35, and killed with a firearm." The number is likely an undercount due to systemic anti-trans bias and misgendering. This racist, transphobic violence is fascist in character and state-sanctioned. We must act to end it now.

Now, more than ever, is the time for members of the LGBTQ+ community to stand together with their allies to declare their dignity in the face of threats and attacks from all corners of monopoly capital and the fascist right. LGBTQ+ people face threats at home from their families, threats at work from co-workers and bosses, and threats in the realm of policy from bigoted legislators who hope to write them out of existence. The fascists of this country try to dim the light that LGBTQ+ folks bring to the world in the hopes that they will never shine, but the bravery and solidarity of LGBTQ+ workers will continue to glow despite these constant threats.

This community is multiracial, gender-diverse, and multiethnic.

The community does not move forward with one single voice, but rather as a choir of struggle and determination. Black transgender women are the most common victims of anti-LGBTQ+ violence. The fight is not just for one sector, but for every shade of the rainbow.

The struggle of LGBTQ+ workers may be greater than ever under the second Trump Administration. The MAGA coalition has carried out every trick in the book, hearkening back to the violence and repression of the McCarthy period. Whether it is through defunding gender-affirming healthcare, attempting to outlaw public expression of LGBTQ+ identity, or requiring passport genders to match sex at birth, the ruling class has shown they believe dignity is a privilege, not a right. The LGBTQ+ community fought anti-sodomy laws, against the AIDS epidemic, for marriage equality, for gender-affirming care, and the fight to defeat MAGA fascism's reign of terror must be the next victory.

Great attention must be paid to every wave of hate that flows out of the Trump Administration. As ICE sinks its claws into the immigrant community, trans people are some of the most impacted. Recent Trump rulings no longer require ICE to report the number of gender-nonconforming detainees, and ICE requires trans immigrants to be detained according to their sex at birth.

Further, with the Supreme Court's decision to overturn sections of the Civil Rights Act, thousands of Black queer voters, particularly in the South, could lose their voice at the ballot box in coming elections.

While the attacks are directed at African Americans, the queer community suffers from these blows too. These are attempts to politically silence progressive and working-class constituencies who are overwhelmingly opposed to MAGA fascism.

Trump, the Supreme Court and the ultra-wealthy are afraid of LGBTQ+ power. They are scared of the way LGBTQ+ workers show up for themselves, especially in the labor movement. MAGA fascists know that the LGBTQ+ community will not roll over. LGBTQ+ workers will not take abuse from a boss, from a CEO, and will certainly not take it from a president or politician.

Queer workers and allies: it is time to stand up. The next generation is counting on LGBTQ+ workers and their allies to not only fight for their existence, but to fight for their success and achievements. There is simply no other option. All those who consider themselves allies of the LGBTQ+ community must understand the centrality of anti-trans violence to the program of MAGA fascism, and join with the community to defend our transgender siblings and comrades from these violent attacks. When we fight to defend our transgender siblings, we fight the advance of fascism at large.

NewsGuild President Schleuss: Media consolidation threatens democracy

By Mark Gruenberg

MINNEAPOLIS—Intense pressure from the Trump administration and consolidation of mass media ownership into "four or five" newspaper chains—as some owners, in pursuit of profits and permissions, play along with Trump—poses a big threat to independent news in the U.S., NewsGuild President Jon Schleuss says.

In an exclusive interview with *People's World*, Schleuss, whose rapidly growing union has campaigned for years to "Save Local News!" added that not just journalists, but readers and voters are the victims of such pressure. That pressure, he said, robs journalists and the public of the protection they need to hold government and business accountable.

"They work in a double symbiosis," Schleuss says of Trump and the chains, particularly the billionaire owners of the news organizations.

Meanwhile, "The chains are continuing to self-destruct because of bad management, while the need for local news coverage" and the accountability it demands from both government and business "is higher than ever," Schleuss says.

In the last several decades, the mainstream print media has consolidated into two big chains listed on securities exchanges, McClatchy and Gannett, and a third, Tribune, owned by the private venture capital fund Alden Global Capital. Two smaller chains—including one non-profit group—own other papers.

Schleuss has nicknamed Alden "vulture capital."



It swoops in on distressed papers, buys them, cuts their staff in half or more, eliminates coverage, and leaves ruined families and jobless workers. It also sells off valuable real estate and then pockets all the proceeds from those moves.

Sometimes Alden cuts publication to electronic-only, or shuts the paper completely, leaving "news deserts" to be filled by online feeds with ideological slants.

In more than a dozen cases, including at the now Alden-owned *Chicago Tribune* and at local papers in Florida and Texas, news staffs resisted and moved to preserve their independence and rights to report by unionizing with the NewsGuild. As a result, it's been one of the fastest-growing unions in the AFL-CIO.

But even that's not enough to completely combat the threat, so Schleuss talks up other ideas on how to battle the combo of Trump and consolidation.

"Newsrooms need to be independent from the federal government," Schleuss says. "When the federal government or the president sues a news organization, that's illegal and inappropriate.

"We're trying to get news organizations not to capitulate."

Prime among the counter-moves Schleuss talks up: Further unionization, with news staffs turning to the Guild, a very independent sector of the Communications Workers of America, for the protection of a union contract. "In a union newsroom, you have the right to speak up and prevent AI (artificial intelligence) slop in your news pages," he points out. There are also grievance procedures designed to prevent arbitrary firings. When those occur, the Guild goes to bat for the staffer.

And AI slop led to at least one recent Guild win. The seven staffers at the *Centre Daily Times* in Pennsylvania signed union cards and got voluntary recognition from their McClatchy chain bosses, who had put their bylines on AI-generated stories. The larger unionized staff at *Politico*, in D.C., won a ban on unchecked "AI slop," too.

"And we can hold the boss accountable, too, in court," Schleuss adds. The Guild-unionized staff of the now-shuttered *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* did that, through a first-time-ever NLRB section 10-e injunction, reserved for unusual circumstances—such as a News Guild unfair labor practices strike that lasted almost three years.

Another way: Convincing non-profit organizations, including union consortiums, to buy local media.

Non-profit purchases have occurred in Salt Lake City, with the *Deseret News*, at both the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the *Philadelphia Daily News*—under the same owner—and twice, at the *Chicago Sun-Times*, among others.

The Chicago Federation of Labor was among the investors who bought the Guild-unionized paper out of bankruptcy. When too much red ink gushed, due to loss of print ads to digital, the investor group sold the paper for a token amount (plus assumption of debts) to non-profit public radio station WBEZ.

It's also occurred in Seattle and in Portland, Ore., Schleuss notes. The non-profit Noisy Creek Group bought the cities' alternative newspapers, the *Stranger* in Seattle and the Portland *Mercury*, last year.

Big news chain owners, more interested in profits than in people, have cut local newsrooms to the bone, depriving readers and citizens of local coverage and the ability to hold local governments accountable for their actions.

A typical example is in Middletown, N.Y., where the Gannett-owned *Times Herald Record* now attempts to cover three rapidly growing mid-Hudson Valley counties with a total staff of four, plus wire services. In its heyday, 40 years ago under the smaller, family-owned Ottaway chain, the paper's sports desk alone had eight staffers. There were four copy editors and 20 reporters, including those in now-shut outlying bureaus.

Even larger papers have had to cut back. The *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, available to AFL-CIO convention attendees in the Twin Cities, is unionized, as is the *St. Paul Pioneer Press.* But the *Star–Tribune's* daily deadlines are early, because it's actually printed at a union shop in Des Moines, Iowa, more than three hours away. There are no more large union printers in Minnesota.

Despite that, local "journalists are witnesses" in cases where the national media often aren't. As an example, Schleuss praised the *Star-Tribune* and the *Pioneer Press* for their fearless coverage of Trump's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents' brutal and violent conduct during Operation Metro Surge, the anti-immigrant sweeps through the Twin Cities, including photos.

Members of the papers' photography staff "were shooting photos" of the scene where a Trump Border Patrol agent first disarmed Veterans Administration nurse Alex Pretti, a Government Employees (AFGE) member, then killed him with seven bullets in his back.

The photographers, Schleuss added, "wore dark blue vests labeled 'PRESS' and gas masks, but the masks don't work in 20 degrees below zero weather." One agent "shot a *Pioneer Press* photographer in the chest with a tear gas cannister. Ten minutes later, he was back at work."

Schleiss's point is that chains don't have that commitment to local news. And it took the NewsGuild to sue the Trump government for ICE attacks on newspeople in Los Angeles, Chicago, and the Twin Cities during the agents' violent repression and sweeps in all three. The Chicago and L.A. Guilds won court rulings against the Trump government, Schleuss noted.

The National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians/CWA local in Chicago joined that city's Guild in their case. The Illinois Publishers Association—the bosses—pulled out, leading its executive director to resign in protest.

On the broadcast side of the news, the 2025 $8 billion merger of Paramount, which owns CBS, with Skydance Media brought Trump donor David Ellison to the fore of the combined company. "CBS had a settlement" with Trump over one of his lawsuits, Schleuss comments. "And then there was the purchase."

It's also produced a multimillion-dollar payment to Trump to stay out of the merger talks, and the hiring of right-wing editor Bari Weiss for CBS News. That wasn't all.

Weiss initially killed a *60 Minutes* investigative story about dangerous conditions at the largest ICE detention camp in East Texas, allegedly because of a lack of Trump White House input. Staffers complained loudly. Weiss, whose background was as a conservative podcaster and commentator, retaliated by firing veteran and noted *60 Minutes* correspondent Scott Pelley.

Before he was canned, Pelley told Weiss to her face during a tense staff meeting that she was "murdering" *60 Minutes*.

Even before that, Weiss "directed coverage of the killing" of the other Minnesota citizen, Renee Good, to show her driving her sport utility vehicle towards the ICE agents, not trying to back out of a parking space, as video showed, Schleuss noted.

That's not the first time a print owner bowed to Trump. When the Jan. 6, 2021, MAGA invasion of the U.S. Capitol occurred, the unionized *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* staff wrote it straight. The right-wing Block brothers, the paper's owners, had their editor rewrite the stories to take away blame from the invaders. Under the union contract, the paper's staff conducted a byline strike.

And when multibillionaire Jeff Bezos, owner of the *Washington Post*, spiked an endorsement editorial for Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris in 2024, he provoked a staff uproar at the Guild-unionized paper. When Bezos later followed by decreeing the Post op-ed pages would run only columns by conservative, pro-business, or libertarian writers, resignations followed. Bezos has since fired a third of the paper's remaining staff.

Israel included on United Nations' sexual violence blacklist

By Zo Haderekh



NOTICE: *This news article contains descriptions of sexual violence.*

TEL AVIV—United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has placed Israel's armed forces on his blacklist of countries and entities accused of sexual violence in war zones, citing abuse of Palestinian inmates.

The 2026 edition of the Secretary-General's Report on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, which covers the year 2025, said the UN had verified 13 instances of sexual violence against Palestinians by Israel's armed forces in 2025, in addition to 18 cases in 2023 and 2024. The victims included 14 men, seven women, nine boys, and one girl, all from occupied Gaza or the West Bank.

Alleged violators included the Israel Defense Forces, the Israel Prison Service, and the Israeli police, according to the UN report, which claimed violations were recorded in prisons, occupied West Bank checkpoints, and the Gush Etzion police station, as well as during military operations.

Israel has failed to comply with demands in last year's report for greater accountability and transparency, the UN chief said. As an example of the alleged "systematic lack of accountability," Guterres cited the case of a detainee at the military's Sde Teiman facility who reportedly suffered severe rectal injuries following the "insertion of an object in the anus" by guards in July 2024.

Guterres noted that, despite "video and medical reports and a detailed description of the assault," five reservists indicted in the case were not charged with rape, and the charges were dropped entirely earlier this year, after top army prosecutors admitted leaking the footage and lying about it.

"Violations consisted of rape, including with objects, gang rape, attempted rape, physical violence to the genitals, instances of targeted shooting of the genitals, touching of breasts and genitals, strip and cavity searches conducted without apparent security justification, forced nudity, and threats of rape," the report said.

The sexual violence against female detainees "included mostly threats of rape, forced nudity, unwanted touching, and humiliating or degrading strip searches without justification," while male detainees were targeted more severely with "rape, attempted rape, and violence to the genitals, resulting in five male victims suffering severe rectal bleeding or swelling...in some cases, without receiving medical treatment."

The verified cases "should be seen as indicative of incidents and patterns over multiple reporting periods rather than comprehensive, given the continued denial of access by the Government of Israel to detention settings, as well as to Gaza," the report added.

According to Hadash / Israeli Communist Party Member of the Knesset Ofer Cassif, "The inclusion of Israel in the UN Blacklist of Sexual Violence in Conflict Zone is sadly not a surprise."

He said that those "who chose to close their eyes in the face of countless testimonies must now witness the wickedness and depravity the Israeli government has institutionalized and sowed deep into the society.

"I have personally attempted to shed light on these crimes in the Knesset, only to be silenced, censored, and expelled."

But recognizing the fault is only the first step, Cassif said, "accountability must now follow. The Israeli government has proven it is unable and unwilling to correct its ways, so the international community must step in and act—first and foremost to bring justice for the Palestinian victims, but also to cure Israel itself from this horrendous evil."

LABOR NEWS

Brazil: Communist Party celebrates 104 years

By CPUSA International Department

The Brazilian Communist Party (PCB) celebrated 104 years on March 25, marking over a century of struggle as the country's oldest political organization. Born from the workers' struggles following the Bolshevik Revolution, the PCB has been present in all major fights of the Brazilian proletariat, operating underground for much of its existence while producing some of the nation's greatest popular heroes. The party noted its role in organizing unions, resisting dictatorships, and championing the rights of workers, Black Brazilians, women, Indigenous peoples, and the LGBTQ+ community.

"We were, we are, and we will be communists," the party declared in a statement celebrating its history. Despite brutal persecution by the bourgeoisie and dictatorial regimes, the PCB has survived and remains steadfast in its commitment to the Brazilian revolution and the construction of socialism.

Britain: half a million march against far-right and racism

The Communist Party of Britain joined half a million protesters on the streets of central London on March 28 for the Together Alliance rally, described by organizers as the largest anti-far-right demonstration in British history. The march, which stretched from Park Lane to Whitehall, sent a clear message against racism, the Trump administration, and the organized far-right, with chants of "Refugees welcome" and "No to racism" echoing through the capital.

Speakers included MPs Diane Abbott, Jeremy Corbyn, and Zarah Sultana, alongside trade union leaders and campaigners. Abbott told the rally the turnout was the largest anti-racist march she had witnessed in her lifetime. Together Alliance chair Kevin Courtney noted that the scale of attendance had intimidated the far-right from mounting a counterprotest, following the biggest far-right mobilization in British history in September 2025. A separate Palestine Coalition march joined the route, underscoring the unity of anti-racist and anti-war struggles.

La administración Trump exige registros hospitalarios como parte de su ofensiva contra la atención médica para personas transgénero

Por Raven Raevsky

NUEVA YORK — El sistema hospitalario NYU Langone Health (NYULH) y otras instituciones sanitarias no identificadas han recibido una citación de un gran jurado emitida por la oficina del Fiscal General del Departamento de Justicia. Se ordena a NYULH que proporcione información exhaustiva sobre su programa de atención de afirmación de género para menores.

La citación incluye solicitudes de gran alcance que abarcan registros de empleados que administran atención directamente a los pacientes, supervisores y personal de facturación, así como datos sobre identidades de pacientes, indicaciones, evaluaciones clínicas, diagnósticos y expedientes de atención al paciente. Asimismo, la citación requiere registros de comunicaciones con fabricantes de bloqueadores de la pubertad y hormonas, así como intercambios con la Asociación Profesional Mundial para la Salud de las Personas Transgénero (WPATH).

La solicitud de registros a NYULH representa la primera citación documentada de un gran jurado que la administración Trump ha dirigido a un hospital que ofrece atención de afirmación de género a menores. Por lo general, los grandes jurados se constituyen cuando el gobierno se prepara para imputar un delito a alguna parte.

Históricamente, los proveedores de atención de afirmación de género y los pacientes de Nueva York han estado protegidos contra acciones judiciales iniciadas en otros estados gracias a las leyes de protección (*Shield Laws*) de Nueva York; sin embargo, esta citación federal no tiene precedentes. Además, el Departamento de Justicia emitió la citación a través del Tribunal Federal del Distrito Norte de Texas, una instancia judicial repleta de jueces nombrados por Trump y por el Partido Republicano.

La orden de comparecencia del Departamento de Justicia se emitió a pesar de que NYUHL ya había cancelado su programa de atención de afirmación de género.

La orden ejecutiva del presidente exigía a los departamentos federales investigar a los estados y a los proveedores que respaldan las necesidades de atención médica de los jóvenes trans.

Abogados defensores de los derechos LGBTQ+, como Alejandra Caraballo de la Universidad de Harvard, criticaron duramente la decisión de emitir una citación judicial desde el Distrito Norte de Texas, calificándola de maniobra de «elección a la carta de juez y tribunal» (*judge and forum shopping*); se trata de una práctica en la que las partes litigantes seleccionan los tribunales y jueces que prefieren, con la expectativa de que fallen a su favor.

Shannon Minter, del Centro Nacional para los Derechos LGBTQ, describió la citación como un intento de intimidar a los proveedores de servicios de salud para que nieguen atención médica a personas transgénero, motivado por «la oposición ideológica de esta administración a las personas transgénero y a esta atención sanitaria».

La organización Human Rights Campaign emitió un comunicado criticando a la administración por intentar acceder a los historiales médicos privados de las personas, calificando la medida como «una peligrosa escalada en los ataques contra los proveedores de servicios de salud».

Un grupo de activistas en representación de la comunidad LGBTQ y sus aliados se manifestó frente al tribunal Lower Tweed de Manhattan para exigir mayores protecciones ante la ofensiva de la administración.

En su respuesta pública, NYULH afirma que está evaluando opciones sobre cómo proceder respecto a la citación judicial, pero no ha revelado si impugnará o no las acciones de la administración.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

June 20, 2026

Joy in the Struggle: The life of Bea Lumpkin, 1918-2026

By Jenny Carson

Beatrice Shapiro Lumpkin came roaring into the world on Aug. 3, 1918, and she went out of it just after midnight on June 14, 2026, hailed by labor and progressive leaders around the country as a "matriarch of the movement." Dying just weeks shy of her 108th birthday, she was an activist, organizer, and teacher who had an impact on countless people and struggles across the 20th and 21st centuries.

Bea no doubt inherited her fiery spirit from her parents, who were Jewish revolutionaries in Russia before they emigrated to the United States in 1905. Bea's father, Avrom Hirshenhorn, was arrested after returning fire on the Czar's Cossack troops when they attacked the synagogue in Odessa where the Jewish Labor Bund was meeting. The Bund decided to spring Avrom from jail. Bea's mother, Dora Chernin, then Avrom's fiancée, baked and delivered a cake that contained instructions on the proposed jail escape. With a passport in the new name of Morris Shapiro, Avrom made his way to New York City. A year later, Dora joined him.

In 1927, Bea's family moved to the mostly Jewish working-class Bronx neighborhood of Hunts Point. Eager to escape the oppressive conditions in the garment industry, Dora and Morris had opened a small laundry shop. Bea spent her early years in the laundry watching her mother iron clothing all day. As she grew older, she learned how to sort the laundry and use the mangle machine (an ironer). Earning less than the unionized factory workers that patronized their shop, Bea's parents retained their socialist outlook, and Bea says she was born "knowing which side I was on."

At age 9, Bea took her first train ride to Passaic, N.J., to support striking textile workers there.

Bea was editor of the school newspaper and a member of the Arista Honor Society but was stripped of all honors after May 1, 1931, because she had skipped school to attend the International Workers' Day march.

Student leader

A free speech fight at Monroe High School in 1933 led 15-year-old Bea into the National Student League and soon after, the Young Communist League. Since that time, Bea often said, she "never had a moment when I had nothing to do.



Bea Lumpkin at her 100th birthday celebration at the Chicago Teachers Union Center in 2018. | Photo courtesy of Gokhan Cukurova

There were always picket lines for workers on strike, demonstrations to demand food for a hungry family, knocking on doors to sell the *Daily Worker*, or bring people out to vote."

She made speeches on street corners denouncing Hitler and the rising wave of fascism. Her involvement in the "Free the Scottsboro Nine" campaign helped her understand the need for multiracial unity.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Joy in the Struggle: The life of Bea Lumpkin, 1918-2026

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

When she graduated from high school in 1934, Bea enrolled at Hunter College, a city college with free tuition (by this time her family was on relief, as the laundry business folded due to the Great Depression). She always remembered the injustice of not being allowed to major in physics because the all-women's school did not have a full physics program.

At a very young age Bea had developed a feminist consciousness, a sensibility she attributed to her mother. During the 1905 Russian Revolution, a young Dora Chernin had brought ammunition hidden in her long skirts to the soldiers on the frontlines, all the while dodging bullets from the Cossack troops. Dora Shapiro would take her daughter out with her when she went canvassing and ringing doorbells to recruit new members to the International Workers Order.

Bea remembered that her mother found time for such activities even though she was "always working," first in the needle trades and later in the family's laundry shop. Bea recalled that Chernin Shapiro was the first woman in her neighborhood to cut her hair short and shorten her dresses. It was her mother, she said, who taught her to think for herself.

At Hunter College, when the school threatened to raise the price of a half pint of milk from five to six cents, a not insignificant amount of money for the mostly working-class students, Bea and other members of the Young Communist League organized a boycott and convinced the school to keep the price at five cents. If the milk protest wasn't enough, Bea and other student activists had also gotten themselves on the dean's blacklist due to a protest they organized against a visit of the ambassador from Nazi Germany. A few weeks later, the dean suspended Bea after she led a group of classmates to join the National Student Strike for Peace.

Bea was also active in many of the labor struggles that were transforming New York and other cities across the nation in the 1930s. In 1935, on a picket line in front of Ohrbach's Department Store on 14th Street, she was arrested for the first time. She was picked up a while later in front of the New York Public Library for "peddling" the *Daily Worker* on park property.

'Hey CIO girl!'

Not yet 20, Bea was among the 30 organizers to be hired by the CIO in 1937 to organize New York City's more than 30,000 laundry workers under the newly-formed Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

Conditions in the laundries—where many of the workers were African American women—were among the worst in the city. Bea remembered that as word spread that the organizers were on their way to a plant, workers would run out and shout at her: "Hey, CIO girl! We want a union too!" Bea helped the workers establish shop committees that included a worker from each department.

She won the trust of the workers by answering their questions honestly. When some of the workers conveyed fears to her that the union might sell them out, she replied: "Well, that depends on you. If you go to the meetings, and you're active and on top of them, then they can't sell you out." Over the next few months, Bea was among the organizers who were able to sign up close to 20,000 workers in the Laundry Workers Industrial Union.

A quick succession of jobs followed her time in the laundry. She operated a drill press and a milling machine in Queens and worked briefly at Emerson Radio in Manhattan. Eager to spread her wings, in 1942 she moved to Buffalo and got a job checking electronics equipment for Sylvania Radio.

In the 1940s, Bea was blessed with two wonderful children, Carl and Jeanleah. After an amicable divorce from her first husband in 1946, Bea met her soulmate, Frank Lumpkin. Bea met Frank through his remarkable family, in particular his mother, Hattie Lumpkin. Bea described Hattie as her mentor for community work. Deeply rooted in the community, Hattie was a force within Buffalo's Communist Party and a community activist. Bea became fast friends with Hattie and her daughter Jonnie. The three women spent their evenings knocking on doors campaigning against Nazism and racism.

The Lumpkins—an impressive team

Bea and Frank married on Oct. 22, 1949, in Chicago. They spent their early married years living in Gary, Ind., while Bea worked at Allied Radio until she was fired for being pregnant and Frank worked as a chipper at Wisconsin Steel in South Chicago. Bea and Frank were blessed by two more wonderful children, Paul and John. Bea worked long distance writing copy for an electronics company in Chicago.

Together, the Lumpkins were an impressive team. It was the McCarthy era, and neighbors soon reported that FBI agents were asking about the interracial couple. Undeterred, Frank and Bea threw themselves into community organizing.

When they discovered that the septic tanks were leaking into the water wells, they organized their neighbors and launched a ten-year battle that ended with the city providing sewers. The city could not give them clean drinking water, however, because the water was apparently privately owned.

The Lumpkins would also join the many civil rights battles that would culminate in the passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts in 1964 and 1965.

Pioneer of multi-cultural education

Bea began her career in education at the age of 47 when she became a Chicago Public School teacher. She went on to become a tenured associate professor of math at Malcolm X College.



'Comrades and sweethearts': Bea and Frank Lumpkin in 1950. | Photo courtesy of Bea Lumpkin

As Bea explained, her life experiences—motherhood, her job as a writer of instructions for electronic kits, and above all else, civil rights and labor activism—prepared her well for her career in teaching. As a professor, Bea welcomed her students' demands for African American Studies, Latino Studies, and Women's Studies. Since textbooks largely omitted this information, Bea became a researcher, an author, and an advocate for multicultural education.

She published groundbreaking books and essays on the multicultural roots of mathematics and science including: *African and African-American Contributions to Mathematics, Mathematics in Ancient Egypt, Math: A Rich Heritage*, as well as articles in leading social science and scientific journals. Her pioneering work helped establish the centrality of African contributions to the development of mathematics knowledge. Bea developed curriculum and teaching resources and served as a consultant to public school systems in Portland, Ore., Chicago, Detroit, and Milwaukee.

Through all of this important educational work, she continued her organizing and political action. Bea was present at the 1974 founding of the Coalition of Labor Union Women. She served on CLUW's National Executive Board and for 20 years was on the executive of the Chicago chapter of CLUW. She continued to act as a mentor to younger trade union sisters.

In 1979, she and Frank moved to Chicago's South Shore neighborhood. From there, they supported the successful 1983 mayoral campaign of African-American Harold Washington.

Bea's book Always Bring a Crowd chronicled Frank's 17-year battle to hold Wisconsin Steel accountable. The company manipulated bankruptcy laws to steal millions of dollars in wages and pensions when it closed in 1980.

With Bea at his side and represented by labor lawyer Tom Geoghegan, Frank launched a Save our Jobs Committee. While the plant never reopened, the Save Our Jobs Committee forced the company to pay its former workers $19 million.

The couple remained deeply in love, united by their shared belief that only through social change would racism, sexism, poverty, and war be eradicated. Frank died in 2010.

In 2013, Bea published her autobiography Joy in the Struggle: My Life and Love, documenting her remarkable life of activism, work, family, and friends. In addition to her extended family of friends and comrades and four children, Bea had several grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren.

In her 90s, she took on Southwest Airlines for age discrimination, while in her 100s, Bea continued to walk picket lines in her hometown of Chicago and campaign for pro-labor candidates. She said that she believed women's rights and civil rights can "best advance when labor's rights advance." She worked hard on the election and re-election of President Barack Obama, watching with amazement and contentment as young people crowded into tiny offices working the phones for the candidate of hope.

Tireless retiree

Bea never slowed down even in her most senior of senior years. She sat on the Executive Board of the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans and the South Chicago chapter of the Steelworkers Organization for Active Retirees. As a member of the Chicago Teachers' Union Retirees, she supported the 2012 Chicago teachers' strike marching alongside community members demanding fair treatment of teachers and better services for students. They were also challenging the closing of 50 public schools in African American and Latino communities.

In 2017, Bea helped found INTERGEN, a coalition of retirees from the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans and young activists from the labor movement, the United Steelworkers Next Gen, Chicago Young Workers, and Chicago Student Action. The intergenerational and multiracial group supported initiatives such as the "Fight for $15" minimum wage, Free Tuition Illinois, and broader struggles to win affordable health care and preserve Social Security.

In 2020, amid the lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bea appeared on television screens and newspaper front pages around the world when she hit the streets in a full-body hazmat suit to cast her ballot in the pivotal election that year.

Then aged 102, she couldn't take a chance of catching coronavirus, but she said, "I think democracy is on the line, and if we ever want to have another election," then Donald Trump had to be defeated.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

She told *People's World* at the time that the American people "do not want to see fascism in the USA.... It's something so serious—whatever it takes, I'm going to make sure that my ballot is counted."

After the global health crisis passed, Bea once again became a familiar face at demonstrations, peace vigils, and rallies to save Social Security and oppose privatization. She joined countless picket lines in Chicago in front of restaurants, hotels, and even laundries.

In 2022, the Chicago labor movement honored Bea by making her the Grand Marshal of the Labor Day Parade. At 104, she showed up to support Starbucks strikers in the West Loop, offering tales from her decades of labor movement experiences to rally the young people fighting to win a union at the coffee giant. "No matter how big the company is, we workers are stronger—when we're united!" she told them.

Her last article for *People's World*, published in September 2023, provided guidance on "How to prevent a fascist takeover in the U.S.," where she encouraged a united front to defeat the right in the 2024 elections.

Legacy of struggle

After Bea died in June 2026, the proof of her decades of tireless work and commitment was evident in the statements and condolences expressed by movement leaders.

The AFL-CIO, the country's largest labor federation, called her a "giant of the labor movement" and a woman who "embodied solidarity." The labor body's president, Liz Shuler, said, "Bea Lumpkin dedicated her life to proving that when working people stand together, we can change the world."





Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson issued a statement saying that Bea's life "was a testament to the power of principled activism and the enduring belief that ordinary people, working together, can change the world."

The Chicago Teachers Union, which awards a scholarship named for Bea, said, "She never met a struggle she was willing to leave to someone else and accepted the challenges faced by organized labor without reservation or condition."

Joe Sims, co-chair of the Communist Party USA—of which Bea was a member for over 90 years—said, "With the passing of Comrade Bea Lumpkin, we lost a great fighter for peace and social justice.... We pause to dip our banner in her memory."



104-year-old labor veteran Bea Lumpkin rallies striking Starbucks workers in Chicago. | Roberta Wood / People's World

Through example, Bea demonstrated how one person's integrity and passion for social justice can transform individual lives, families, and communities. For almost 108 years, she devoted herself to the cause of the working class, whether they be exploited laundry workers trying to organize during the Depression in New York City; African Americans challenging Jim Crow segregation and state-sanctioned racial violence; unemployed steel workers in Chicago bearing the brunt of deindustrialization and corporate capitalism; union women fighting for equality in the workplace; teachers committed to preserving public education; seniors demanding affordable health care; or young people who dare to believe that another world is possible.

It is impossible to feel cynical about our potential to shape history when one thinks about the indelible mark that Beatrice Lumpkin had on the lives of so many.

Her passion for and commitment to social justice inspires us to feel hopeful for the future, even during the darkest hours.

New front in the Target struggle? Labor joins the Black-led boycott

By Jamal Rich

Two major labor organizations recently affirmed their support for the nationwide Target boycott, which started in February 2025.

The first is the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), which passed a resolution at its 55th convention during Memorial Day weekend in Atlanta encouraging its members to "refrain from patronizing Target until the company demonstrates a clear and measurable recommitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility" and to further promote awareness of the boycott among its membership and encouraging support for Black-owned and union-supported businesses.

The second is the largest labor federation in the United States, comprising 15 million members, the AFL-CIO. At its recent convention in Minneapolis, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) introduced the resolution titled "Calling on 15 Million Members to Support AFT's Boycott of Target, Shop Locally, During Back-to-School Season," and urged the entire federation to call on "parents, communities, and other allies to join us in this campaign to shop local."

The Teachers union urged people to not shop at Target for back-to-school and other school-related supplies until the company "is willing to stand with the Twin Cities, including educators, healthcare workers, public employees, and the students and patients they serve, and publicly call for ICE to stop aggressive enforcement and occupation in Minnesota as well as signing on to the Business for Democracy Pledge to protect our democracy."

Will the labor movement take on leadership of the boycott?

Since Rev. Jamal Bryant's announcement in March that he was pulling his "Target Fast" campaign out of the "Mothership Three" coalition with Tamika Mallory and Sen. Nina Turner, the national boycott movement around Target was left divided. Many participants have been confused as to what concessions were made by Target during negotiations with Bryant and why he decided to suspend his organization's participation.

Target never publicly announced any agreements and denied that any company policy had changed in response to Bryant's announcement. Though the new CEO Michael Fiddelke says he aims to regain the trust of the Black community and has listened to the concerns of his workforce, it remains to be seen whether Target is actually willing to publicly break with the Trump administration's fascist policy of targeting diversity and racial equity programs, otherwise known as "DEI."

Additionally, the democratic forces in Minnesota's Twin Cities, where Target is headquartered, continue to carry the torch against Target, saying they won't stop until the company proves it's willing to stand on the side of democracy.



The labor-community coalition behind the Day of Truth and Freedom, which was organized in response to Trump's ICE terror with Operation Metro Surge, has continued with its advocacy for big corporations to pledge to defend voting rights and to stand against any attacks on the elections in coming midterms.

Part of this effort includes urging Target to not only commit itself to being a Fourth Amendment workplace but to also to truly support its workers and shoppers by defending their basic democratic rights. This parallels the call of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) for Corporate America to condemn the current efforts to dilute Black political power in the South in response to the Supreme Court's recent gutting of the Voting Rights Act.

In light of the assault on civil rights and the continued attack on African Americans in particular, organized labor can play a major role. Perhaps the pair of resolutions passed by CBTU and AFL-CIO represent the beginnings of a consolidated, labor-community effort around a boycott target that is already weak. Such a unified campaign could bring Target to its knees and cripple the company for not standing tall when it comes to DEI and immigration.

The AFL-CIO, if it follows through on the resolution, can mobilize its 15 million members to participate and also initiate new activity around the country to boycott Target in coalition with the Black church and immigrant rights organizations.

Could the boycott spark union organizing in stores?

It remains to be seen whether the labor movement has the appetite to take on another big business, given its major fights with Starbucks and Amazon, two major monopolies in the country. The argument could be made, however, that a dual front is necessary—similar to the approach of Starbucks Workers United (SBWU), which has paired a major union organizing campaign alongside subsequent boycotts of Starbucks stores for as long as the company refuses to bargain in good faith for a fair contract.

Starbucks, which is also inside many Target stores throughout the country, could be an entry point in merging the two struggles and trying to develop an effort to begin organizing workers within Target. The retail giant has a long history of union-busting, which makes such an effort all the more crucial.

Back-to-school is important to rebuild momentum

The AFT's effort to breathe life back into the Target boycott is important and should not go unnoticed. This is the time where there should be active engagement and outreach to AFT affiliates and locals throughout the country to build alternatives to Target for back-to-school supplies and clothes.

These labor-community coalitions should include partnerships with Black-owned small businesses and union shops to organize marketplaces near Target stores that can provide an immediate and accessible alternative for regular shoppers.

This activity and organization could build momentum into the fall for Black Friday, a time when Target will try to lure shoppers back with cheap deals, especially amid the ongoing economic crisis and inflation.

Labor support for the Target boycott is essential, and the AFL-CIO should put resources into printing literature and supporting local coalitions that are forming to build alternative shopping guides and small business-community marketplaces.

If the union movement jumps into the campaign in a major way, it could prove to be a tipping point for beating back corporate cooperation with the Trump administration's racist agenda.

Trump war on Iran wipes out wage growth since he retook office

By Mark Gruenberg



WASHINGTON—Fueled by an enormous increase, more than 40%, in the price of gasoline, Donald Trump's war on Iran has wiped out all the hourly wage growth for workers that occurred since he returned to the Oval Office in January 2025.

That month, an average non-supervisory worker earned $37.53 hourly, adjusting for inflation, the Economic Policy Institute noted. That wage rose to $38.51 this past February. Trump, allied with fellow right-winger Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, launched the war on February 28.

And average hourly wages immediately started to decline, an EPI graphic, based on the Labor Department's Consumer Price Index for May, which was released June 15, shows. Last month, the average hourly wage was back to $37.53.

"The war imposed disastrous costs—both economic and humanitarian—around the world," EPI's Ben Zipperer wrote. "The U.S. has been more insulated from these costs than most other countries, yet even here they are extremely large. The war's effect in pushing up U.S. energy prices has erased all the real (inflation-adjusted) wage gains workers have made during his second term."

Zipperer actually may be understating the case.

A look at the components of the "market basket" which the Labor Department uses to create the CPI confirms what anyone trying to fill up their gas tank knows: The price of gasoline has skyrocketed.

Not adjusted for seasonal variations, gasoline rose by 40.5% nationwide from May 2025 to May 2026. More than half of the hike (21.3%) occurred in March 2026 alone, just after the war began.

Fuel oil was even worse. Unadjusted, it rose 58.9% from May 2025 to May 2026. Most of that, too, was in February (11.1%) and March (30.7%) of this year.

Overall inflation in the last 12 months, from May 2025 to May 2026, was 4.2%, the BLS reported.

Gasoline is 4.1% of the BLS market basket, half the share for food (8.2%). Both are far below shelter (35%), including 25% for mortgage and other home-buying costs, but not rent (7%).

"The sudden burst in inflation, along with slowing nominal wage growth, means the average hourly real wage for private-sector workers is now no higher than it was in January 2025," Zipperer said.

"So far, excessive inflation has been limited to energy and airfares. But as long as the war continues, there is a heightened threat that price increases will spill over to the broader economy, triggering a more permanent increase in the cost of living and further reductions in real earnings," he warned.

All that data emerged after the non-partisan progressive Roosevelt Institute in New York released a survey of attitudes about the economy. The bottom line: People are unhappy, and politicians who look out for themselves and corporations thinking only about the bottom line get the blame.

"Nearly eight in 10 people are worried about their personal finances, either their current situation or their ability to save for the future," the survey reported.

"Only 18% of people surveyed say they haven't had to cut back or make financial trade-offs in the past two years. More than half lack the ability to retire comfortably, nearly half lack freedom from consumer debt, and 40% say they don't earn enough to cover everyday costs and have a cushion for when something unexpected comes up.

"These pressures are also a power problem. When asked what most gets in the way of government providing a good life, 50% of people surveyed cite politicians who look out for themselves instead of the people they represent, while 39% say the system is rigged in favor of corporations and the wealthy."

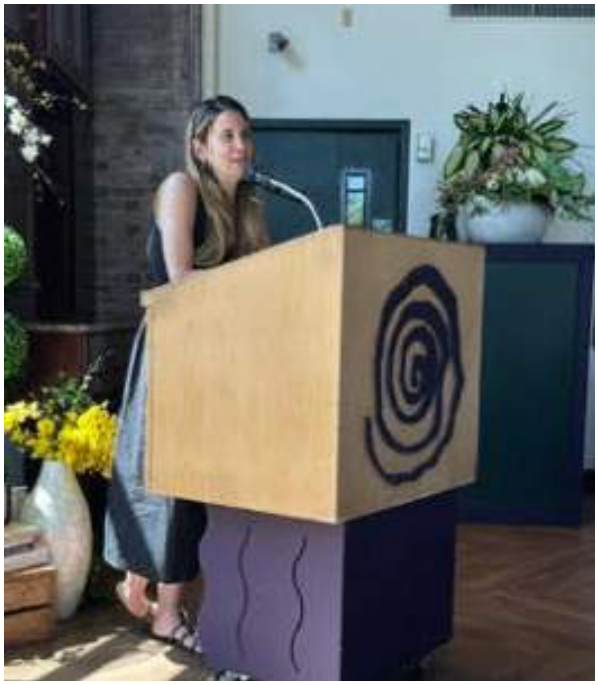
Brian Steinberg, working-class champion

By Special to People's World

HARTFORD, Conn.—Brian Steinberg (Dec. 15, 1941 – May 24, 2026), beloved Communist Party leader, passed away in Hartford on May 24 at the age of 84 surrounded by family. His beautiful and inspiring memorial service on June 12 reflected Brian's lifelong dedication to the multi-racial working-class movement for equality and socialism. Filled with love, the service was packed with family, Communist, union, and community leaders and activists of all ages from Hartford and across Connecticut.

His daughter, Jane Steinberg, called upon all present to carry on her dad's life work. "If you're not already active, find a group that you want to work with and get involved to make a better world," she said in concluding the service held at the Pond House in West Hartford.

Brian pioneered organizing at the grassroots neighborhood level by bringing the *People's World* to hundreds of families at their homes weekly across Hartford up to his last days. These routes became the basis for organizing ongoing Communist Party neighborhood clubs that have fought and won victories, including the first civilian review board at a time of intense police brutality against the African American and Puerto Rican communities in Hartford.



Brian's daughter, Jane Steinberg, was the emcee.



His concept of neighborhood organizing with the *People's World* set a new standard throughout Connecticut and nationally. An outstanding teacher, Brian brought forward the history of fascism, emphasizing the need and urgency to build a united front and protect democratic rights as part of achieving the longer term goal of socialism.

When Brian received a Special Recognition at the People's World Amistad Awards in 2022, when he turned 80, he took the opportunity to warn about rising fascism and called for unity and solidarity, saying, "It is now the time to continue and win more needed gains and to ensure a strong united front in the coming elections and future."

Speakers at the memorial from different parts of Brian's life all recounted stories of their time with him and the fun and adventures they shared.

Tom Connolly told of maintaining Brian's People's World routes while he was in the hospital and recalled first seeing Brian as a teenager attending the famous DownBeats band concerts led by Brian on saxophone. Melvin Thomas, one of the DownBeats, told how they, as the first interracial band, helped integrate the Musicians Union at the time.

Joelle Fishman spoke of being a team with Brian for 58 years ever since they were asked by their mentors to help rebuild the Communist Party in Connecticut following McCarthyite repression. She described her weekly trips to Hartford from New Haven and meeting with Brian in between his academic schedule and precious family time.

"It was a swirl of campaigns, strikes and organizing drives, trips and conferences, and fundraising parties.

We called for ‘tax the rich’ and ‘people before profits’ when no one else would, and along with Art Perlo and others developed practical campaigns along the way,” she said to applause.

“Thank you, Brian. You inspired us with your depth of understanding, with your lifelong courage, and with your constant commitment and vision for socialism.”

She concluded by remembering Brian’s work in the South during Freedom Summer in 1963, announcing, “We now launch Brian Steinberg Solidarity Summer to get out the vote against fascism and for a better world in 2026. We carry on in your name.”

Brian lived life loudly in a rhythm of movement and sound, fueled by his involvement in the popular music scene and politics. He was born in Hartford to an Italian mother and Jewish father. His early home life introduced him to politics at a young age. Brian’s father, Hyman, owned a popular West Hartford pizza restaurant called Dino’s, but Hyman’s passion was his involvement in the Communist Party—something he passed down to his son.

As a card-carrying Communist at the height of McCarthyism, Brian’s father was pursued by the U.S. government and found himself on the front page of the paper. Though Hyman’s political affiliation cost the family their house, he maintained his beliefs, and the experience only further instilled those values in his son. Brian went on to become a leader in the Communist Party and remained an active member throughout his life.

Brian attended Weaver High School in Hartford and was very active in both student government and his school’s marching band. In his freshman year, Brian started playing tenor sax in an R&B band, the aforementioned Downbeats. Brian’s brothers, Bill and Jim, were also members of the band, and Hyman was their manager. The Downbeats were Connecticut’s first integrated group, and their widespread popularity inspired the state’s two music unions (one Black and one white) to integrate.

Though their early gigs were mostly bar mitzvahs and high school dances, the Downbeats eventually gained so much popularity that their concerts brought them to venues across New England and helped finance Brian’s bachelor’s degree at UConn. The Downbeats played back-up for several notable artists when they came through Hartford, such as Gladys Knight & the Pips, The Marvellets, The Four Tops, Chuck Berry, and Stevie Wonder.

At UConn, Brian maintained his political leanings and became one of the first left-wing students to run for and win a student government position.



Connecticut Communist Party Chairperson Joelle Fishman gave the euology at the memorial.

The FBI, which wasn’t happy that a Communist student was in power, came to investigate him. He later continued his activism in Mississippi in 1963, when several civil rights workers were killed by the Ku Klux Klan. Brian headed south, joining the movement to register voters.

Brian attended the March on Washington in August 1963 and was honored to hear Rev. Martin Luther King speak.

Brian’s political involvement took a deeper dive into academia when he completed his master’s at the University of Wisconsin and his Ph.D. at New York University in political science.

Brian met his wife, Merrilee, through his sister, Bobbie. Brian and Merrilee shared a love and passion for activism and the pursuit of social justice. Their 30 years together before her death were filled with rallies, political meetings, heated political conversations, and a close-knit group of friends and family. One notable year, their daughter Jane spent Thanksgiving with her grandparents because both Brian and Merrilee were in jail after being arrested at a protest. Merrilee was a labor organizer who rose quickly through the ranks of the union.

When Merrilee was offered a top organizing job, Brian turned down a professorship offer at Rutgers University to stay at home with their young daughter, Jane. Brian went on to teach for 47 years at Westfield State University in Massachusetts. He taught political science and ran their award-winning Model United Nations club.

Brian later met his partner, Sue Tenorio, through his work on the Hartford police civilian review board.



Members of the Connecticut Communist Party at the memorial.

Sue and Brian were together for 10 years before his death.

Brian is survived by his daughter Jane Steinberg and son-in-law Jordan Cahan; grandchildren Sydney and Dashiell Cahan; siblings Jim Steinberg, Bill Steinberg and his wife Karen; as well as his partner, Sue Tenorio. He also leaves behind beloved nieces and nephews and his dog Mookie. He is predeceased by his sister Bobbie Koplowitz and wife Merrilee Milstein.

May Brian's lifelong fight for justice and equality be an inspiration to all that knew him and beyond.



Communist Party USA National Co-Chair Joe Sims at the memorial.

RAPID RESPONSE: No U.S.-Israel weapons merger!

By People's World

No U.S.-Israel weapons merger!

Call, write, and visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to **demand they oppose the new U.S-Israel military industrial merger (Section 224) being included in the military budget (National Defense Authorization Act).**

At the same time, refuse to allow the entire $1.5 trillion military budget to be adopted which will further destabilize world peace and enrich military corporations, while starving working class people, here and abroad, of basic human needs.

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.



LABOR NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

Recent mass marches in the U.S. are powerful and large but need to grow exponentially in numbers and develop a more unified message, as well as a sharper anti-imperialist critique that connects domestic issues like job loss and inflation with a wasteful and violent foreign policy entrenched in the military industrial complex.

By linking an end to the embargo with a general call to build a peace economy rather than a war economy, activists can articulate a working-class vision of international relations. Our demand, fundamentally, should be to leave Cuba in peace and instead invest resources in our own social services and economic development.

Sustainable Solidarity for Cuba

Our struggle for basic rights and economic improvements in the U.S. is fundamentally linked to the struggle against worldwide imperialism. Cuba understands this, too. This is why their internal struggles focus on energy independence and growing their productive capacities. This is why solidarity work, when it includes bringing aid, should consider what kinds of aid will directly contribute to this long-term goal in addition to bringing much-needed short-term relief in the form of food and medicine.

Essentially, the wisdom here follows the old saying: *if you give a man a fish, he'll eat for a day, if you teach him to fish, he'll eat for life.*

part 12 of this article will appear in 2 weeks.

Nashville se alza en oposición al centro de datos propuesto junto al zoológico de la ciudad

Por Albert Bender

NASHVILLE—Aparentemente de la nada, durante las últimas semanas surgió una propuesta para construir un enorme centro de datos justo al lado del Zoológico de Nashville. En respuesta, el 5 de junio, el zoológico inició una petición en línea que hasta ahora ha reunido más de 460.000 firmas, con miles de firmas adicionales cada día.

La petición cuenta con el apoyo del Consejo Metropolitano de la Ciudad de Nashville, la Junta de las Escuelas Públicas Metropolitanas de Nashville, el alcalde Freddie O'Connell y la vicealcaldesa Angie Henderson.

La junta directiva del Zoológico de Nashville emitió un comunicado afirmando que está "enérgicamente opuesta" al centro de datos, que actualmente se encuentra en la etapa de obtención de permisos. Sería más grande que un campo de fútbol y estaría situado justo al lado del estacionamiento del zoológico. El zoológico expresó su preocupación de que la instalación pudiera causar daños a sus especies animales en peligro de extinción.

El personal del zoológico toma precauciones adicionales para garantizar que los animales se sientan seguros y cómodos. Tiene carteles colocados que promueven que los visitantes mantengan un disfrute silencioso y también limita cuántos visitantes pueden estar cerca de un hábitat al mismo tiempo. El zoológico incluso tiene un acuerdo con el Aeropuerto Internacional de Nashville para asegurarse de que el tráfico aéreo no se vuelva perturbador para sus residentes animales.

La petición del zoológico también expresó preocupación por los efectos que un enorme nuevo centro de datos podría tener en los vecindarios residenciales circundantes. La petición citó "riesgos para comunidades diversas y vulnerables".

Aunque los centros de datos tienen una amplia gama de propósitos comerciales, muchos en Nashville están preocupados por el papel que pueden desempeñar como repositorios de inteligencia artificial para operaciones de vigilancia y como entidades que podrían utilizarse para la planificación y ejecución de guerras.

Los datos de encuestas de Gallup sugieren que 7 de cada 10 estadounidenses se oponen a la construcción de centros de datos.

La oposición al sitio propuesto en Nashville continúa aumentando. En respuesta, el Consejo Metropolitano propuso el 9 de junio una moratoria temporal de 90 días sobre cualquier nuevo desarrollo de centros de datos. La medida fue aprobada por una votación de 26 a 1. La ordenanza, presentada por los concejales Courtney Johnston y Russ Bradford, impondría una suspensión temporal de la aceptación, tramitación y aprobación de permisos para cualquier nuevo centro de datos.

El 11 de junio, la Comisión de Planificación Metropolitana de Nashville celebró una audiencia pública para establecer directrices para la construcción de futuros centros de datos. Según los medios locales, la audiencia contó con una cantidad "sin precedentes" de residentes opositores, muchos de los cuales esperaron durante horas para presentar comentarios preparados. Las filas de personas esperando para hablar se extendían fuera del edificio.

La propuesta tuvo su primera de tres lecturas en la reunión del Consejo Metropolitano del 16 de junio, y habrá una audiencia pública sobre el tema en la reunión del Consejo Metropolitano del 7 de julio. Mientras tanto, miles de personas más continúan firmando la petición cada día.

La lucha de Nashville contra los centros de datos es el capítulo local más reciente de lo que se ha convertido en una oposición a nivel nacional contra estos gigantes tecnológicos.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

June 27, 2026

The Communist Plus & the fight v. Economism: A reply

By Brooklyn Crawford and Joe Sims

In What Constitutes the Communist Party? CPUSA, May Day, and the Communist Plus, P. K. Gandakin and J. Ryder argues that American communists suffer from an inability to respond to the absence of political form in today's mass democratic movement. By "absence of political form," we understand them to mean the lack of a political vehicle capable of moving broad and diffuse mass movements like 'No Kings' in a transformative direction.

In this regard, Gandakin and Ryder identify two main political currents among the left that have a single ideological source, namely, economism. The two trends presently are abstentionist sectarianism on the one side, and on the other, attempts to engage with mass movements. The CPUSA, they identify correctly, is in the second line of movement, which rejects abstentionism.

While acknowledging that the party is formally critical of economism, they assert that in practice it ends up producing economism anyway through the way in which it participates in labor struggles, activist campaigns, and broad coalitions. What is their problem with the CPUSA's style of participation? That it does not distinguish itself enough from liberal progressivism, trade union reformism, or social justice activism. Here, they single out the party's implementation of the communist plus: "... it should be noted that in understanding the 'communist plus' as equal to a program of taxing the rich, boycotting corporations, and perhaps most vitally 'showing up', they have, in effect, ceded the ability to imprint a unique political stamp on present events and have succumbed to the very 'economism' they are attempting to extinguish."

They assert the Party remains on the margins and has failed to place its stamp on unfolding mass movements due to its apparently narrow focus on taxing wealth and corporate boycotts — a telling critique if true.

Misreading the communist plus

But here the authors commit errors of both fact and analysis that severely undermine their argument. The first factual error lies in a misquote of CPUSA co-chair Joe Sims. They write:
"What is the content of the communist critique? Sims clarifies: "Taxing the rich, breaking up the big monopolies, fighting racism, sexism, and homophobia. Add to that boycotting Target and other corporations that have backed away from equal opportunity.



And let's not forget cutting the military budget and ending the forever wars in the Middle East. U.S. imperialism must be defeated!"

The quote attributed to Sims is from a photo essay summarizing the CPUSA's participation in No Kings. The accompanying explanatory text was taken from a heavily edited extemporaneous Instagram video by Sims in which he, following Lenin's Two Tactics, calls for a working-class stamp and leadership of the broad democratic movement.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

The Communist Plus & the fight v. Economism: A reply

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
This social media video was never intended as a definitive statement. In fact, that paragraph does not appear in the Instagram post. For this reason, it's signed by CPUSA.org, suggesting the work of many editorial hands.

Setting aside Gandakin and Ryder's editorial mistake, the second error stems from their selective and one-sided quoting of the actual text in question. Rather than equating the communist plus with taxing the rich and boycotting corporations as the authors suggest, the actual text articulates a much wider range of issues, among them fighting racism, sexism, imperialist wars, etc. Indeed, the article goes on to highlight Palestine, Cuba, the fight for civil rights, statehood for D.C., ending plant closings, and concludes by highlighting the need for working-class leadership in the fight for democracy and the coming midterms — hardly an exclusive focus on economic issues, which we most emphatically agree would be a mark of economism or vulgar Marxism.

What economism actually means

We ask the authors to clarify exactly what they mean by economism. "What Constitutes the Communist Party?" devotes considerable space to quoting Lenin on the subject, but have the writers grasped the essence of the matter?

For Lenin, economism consisted in an exclusive focus on trade union and economic issues, an eschewing of politics, a reliance on spontaneity, along with an emphasis on collaborating tactics in tune with the issues of the day (tactics-as-process) absent and in opposition to a general plan. Lenin insisted on addressing not only economic struggles, but each and every issue that might be of concern to the people of Russia.

The emerging party must be a "tribune of the people." Moreover, in the course of struggle, the party must continually expose the capitalist roots of the crisis, intervening ideologically and raising class and socialist consciousness, so that the fights for reforms are not mere ends in themselves but the means to the socialist goal. This point is central to Lenin's thesis because, in his view, left to themselves, economic struggles will only take the movement so far. It will not encroach on the rule of big capital. Why? Because trade unionist and other forms of democratic thought remain in the realm of bourgeois consciousness and ultimately capitalism.

The party in mass struggle

Is the CPUSA guilty of these mistakes as the writers insist? Does its identification with the present goals of the democratic and trade union movement make it culpable in inadvertently spreading economism? The charge might be true were it merely to repeat the slogans of current protests and leave it there. However, that hardly seems to be the case.

We must sharply disagree with Gandakin and Ryder, who assert with no evidence, or 'evidence' taken out of context, that the party's concept of the communist plus is to equate it with taxing the rich and boycotts. Rather, party members in our day-to-day struggles, along with our schools and written materials, continually use the demands of the day as points of engagement.

We attempt to use these demands to deepen people's understanding of how current crises are rooted in capitalism, and that truly resolving these problems requires a revolutionary change of the system.

The demands of the working class are the immediate things we fight for — our minimum program — but Communists should be and will be the ones to deepen these struggles into one coherent political movement. The "communist plus" is an effort to intervene ideologically in mass struggles with a political emphasis that criticizes not only the conditions which have been catapulted from the capitalist system (unaffordability, lack of jobs, discrimination) but identifies the problem as the system itself. We say that Target is wrong for capitulating to the Trump administration, but we also say that this is the nature of corporations — not only that they prioritize profit over people, but that racist and discriminatory practices are essential for their success. Indeed, they are a source of super-profits.

It's disappointing that Gandakin and Ryder chose to single out the CPUSA's support for the Target boycott as an expression of faulty ideology and politics. It's a campaign that's resonated broadly in the African American community and that has won some recognition for our comrades' outstanding coalition work. Far from being a narrow economic demand, the Target campaign struck a wide chord through the body politic, raising advanced democratic demands before the country, as the African American national question is bound to do given its centrality to class and democratic struggles generally. Target's support for Trump and its decision to allow ICE to use its facilities to round up immigrant workers only accentuates the relevance of these issues.

Taxing the rich or participating in campaigns like the Target boycott, we know, are not the end of our struggle, but are the very point at which we begin our struggle. This is certainly not to diminish the struggle for these reforms. It's through participating in these struggles that the CPUSA is practicing organization, building capacity, training cadres, and directing the movement of the working class to its most powerful tool: unity.

Geese are well aware, it's through fighting for reforms and the failure of these reforms to satisfy the needs of the working class that we'll be able to advance and deepen our struggle toward a socialist future. It is through participation in mass struggle that we will develop a strong political form, and the form that is currently developing must include the participation of the working class and the demands they put forward.

United Front politics in practice

The United Front policy is premised on the idea that communists align with workers and movements on issues of mutual concern as the basis for unity. This does not preclude, while working together, deep, probing debates on differing issues at hand or over a broad array of questions. Not having these conversations would be a glaring symptom of the economism our comrades are attempting to combat. For example, in the New York District, our participation in New York's Mayoral contest did not mean we stayed silent on issues like public housing. We distributed electoral guides that advocated for the top ranking of the mayor, but also rejected his support for Props 2-4 which have given way for corporate owned luxury developments.

We've also been a part of the coalition that is pushing the mayor to keep his campaign promise in supporting the No More 24 campaign — a drive led by working-class women of color in Manhattan's Chinatown.

The CPUSA takes strategic inspiration from the 'Peace, Bread and Land' party of the Bolsheviks. They educated the party and the broader public in the spirit and letter of Marxism, building a revolutionary party in the process. In 2026, the CPUSA is committed to building a People's Front that's united in breaking the billionaire grip on the U.S. political process. This unity is a precondition to advancing a multi-racial democracy, an anti-monopoly coalition government, and revolutionary socialism. The CPUSA's strategy is clear: united fronts built around the burning issues of the day are the way forward.

Is this enough? Or should a revolutionary vanguard do more than articulate the mass movement's current talking points and slogans? It's an important question that should not be evaded, and it's here that, though misformulated, Geese's critique touches on something.

Leadership means going further

Here, leadership necessitates providing an additional "plus," that is, next steps to move the democratic revolution and class struggle forward. Without such steps, we might not only risk getting stuck in the present but also might face a legitimate question: "If the Communists are offering no more than ordinary democratic movements, why join them?" The task at hand then is finding the balance between current demands and stretching them further, but not so far as to narrow the scope of action and lose contact with key sections of working people.

For example, instead of limiting ourselves to calling for an end to plant closings or AI-induced unemployment, Communists in addition advocate shortening the workday and/or week, e.g., a 6-hour day with no cut in pay. Or instead of simply aligning with the call to abolish the electoral college or eliminate the Senate, a radical reform of the voting system like proportional representation is required. The CPUSA and YCL must do much more in bringing forward our platform and solutions. Former chairman Gus Hall put forward that, "We must be the same but different. We must be differently the same."

But why then, the authors might counter, if you have all of this figured out, does the CPUSA remain on the fringe of political developments? A major part of the answer lies in understanding the impact of the party's long-term struggle with right opportunism, revisionism, and reformism: Jay Lovestone, Earl Browder, and Sam Webb's tenures in leadership continue to weigh on the party today. These tendencies expressed themselves after the turn of the century in a renouncing of the communist plus, in a steady downplaying of left and communist candidacies, and in a stiff opposition to taking initiative as a party unless others had done so first.

Bowing to spontaneity, economism, and tailism: these criticisms once had merit but we are aggressively attempting to correct the errors of the past while dealing with all the problems that have developed from it.

Keep in mind that alongside these revisions there were attempts to change the party's name, dissolve its press including its theoretical journal, and even liquidate the organization itself — which was successful in the case of the YCL. The result was the shedding of generations of leadership, splits, losses of revenue, and isolation from general developments. It cannot be overlooked that decades of errors can't be resolved overnight.

Why the CPUSA remains on the margins — and what's changing

While the party's experience with McCarthyism, right opportunism, and revisionism remain weights, we are not so naive to think we are simply victims of our history. A major task lies before us that we are at work trying to solve. How do we make ourselves known and trusted political leaders? Several efforts are already underway: we are running candidates for office, we're in the process of re-launching Political Affairs, and we are developing a new generation of leaders.

Another major area of work that needs to be done is our presence in popular culture. One example is the reformation of our Social Media Collective, who are slowly but surely navigating the online world and learning how we can become more relevant to everyday political discourse. How do we get to a place where we have our own influencers, artists, and spokespeople who can represent us in the mainstream?

Finally, we must also acknowledge the YCL, which *Geese* references and makes another error by claiming it is entrenched in ultra-left politics. While the newly formed YCL, that the authors were familiar with, may have expectedly encountered the ultra-left tendencies of some young Marxists, today YCL chapters reflect the development that has come with organizational discipline.

In NY, Philadelphia, D.C., New Haven, and Michigan, to mention only a few, YCLs are deeply involved in electoral and coalition politics. Though they never came to see the results of their efforts, the authors were a part of this process that has taken the YCL to become a respected organization in communities throughout the country. Through party-led and YCL educational activities, Lenin's Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder has now become a favorite among the YCL that is revisited formally multiple times a year. YCLs across the country are involved politically at every level. Some YCL leaders have worked on multiple city council campaigns, the fight to protect public housing, the years-long No More 24 campaign, and community campaigns demanding police accountability. What about this activity could be deemed "ultra-left"?

Finally, we urge our authors to address their critiques to official party documents: the CPUSA program, National Committee reports, etc. We also welcome the discussion that Geese has prompted and look forward to continuing the debate as we work to take the CPUSA into its next stage of development. If the criticism from Geese is that we are not yet the political force that is needed, we can agree. But we put forward confidently that though we are not yet where we ought to be, we are surely on our way.

Socialism under siege: Cuba embarks on emergency reforms to survive

By C. J. Atkins



State capitalism, socialist market economy, New Economic Policy—whatever term supporters or critics of the Cuban Revolution want to use, it's clear that the emergency reforms being proposed in that country will bring major changes to its socialist system.

On June 19, Cuba's National Assembly unanimously approved a sweeping package of 176 economic measures presented by Prime Minister Manuel Marrero in a nearly two-hour address to lawmakers. The package touches virtually every pillar of the socialist economy: private property, market pricing, labor law, banking, and foreign investment.

It is an early look at what could be a historic transformation—but how and whether these measures get implemented, and who ultimately benefits, remains an open question.

What the reforms include

The scope of the changes is extensive, touching essentially every corner of the national economy.

Foreign investors will no longer be required to form joint ventures with the state, removing a longstanding requirement that kept the Cuban government as a mandatory partner in all outside investment. Private banks will be allowed to enter Cuba's finance sector for the first time, ending decades of state monopoly.

General price controls—which the government admitted had failed to curb inflation and instead drove products into the black market—will be lifted and replaced with targeted subsidies for the most vulnerable.

On private property, the reforms mark a significant departure from past practice.

State-owned properties may now be sold to "national and foreign legal entities and individuals, including Cubans living abroad," according to Marrero's presentation, and private real estate development will be permitted for the first time in generations.

Private companies will be authorized without any cap on the number of workers, opening up opportunities for those with capital to start and/or expand businesses. Cubans will also be permitted to own more than one business and hold equity stakes in multiple firms. New corporate structures including joint-stock companies will be allowed—arrangements common in market economies but historically absent in Cuba because the buying and selling of shares opens the possibility of capital concentration and wealth inequality.

In the labor sphere, private employers will now be able to hire freely, and direct import and export will be permitted without mandatory state intermediaries. Both Cuban and foreign investors will be able to acquire shares in formerly state-run companies. As Prime Minister Marrero told legislators, the measures formally recognize the market as "an instrument for the efficient allocation of resources."

Blockade prompts change

The context for these reforms is unmistakable. Cuba's GDP has contracted by at least 15% since 2020, and the United Nations' Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) projects a further 6.5% contraction by end of 2026, making Cuba the worst-performing economy in the region for the second straight year.

Power blackouts lasting more than 30 hours have become routine. Food, fuel, medicine, and drinking water are in chronically short supply. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, has warned that "children are dying" because doctors lack access to basic medical supplies.

The cause of the immediate crisis is the Trump administration's oil blockade—along with the 66-year old U.S. economic blockade generally. Following the U.S. kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in January 2026, the Trump administration cut off Venezuela's oil exports to Cuba—a supply that had provided as much as 50% of its fuel needs.

Trump then signed an executive order threatening tariffs on any country that ships oil to Cuba, effectively extending the blockade globally. Only a single Russian oil tanker has reached Cuba since late January. The administration has also sanctioned Cuba's national oil company and GAESA, the military-linked conglomerate with ties to nearly every sector of the Cuban economy, and pressured Visa and Mastercard to cut off payment services in Cuba in order to choke off international tourism revenue.

Speaking to the National Assembly just before the vote, President Miguel Díaz-Canel was pointed about what Cuba is up against: "What is being debated here is the dilemma of how to continue the process of socialist construction, which has suffered the longest blockade in history from the world's greatest power."

Yet Díaz-Canel also insisted the reforms were not simply a capitulation. "We are not doing this because of pressure from the Yankees," he told lawmakers, stressing that Cuba was acting "sovereignly."

"Had to be done anyway"

He acknowledged that many of these proposals had been debated internally for years—since at least the 2011 Communist Party congress—and that the government had been "postponing decisions it now deems essential for over 15 years." The president said, "I believe this had to be done anyway, whether we were living this moment or not."

Sounding like Deng Xiaoping circa 1984, Díaz-Canel repeatedly emphasized the need for the economy to grow, for the Cuban people's material living standards to rapidly improve, and for socialism to take a hard, fresh look at its principles.

"Without wealth, there is nothing to distribute," he said, highlighting that fact that achieving social justice requires the creation of material abundance first if it is to have any meaning. Almost 40 years ago, when China was in the early stages of market reforms, Deng made a similar point, saying that common poverty is not equal to socialism.

"The challenge is to produce in these conditions, create wealth, and then distribute with social justice and fairness, not egalitarianism," Díaz-Canel said, declaring that the Cuban economy had to get rid of its flat wage system.

With only the smallest of pay differences between workers of different qualifications and responsibilities, the president said there was not enough material incentive to encourage people to exert more effort or strive to advance themselves or their workplaces. His message was that harder work has not come with a reward, and moral incentives alone are not enough to keep people motivated long term.

Acknowledging that paying workers flat wages supplemented by rations and subsidies was an inherently bad practice, Díaz-Canel admitted that these were distortions of socialism and have to be changed regardless of the external pressures Cuba faces.

"There are obstacles that don't stem from outside or from blockades. There's sluggishness, bureaucracy, regulations that stifle those who want to produce, and decisions we've delayed. What depends on us must be changed by us, and we need to change it now," he asserted.

Marrero echoed that the reforms "do not constitute a deviation from our socialist project; on the contrary, they respond to its development" and attempt to improve it.

He mentioned the efforts of former President Raúl Castro to update Cuba's economic and social model: "not to be dogmatic or inflexible, to banish the mechanical association between socialism and egalitarianism, and to recognize that socialist planning does not exclude, but must incorporate and regulate the rules of the market."

Castro, facing a U.S. criminal indictment for the 1996 downing of a Brothers to the Rescue plane, participated in the session via video conference and sent a written letter to the Communist Party Politburo and the National Assembly calling the measures "beneficial" and urging their rapid implementation.

More like Lenin?

Some commentators—including Cuban opposition leader Manuel Cuesta Morúa, who called the package "belated Chinese reforms"—will be quick to compare these changes to China's post-1978 "socialist market economy" or Vietnam's *Đổi Mới* ("renovation") of the 1980s. Those comparisons have some surface validity: In each case, a Communist Party-led government introduced market mechanisms, private ownership of capital, and foreign investment while maintaining political control and limiting capitalist participation in the affairs of state.

But a more apt historical parallel may be Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP), launched in Soviet Russia in 1921. Then as now, the situation involved a state with a severely underdeveloped industrial base, cut off from the world economy by hostile powers actively working to strangle it. Lenin was explicit that the NEP was a retreat into "state capitalism"—allowing private trade, foreign concessions, and market mechanisms—as a necessary survival measure to rebuild the material base from which socialism could eventually advance.

The difference, and it is a crucial one, is that Lenin had already beaten back foreign military invasions and domestic counter-revolution (largely) before launching the NEP. Cuba is being forced to make these concessions precisely while under a brutal external assault.

The Trump administration has been explicit that its goal is regime change, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio openly stating that removing Cuba's socialist government is a precondition for lifting the embargo under the 1996 Helms-Burton Act. Cuba is not experimenting with state capitalism from a position of stability; it is doing so with a gun to its head.

Who will invest—and at what cost?

This raises the central uncertainty hanging over the entire reform package. The U.S. controls much of the world's financial system and has demonstrated willingness to sanction any third party that does business with Cuba. Even a partial relaxation of restrictions would likely require either China or the U.S. to make a major move on investment.

The most optimistic scenario for Havana likely involves Chinese companies investing in substantial portions of the Cuban economy—in mining, energy, tourism infrastructure, and agriculture. China has long-term strategic interests in strengthening its relationships with Cuba and in the Caribbean region and has some experience navigating around U.S. sanctions.

But this approach would not lift the U.S. blockade, and whether the government of China would be willing to absorb the financial and diplomatic costs of even deeper engagement with Cuba in the current climate remains to be seen.

The other scenario—and arguably the more likely one given Washington's leverage—is that these concessions become a lever for Trump to extract political and economic gains. That could mean waiving portions of the blockade in exchange for allowing U.S. corporations to begin acquiring companies, resources, mines, hotels, and resorts.

In some cases, this would effectively allow descendants or successors of pre-revolutionary owners to repurchase assets nationalized after 1959—a backdoor restoration that the Cuban government has long resisted as a matter of principle and that many Cubans would regard as a betrayal of the revolution itself.

Many U.S. corporations and wealthy Cuban exiles in Florida are no doubt hoping for a USSR-style collapse in Cuba—the complete overthrow of socialism, including mass privatizations and sell-offs of public property. The leadership of the Cuban government and the ruling Communist Party, however, have made clear that they intend no such outcome.

An early look

Nothing is settled yet, though, and it will take time for reforms to play out and yield results. Díaz-Canel himself warned that "equally or more important than the approval of these transformations is their proper and timely implementation," acknowledging the gap between legislative approval and real-world change.

It is not yet clear through what mechanisms, or on what timetable, the 176 measures will take effect. Many questions remain unanswered. The session ended, though, with Díaz-Canel turning to Fidel Castro's iconic slogan: "¡Socialismo o muerte!"—"Socialism or death!"

What is clear is that Cuba is betting that measured doses of capitalism can save socialism—a wager Lenin made over a century ago under very different circumstances. Whether the Cuban leadership can navigate the profound contradictions that bet involves, while resisting the pressures that could turn a tactical retreat into a permanent transformation, is the defining question of the months ahead.

Bridge North Texas and Black Faith Coalition launch voter power campaign across Dallas

By Stu Becker

DALLAS—Over two weekends in June, Bridge North Texas and the Black Faith Coalition brought together faith leaders, labor organizers, and community activists for a series of trainings and rallies aimed at building progressive people power and driving voter turnout among poor and low-wage Texans.

The effort kicked off on Saturday, June 6, at Friendship West Baptist Church—a historically African American congregation—with an info session and non-compliance training titled *Organized People Change Everything*. A second session followed the next day at the Communication Workers of America union hall in Dallas. Together, the trainings covered authoritarianism, fascism, civil disobedience, and strategies for progressive organizing.

Bridge North Texas seeks to unite faith communities, historically Black churches, labor unions, and civil rights organizations into a broad, independent coalition built for the long haul.

At the opening of the Saturday training, Bridge North Texas and Black Faith Coalition leader Edwin Robinson cited author Steve Phillips—whose books include *How We Win the Civil War: Securing a Multiracial Democracy* and *Ending White Supremacy for Good and Brown is the New White: How the Demographic Revolution Has Created a New American Majority* —as a major influence on the organization's direction.



Presenter Tasneem Al-Michael offered a sobering framework for understanding the current political moment. Authoritarianism, he argued, is a system—not just a person—that relies on social, political, economic, and cultural institutions to sustain it. He traced its roots in the United States to a long history of racism and white supremacy, and warned that the country is now experiencing what he called an "authoritarian breakthrough"—a narrow window in which an authoritarian regime moves aggressively to consolidate power and dismantle the checks on it.

The following week, on June 9 and 10, Bridge North Texas hosted online nonviolence training sessions led by Vonnetta West and Curtis Johnson of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change.

Drawing on Dr. King's legacy, the presenters walked participants through the six principles of nonviolence—among them, that nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people, that it seeks to defeat injustice rather than people, and that it holds voluntary suffering for a just cause to be redemptive and transformative.

They also outlined six steps for nonviolent social change, moving from information gathering and education through personal commitment, negotiation, direct action, and ultimately reconciliation. The goal, they emphasized, is the "beloved community"—a society grounded in love and justice.

Bishop Barber brings the fire

The series reached its emotional peak on Saturday, June 13, when Bishop William Barber II, co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign, headlined a rally in Dallas alongside Bridge North Texas and the Black Faith Coalition.

Barber, whose thundering oratory blends scripture with political analysis, delivered an unsparing message: The progressive movement failed to do enough to stop Trump and the rise of what he called "neo-fascism"—and it needs to own that.

"All of this ain't Trump's fault," he told the crowd. "Everyone of us got to say, 'I'm part of this too, I didn't do all I should've done.' The church ain't done all it should've done.

"Who let 'em in? And why did we only get excited after they destroyed the Voting Rights Act? The Voting Rights Act was attacked in 2013, we didn't have one major march on Voting Rights, in 2014 and 2015, when they totally killed it, now everybody wants to march."

He backed that charge with numbers. Trump won the 2024 presidential election by only two million votes, Barber noted, while 89 million Americans stayed home. In Texas alone, Trump's margin was 1.6 million votes—but 2.5 million poor and low-wage voters never cast a ballot. Congressional control, he pointed out, came down to roughly 7,000 votes separating Hakeem Jeffries from Mike Johnson as Speaker.

"We think Trump won by this big mandate—No! We didn't fight!" Barber said.

His prescription was a march to the polls this year and in every election—block by block, congregation by congregation.

He challenged church leaders to stop running organizers out of their pews and start building political infrastructure within their own communities.

"If you don't have a political action committee in your congregation to know who voted, you ain't serious," he said. "You don't leave a mega church and then tell everybody else what to do—you organize that mega church and then two miles around that church."

Barber was equally pointed in rejecting both partisan loyalty and racial separatism as paths forward. He reminded the audience that nine Democrats joined Republicans in 2020 to block a living wage increase, and invoked Dr. King's warning that the greatest fear of the wealthy oligarchy is the moment poor Black and white Americans unite into a single voting bloc powerful enough to reshape the nation's economic architecture.

"The church *always* needs to stand up," he emphasized, "not just right now. It's not because we got a certain administration. It doesn't matter the administration, Democrat or Republican.

"The moment that we are in is not white supremacy alone.... The moment we are in is neo-fascism and authoritarianism. And authoritarianism ain't after just Black folk, it's after everybody that's poor and marginalized," said Barber.

"Neo-fascism takes all of the economic systems and turns them to the greedy, by letting inflation run, cause that's the way you pay back the friends that got you in office. Or let oil prices go up cause that's how you pay back...."

Again emphasizing the need for multiracial unity, he said, "Neo-Black nationalism will not get us out of this. That's what they want—the white folk over here, and the Black folk over there."

He also drew a direct line between religious nationalism and money, arguing that Texas oil wealth funds much of the movement. "If you don't understand that connection, you really don't understand the battle that we are in."

What comes next

The Black Faith Coalition is now moving from training to action. Under the banner of *Freedom Summer 2.0*, the coalition has announced a statewide series of organizing events: July 24–25 in Houston, August 21–22 in Austin, and September 18–19 in Dallas—all aimed at turning out the very voters Bishop Barber described: poor, low-wage, and largely absent from recent elections.

Justice for Karmelo Anthony

By African American Equality Commission, CPUSA

Karmelo Anthony, a 17-year-old Black youth, was found guilty of stabbing 17-year-old Austin Metcalf, a white youth, at a high school track meet in Frisco, Texas, on April 2, 2025. The racist U.S. justice system tried Anthony as an adult. He faced a sentence of five to 99 years, or life in prison.

He was found guilty of first-degree murder and sentenced, after three hours of deliberation on June 9, 2026, to 35 years in prison.

Anthony's mother, Kayla Hayes, was the sole witness during sentencing, pleading for mercy for her child.



"My son is no murderer," Hayes said. "My son didn't intend to hurt anyone. My son was defending himself. And that's what hurt so bad." Anthony's supporters chanted "Free Karmelo" outside the courthouse after the verdict was announced. Some supporters argued that Anthony is entitled to a jury of his peers and because he did not get one, on that ground alone, he is entitled to a new trial — contending that the prosecution's stated reasons for striking all Black jurors are a racist pretext.

In Collin County, where the trial took place, Black people make up 12.1% of the population, yet of the approximately 600 residents summoned for jury duty, not one Black person ended up seated. The jury selection was racist, and the judge allowed the trial to proceed with the racist jury in place. Anthony was not judged by an impartial jury as the U.S. Constitution mandates. Nor was he judged by a "jury of his peers," a principle enshrined in the Magna Carta of 1215 that carried forward into the U.S. legal tradition.

Anthony's defense attorney said, "We believe there are several important issues for the appellate courts to consider. An appeal is the next part of the legal process and a right afforded every American." The appeal is expected to challenge the jury selection process and the court's rejection of key defense arguments. Some House Democrats also weighed in, arguing that Black defendants are not allowed to be fearful or claim self-defense at the same standard as others, and calling for appeals and further review.

The prosecution's argument, that last April's events were "race neutral" and therefore the inclusion of Black individuals on the jury was not necessary, is absurd. How can anything in a country built on the economic exploitation and racist oppression of Black workers — as slaves and as underpaid laborers — ever be "race neutral"? In truth, Black people in the United States have never experienced neutral treatment on the basis of race. It is inconsistent with, and in contradiction to, the history of our country to believe otherwise. This is shown in the disparity in outcomes between this trial and the trial of Kyle Rittenhouse, for example. Both Rittenhouse and Anthony were teenagers. Both argued that they acted in self-defense.

However, the jury in the former case took 26 hours to determine that the accused was innocent. And the jury in the latter case took only 3 hours to determine the accused is a murderer. Rittenhouse walks free and will get to enjoy his young adult life. Anthony was sentenced to 35 years, and he will spend his most formative years behind bars. Additionally, it's important to highlight that Black people still face discrimination in the justice system, even as victims. Just earlier this month, a South Carolina store owner was found not guilty in the murder of a 14-year-old Black boy, Cyrus Carmack-Belton, who he shot in the back over a water bottle. Does any of this sound "race neutral?"

Not only does the white supremacist myth of race "neutrality" or race "blindness" negate the centuries-long oppression of Black people in this country, its continued advocacy sets Black folks further back. It was the rationale given for striking down Affirmative Action. It was the justification given for dismantling the Voting Rights Act. It's the justification used for the discrimination faced by Anthony and other Black folks in the U.S. justice system. And it will continue to be the reason given by the capitalist class, backed by MAGA fascists in the GOP, when they try to thwart attempts to address our country's history of racist oppression and exploitation of Black people. Perpetuating the lie of racial "blindness" — while continuing the super-exploitation of Black workers — keeps the capitalist class rich and in power, and keeps the working class divided.

The African American Equality Commission CPUSA (AAEC) joins with Next Generation Action Network (NGAN) in condemning the racist nature of the trial, one in a centuries-long stream of racist lynchings implemented through the U.S. "justice" system against Black people, and particularly young Black men.

We reject all claims of race "neutrality" in this or any other case in the U.S. In a nation built on racist enslavement and oppression of millions of people, with Jim Crow laws and their violent enforcement, there can be no pretense that race is neutral anywhere or anytime. We particularly reject race "neutrality" in a time when white supremacists are in power in many states and in the White House.

A more just and democratic system for all people is possible. We need a broad labor-led movement and mass mobilization of our multiracial, multiethnic, multi-gendered working class along with allies to achieve it. Together, united, we can fight for and achieve a civil rights Third Reconstruction, combat the continued racist undermining of the post-Civil War Reconstruction and Second Reconstruction civil rights gains, and defeat the anti-rights counterrevolution of the MAGA period.

Together, we can build socialism. A better world is possible!

Supreme Court lets ExxonMobil sue Cuba for $1 billion

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—By a partisan 6-3 margin—all GOP-named justices for, all Democratic-named justices against—the U.S. Supreme Court gave oil giant ExxonMobil the go-ahead to sue the Cuban government for at least $1 billion.

Writing for the majority, Justice Brett Kavanaugh explained that generally foreign governments, and their diplomats in the U.S., too, have "sovereign immunity" from U.S. lawsuits.

But the Helms-Burton Act, which Congress approved and Democratic President Bill Clinton signed in 1996, made an explicit exception for Cuba, and its "agencies and instrumentalities" unless the U.S. president waived the act's impact.

Two Cuban government-owned oil companies, UniónCuba-Petróleo and Corporación CIMEX, S. A., which ExxonMobil sued along with the government, now run the refinery, the pipelines, and the 100-plus gas stations ExxonMobil's predecessor, Standard Oil, left behind in 1959-60.

The ruling is another pro-corporate decision by the Supreme Court's GOP-named majority, which has helped drive public regard for the High Court into negative numbers.

That same majority has gutted the Voting Rights Act, blessed unlimited corporate cash in politics—including "dark money"—and turned a blind eye to oligopolies, monopolies, and the Bill of Rights.

ExxonMobil doesn't need the money. It reported profits of $28.8 billion last year and is on track for an identical figure this year, market analysts say.

Presidents prior to Donald Trump waived the section of the Helms-Burton Act allowing lawsuits against the Cuban government. Trump, catering to the politically powerful rightist Cuban and anti-Castro community of South Florida, ended the waiver in 2019. That reinstated companies' and individuals' right to sue.

The original value of the oil firm's works prior to the 1959 Cuban revolution and subsequent takeover was $71 million. With inflation, penalties, and 6% annual interest starting in 1960, it's grown to $1 billion. Helms-Burton also allows triple damages.

The Democratic-named justices, Elena Kagan, Sonia Sotomayor, and Ketanji Brown Jackson, dissented. Writing for them, Kagan said, "nothing in the text or 'architecture' of the Helms-Burton Act suggests Congress abrogated the sovereign immunity of these defendants—much less that it did so with the requisite unmistakable clarity."

Neither U.S. lawmakers with large anti-Castro Cuban-American populations—Reps. Robert Menendez Jr., D-N.J., and Mario Diaz-Balart, Carlos Gimenez, and Maria Elvira Salazar, all R-Fla., had immediate reactions to the court's ruling.



And the websites of the *Miami Herald* and the two national Spanish-language networks, Telemundo and Univision, show they did not cover it. The Cuban Embassy in the U.S. also posted no immediate comment.

But in his speech to the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party a week before the court's ruling, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel discussed trying to attract more foreign investment as part of a wide-ranging economic reform plan to counter the U.S. embargo and other right-wing strangleholds on the island republic.

"We must not only tell foreign investors where to invest, but also empower them to invest in the economic sector of their interest, and to directly select their workers, always without state intermediaries," Díaz-Canel stated.

"We must authorize foreign direct investment in the national private sector...with clear rules on ownership, repatriation, reinvestment, and dispute resolution." That includes "facilitating investment models with different modalities and with all stakeholders."

Díaz-Canel sharply criticized the imperialist nature of the embargo, which has lasted since 1960—as well as Trump's obsession with overthrowing the Cuban government.

That is symbolized by the Trump regime's recent indictment of former Cuban President Raúl Castro, now 94, on U.S. charges of conspiracy and murder.

Díaz-Canel did not mention the Helms-Burton Act specifically, even though it opens the door to suits by other firms and individuals, such as the Fanjul brothers.

Those Trump pals and Castro foes have a virtual monopoly on U.S. raw cane sugar production. Trump name-checked the Fanjuls at the White House fundraiser among corporate donors for his controversial ballroom.

LABOR NEWS

Cuba Honors its Youth Ahead of the 64th Anniversary of the UJC

By CPUSA International Department

Miguel Díaz-Canel, President of the Republic of Cuba and the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, led a ceremony recognizing young people and institutions for their contributions to Cuba's revolutionary process, as part of activities marking the upcoming anniversary of the Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas (UJC). During the event, Díaz-Canel awarded the Flag of Honor—the highest distinction granted by the UJC National Bureau—to ten institutions for their achievements, while twelve youth comrades received the Julio Antonio Mella Order for outstanding merit. The ceremony was attended by senior government and party officials, who also presented additional recognitions to dozens of young recipients.

Speaking at the event, Yaliel Cobo Calvo, Second Secretary of the UJC National Committee, emphasized that the awards symbolize not only excellence in study and work, but also the commitment of Cuba's youth to defend and continue the revolutionary project. He highlighted the determination of younger generations to uphold national sovereignty and face global challenges with courage and confidence. As part of the day's activities, Díaz-Canel also took part in National Defense Day exercises in Havana, where military drills were conducted. Among those honored were young combatants recognized for their role in recent operations, presented as examples of dedication and resilience for the country's youth. The ceremony forms part of broader efforts to highlight youth participation across key sectors such as production, education, research, and national defense.

Más de 1.000 delegados vitorean el llamado: Expulsar a MAGA el 3 de noviembre.

Por Tim Wheeler

SPOKANE, Washington.—Fui delegado en la Convención del Partido Demócrata del Estado de Washington en Spokane, del 19 al 21 de junio. Hubo una multitud de 1.000 personas de todo el Estado Evergreen: delegados, suplentes e invitados de todas las razas y orígenes. Recibieron con una estruendosa ovación de pie el llamado de la representante Pramila Jayapal (D-Seattle) a una masiva campaña de "movilización del voto" en las elecciones generales del 3 de noviembre para poner fin al control MAGA de la Cámara de Representantes y el Senado y salvar a nuestra nación de la oligarquía multimillonaria de Trump.

Shasti Conrad, presidenta del Partido Demócrata del Estado de Washington, dio la bienvenida a la multitud al Centro de Convenciones de Spokane. Criticó duramente a los agentes al servicio de los multimillonarios por intentar obtener estatus electoral para una medida destinada a derogar el "Impuesto a los Millonarios" aprobado por la legislatura el año pasado, y exhortó al Partido Demócrata a defender esta medida para gravar a los ricos, una medida que constituye un pequeño paso hacia la corrección del extremadamente regresivo sistema tributario del estado.

Jesse Wineberry, quien vestía el elegante atuendo de un padre fundador del siglo XVIII, dijo ante una reunión repleta del Caucus Laboral que, en sus diez años en la legislatura —ascendiendo hasta el cargo de Jefe de Disciplina de la Mayoría— acumuló un historial de votación 100 % favorable a los trabajadores. La multitud vitoreó. Hizo un llamado a la convención para aprobar un nuevo texto en la plataforma del Partido Demócrata de Washington que exigiera el pago de "reparaciones" para compensar a las personas negras esclavizadas cuyo trabajo no remunerado —como el de sus tatarabuelos— contribuyó con decenas de miles de millones de dólares a la economía de la nueva nación.

Si los demócratas de Washington añaden este lenguaje a su plataforma, dijo Wineberry, será el primer partido demócrata estatal en adoptar la iniciativa de las reparaciones. Más tarde, la convención hizo historia al votar para añadir el lenguaje favorable a las reparaciones a la plataforma del Partido.

Los delegados estaban furiosos porque el presidente Donald Trump está maquinando para quitarnos el derecho a votar por correo, un sistema respaldado por miembros de base tanto de los partidos Republicano como Demócrata que aumenta el número de personas que votan y reduce el fraude electoral. Formé parte del Comité de Resoluciones de la Convención, que presentó 91 resoluciones a la convención para su aprobación o rechazo. Los delegados aprobaron decenas de resoluciones de izquierda progresista, a veces rechazando la recomendación de "Votar No".

Fue rechazada por un estrecho margen, a pesar de una apasionada súplica de una delegada de Seattle, una resolución para recortar el presupuesto militar en un 50 % y redirigir los ingresos ahorrados a la atención médica, la educación pública, la vivienda asequible y otras necesidades humanas.

Otra resolución presentada por muchos delegados árabe-estadounidenses fue una resolución de emergencia que les exigió reunir las firmas de 75 delegados para ser presentada a debate y votación. Denuncia el genocidio infligido por Trump y el primer ministro israelí Netanyahu, y pide rechazar el plan de fusionar la inteligencia militar de Estados Unidos e Israel. Una abrumadora mayoría votó a favor de aprobar esta resolución.

Karen Ducey, fotógrafa del personal del Seattle Times, me vio usando mi gorra griega de pescador adornada con insignias de una docena de diferentes organizaciones de masas de la coalición Dump-Trump. Me tomó una foto a mí y a mi gorra. ¡Esta convención me levantó el ánimo y me llenó de energía! ¡POR FAVOR, regístrate y VOTA!

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July 4, 2026

Miscarriage of justice? Advocates condemn Karmelo Anthony's 35-year sentence

By Chauncey K. Robinson



MCKINNEY, Texas—Karmelo Anthony, a teenager who fatally stabbed another teen at a school sporting event, has been handed a 35-year prison sentence after a jury rejected his claims of self-defense during the confrontation, instead charging the now 19-year-old Anthony with first-degree murder. During the trial, both the prosecution and defense made claims that the case had nothing to do with race, but others assert that the sentencing has everything to do with it and has resulted in a miscarriage of justice.

In April 2025, during a school track meet, then-17-year-old Anthony sought shelter from the rain under the tent of a school where he was not a student. An altercation ensued between Anthony and 17-year-old Austin Metcalf—who witnesses say attempted to physically remove Anthony from the tent. During this altercation, witnesses claim Anthony pulled out a knife, and Metcalf was stabbed in the heart during the scuffle, resulting in his death. Anthony's defense team argued he acted in self-defense, while the prosecution claimed Anthony acted with murder on his mind. Under Texas law, he was tried as an adult and is set to serve his sentence in an adult prison rather than in juvenile rehabilitation.

The criminal case drew nationwide attention due to the fact that Anthony is Black and Metcalf was white, with tensions stoked further for months by racist social media posts directed towards Anthony. Supporters on both sides often clamored outside the Collin County Courthouse, where the trial took place, and got into shouting matches. The jury had the option to go with the lesser charge of manslaughter, but did not.

According to reports from the trial, Anthony's defense counsel objected to the prosecution striking the final three remaining Black potential jurors from the jury pool. The prosecution's stated reason was that the three Black jurors were educators. This reasoning was allowed by the trial court. This led many to question whether Anthony was denied his right to be tried by a jury of his peers and if racial discrimination played a part in jury selection.

Judge John Roach of the 296th District Court, who presided over the case, said in an interview with WFAA that he "sleeps well at night" and that he stands by every decision he made during the trial. When asked about the jury and their decision, he stated: "They were picked based upon the law, they listened to the facts, it happened in this courtroom, and they got a verdict." Yet many disagree with the judge.

Anthony's father, Andrew Anthony, stated in an interview after the sentencing that the situation was "unfortunate" and questioned the composition of the jury, which included no Black people. Andrew Anthony also believes his son was "already convicted" in the court of public opinion long before the jury reached its verdict.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Miscarriage of justice? Advocates condemn Karmelo Anthony's 35-year sentence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

The Collin County branch of the NAACP released a statement condemning the sentencing and the treatment of Black defendants within the justice system: "The absence of Black jurors in this high-profile, racially divisive case involving a Black defendant has only intensified those concerns. A jury should reflect a broad cross-section of the community whenever possible. Diverse perspectives do not guarantee a particular outcome, but they strengthen public confidence that all viewpoints and life experiences have been considered during deliberations."

Texas's 30th Congressional District Rep. Jasmine Crockett stated that if the racial roles had been reversed, "I don't even know if [Anthony] would have been convicted, because if a white boy would have said that they were afraid of a Black boy, something tells me that that jury that didn't have any Black people on it, they would have believed him and his fear."

Crockett's statement also brings into question who, when it comes to race, is allowed to claim self-defense and be believed, as there have been similar trials with wildly different outcomes when the defendant happens not to be Black.

In a recent statement, the African American Equality Commission of the CPUSA highlighted this sentiment, comparing Anthony's trial to that of Kyle Rittenhouse, a white teenager who claimed self-defense after shooting and killing two protesters.

"Both Rittenhouse and Anthony were teenagers. Both argued that they acted in self-defense. However, the jury in the former case took 26 hours to determine that the accused was innocent. And the jury in the latter case took only 3 hours to determine the accused is a murderer. Rittenhouse walks free and will get to enjoy his young adult life. Anthony was sentenced to 35 years, and he will spend his most formative years behind bars," the statement read.

Talbert Swan, NAACP chapter president in Massachusetts, referenced in a post on the social media platform X the Daniel Penny case, in which a white Penny placed Jordan Neely, who was Black, in a chokehold until he died.

"Jordan Neely never touched Penny. Penny was acquitted and later celebrated by Donald Trump and J.D. Vance as a hero.

Meanwhile, Karmelo Anthony, a Black teenager involved in a confrontation with a larger white student who initiated the physical encounter, claimed self-defense and was sentenced to 35 years in prison, more time than former white police officers Derek Chauvin and Amber Guyger got for the murders of George Floyd and Botham Jean combined."

"The issue isn't whether America believes in self-defense. The issue is whose self-defense America is willing to believe," Swan concluded.

And while much of the racial tension exploded online when it came to the trial, the town of Frisco, where the stabbing took place, is also no stranger to such divisiveness.

An article in the *Washington Post* explains that Frisco, which, according to census data, has a population of 46% white, 34% Asian, 10% Latino, and 10% Black, is dealing with racism and far-right extremism. The article reported that a candidate for Frisco mayor called Islam a "terrorist group" and immigrants "rats." Locals have complained of a so-called "Indian takeover" of Frisco, with a number of far-right politicians gaining power in the area.

It is against this backdrop that Anthony and his family have assembled a new legal team to represent the young man as he appeals his conviction. It includes a number of appellate, civil rights, and criminal defense attorneys, including former Dallas County prosecutor Russell Wilson, Michael L. Ware of the Law Office of Michael Ware, and Texas NAACP President Gary Bledsoe.

In a statement to the press, the team said that they have been retained to "conduct a fresh, independent review of the trial record" and that their "responsibility is to determine whether a legal error occurred and to ensure that every issue supported by the record is fully and vigorously presented on appeal."

Anthony's case will no doubt continue to draw attention as many await the outcome of the appeal, noting that the young Black man's case has taken on symbolic meaning. As the Collin County branch of the NAACP put it: "The concerns being expressed throughout our community are not simply about one verdict. They are about whether every defendant receives the full benefit of due process.... Justice is not measured solely by a verdict. It is measured by the public's confidence that the process was fair, impartial, and worthy of trust."

Kohen Wiley's life: worth more than a diaper or a bullet!

By Communist Party USA

On Sunday, June 14, police in Senatobia, Mississippi, fired into a vehicle occupied by a family accused of stealing diapers from a local Walmart. The shots struck and killed 1-year-old Kohen Wiley.

Cell phone footage shows police officers running toward the vehicle as it attempted to drive away. Kohen's mother, Vellesiya Wiley, said, "I raised my baby up trying to show them that he was in the car." The police fired anyway.

Let us be clear: under no circumstances should stealing — let alone allegedly stealing diapers — result in murder. Families across this country are struggling under the weight of an economic crisis that has left many unable to afford basic necessities. Rather than ensuring that families have what they need to raise healthy children, this system responds with criminalization and murder.

Black families face the compounded burdens of economic exploitation and systemic racism. Corporations like Walmart place the protection of property above human life. And Black mothers are too often subjected to racist stereotypes that portray them as irresponsible or undeserving of support.

This horrific incident is not the first time a Black child has been killed by police. We remember the lives of Tamir Rice, Tyre King, Aiyana Stanley-Jones, and so many others whose lives were cut short by state violence.

We stand in solidarity with the Black community in Mississippi and with all those demanding answers, accountability, and justice for Kohen Wiley.

#JusticeForKohen



Indigenous peoples raise alarm as U.S. military spends big on critical minerals

By Aimee Gabay



Over the past decade, Department of Defense spending for critical minerals transformed from virtually nonexistent into a major spending area. The last five years in particular have seen a dramatic surge in both contracts and dollar value.

Although minerals like lithium and nickel can be used for renewable energy and green technology like electric vehicle batteries, they are also key components for military equipment and weapons. Indigenous leaders have been demanding corporations and countries respect their right to consent to mining projects on their land, regardless of the intended use of those minerals. As global demand for these minerals continues to rise, Indigenous communities say that state backing has fast-tracked approvals without essential environmental safeguards or meaningful consultation by companies.

Mongabay aggregated information from the USAspending database — an official open data source of federal spending information — about Department of Defense grant spending on critical mineral projects for military purposes between 2015 and 2025.

This figure does not include Pentagon spending on military contractors, which is a major way that the Department of Defense spends its money.

The actual amount is likely larger given that some projects may not be public due to national security reasons, according to the Congressional Research Service.

Mongabay decided to focus only on grants, as other types of contracts are generally non-binding and do not guarantee federal spending.

It found that the federal agency provided an estimated $621 million in grants for critical mineral projects for defense purposes over the period, according to the USAspending database. Between 2021 and 2025, the Pentagon secured 24 agreements worth nearly $550 million — up from just $31.3 million for three contracts in the previous five-year period.

It poured the most funding into lithium projects ($124.6 million), followed by neodymium and boron projects ($94 million), graphite ($48.8 million), and aluminum ($45.4 million).

Lithium batteries are required for almost every weapon system used by the Pentagon, particularly for portable equipment, as it provides more energy with less weight. Neodymium and boron are used in magnets, which are important for missiles, smart bombs, unmanned aerial vehicles, and fighter jets. Graphite and aluminum are critical for building lighter, stronger, and more technologically advanced military applications.

Indigenous peoples and local communities said the government has implemented special permitting measures to shorten the authorization process for some of these projects in their territories or near their homes. Iñupiat communities affected by the Graphite Creek Project in Western Alaska, for instance, said they have received no information about the project from the company and that they have not been consulted. Meanwhile, Graphite One, the company that owns the open-pit graphite mine, said it has had multiple meetings with local stakeholders to share information.

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Community members said they are worried that accelerated permitting processes, without proper consultation, will lead to the destruction of critical habitats for animals they depend on for subsistence, as well as destroy sacred sites and other culturally significant areas for communities.

The Pentagon press office did not reply to a request for comment.

Out of the 27 funding grants analyzed by Mongabay, 74 percent of funding was allocated for projects based within the U.S. The Trump administration has been vocal about its wish to reduce dependence on critical mineral imports and has issued an executive order to prioritize, expedite, and advance domestic projects.

"Our national and economic security are now acutely threatened by our reliance upon hostile foreign powers' mineral production," the executive order states. "It is imperative for our national security that the United States take immediate action to facilitate domestic mineral production to the maximum possible extent."

In 2015,Congress established FAST-41, a federal program to improve transparency, coordination, and speed of environmental review and authorization process for large infrastructure projects. While the program states it does not change any regulatory requirement and public consultation, it also highlights that, in some cases, projects are approved up to 18 months sooner than projects not included in the portfolio.

A 2025 White House statement said the administration plans to consider more projects for FAST-41. The portfolio currently contains 18 mining projects. Several of these projects receive funding from the Pentagon or other defense-adjacent agencies. One such project is Graphite Creek. The Defense Department invested $37.3 million in the project in 2023 and received non-binding letters of interest from the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the country's official credit export agency, for up to $2.07 billion.

Adelaine Ahmasuk, a member of the affected Siqnasuagmuit community in Western Alaska, said that Graphite One never consulted her community about the project, which will impact hunting and fishing areas, as well as sites across the Kigluaik Mountains, which they consider sacred.

"We rely on money to get by, but most of our meat, most of the food, most of the berries that we eat, is what we harvest from the land," she said. "If this mine were to happen, and if it were to drive animal populations down, to drive the moose away, we would have nothing left to sustain us, because we really rely heavily on being able to hunt and put away wild game, berries, and greens."

Ahmasuk said many community members, especially those in remote areas, have limited knowledge about what the project will entail, as the company has not approached them. Many don't have access to tools like computers and environmental alert systems, which adds additional challenges, especially given the expedited approval processing time of its FAST-41 status.

"We, our community and our region, need more time to be prepared," she explained. "People don't even understand the impacts of hard rock mining. The [community] don't understand how big a scale this is proposed to be. It's supposed to be the largest domestic production of graphite in the U.S. This FAST-41 does not work [for us]. Consultation and consent are already being neglected."

The company has not yet begun mining, but Ahmasuk says the project has already caused some problems.

"Right where the graphite is, there's an ancient mound of rocks," Ahmasuk explained. "Those are where Eagle Woman fell from the sky and landed on our mountains. We created these rock mounds to honor her. We also have rock mounds that are like little checkpoints for when we journey through the mountains. Graphite One put a helicopter pad directly on top of one of them."

Lucille Carter, the vice president of community relations at Graphite One, said in an email that the project will provide a domestic supply of high-grade flake graphite, which is essential for many defense applications, as well as large-scale energy storage and electric vehicles.

Carter said that although formal government-to-government consultation is the responsibility of permitting agencies, since 2014, the company has held more than 75 meetings with local stakeholders to share information, seek feedback, and improve the project based on local knowledge wherever possible.

"Graphite One cares deeply about being good neighbors to the communities near our project and sharing the benefits it can provide with local residents," she said in the email. "We understand and respect the fact that there will always be individuals who have concerns about our work, but we do everything we can to involve those individuals in our process and incorporate their feedback into our work."

In Nevada, Indigenous nations and human rights organizations have raised concerns about the Thacker Pass lithium mine on ancestral lands, owned by Lithium Nevada LLC, a subsidiary of Lithium Americas Corp. The Pentagon provided the company with a $11.8 million grant in 2024.

Lithium Nevada LLC did not respond to requests for comment.

In recent years, several governments around the world have been pushing for a new agenda of military rearmament and a boost in defense industries, including Germany and France. Lorah Steichen, a researcher at the Transition Security Project, a research center that focuses on the global strategies of the U.S. and U.K. militaries, said that this has been especially true in the U.S. under the Trump administration.

Steichen pointed to a series of strategies the government has pursued to tighten its grip over mineral supply chains. It includes the use of the Defense Production Act, a law that grants the president powers to expand and accelerate the supply of minerals and services for defense purposes, as well as industrial policy strategies, such as price floors for some minerals, stockpiling, and increased spending on mineral projects.

The federal government has invested in several mineral projects outside the U.S., although this only represented 26 percent of the grants Mongabay identified. All of these projects are in Canada.

Experts in sustainable development, international law, and mining and energy transitions that Mongabay spoke to pointed out that the push to increase military budgets and rearmament is a response to increasing geopolitical pressure, from Russia's invasion of Ukraine to the Iran war.

"War unfortunately has been one of the driving forces of this race for more minerals," said Edson Krenak, of the Indigenous Krenak people in southeastern Brazil.

Krenak says that his community has seen the harm caused by iron mining, and now nickel and other minerals are causing the same devastation. "Rivers have been contaminated," Krenak said. "Rivers have been depleted completely from fish. We cannot fish, we cannot take baths, we cannot wash ourselves there anymore."

Phil Johnstone, a research fellow at the University of Sussex in the U.K., as well as the University of Tartu in Estonia and Utrecht University in the Netherlands, said that, as a result of this pressure, there could be a transformation of mineral supply chains, with an increase in demand for minerals that are critical for defense industries, but also changes in the measures and governance mechanisms used to acquire those minerals.

This could lead to a decrease in the availability of minerals needed for the energy transition, he said.

"Military demand is more likely, in situations of crisis, to have a priority," said Anabel Marin, a research fellow at the Institute of Development Studies in the U.K. and a researcher at the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research in Argentina, echoing Johnstone's statements. "The demand that responds to military priorities also reshapes trade patterns, relationships between countries, and it is shaping the way in which minerals are being extracted, the logic under which minerals are extracted."

Experts also pointed out the similarity between the current race to secure access to minerals and other races to secure access to natural resources considered critical throughout recent history. An example is the rubber rush driven in part by the demand for rubber during World War I, and again during World War II, for vehicles and tanks.

The consequences of this rush were experienced by Amazonian communities, including in Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia. The rubber barons subjected Indigenous communities to debt slavery, accelerated the decline of Indigenous peoples and, in extreme cases, exterminated entire villages.

Luis Eslava, a professor of international law at La Trobe University's Law School, Australia, said, "It is really important to remember that there has not been a moment where law has not been part of the equation, even when we think about earlier forms of exploitation during the heyday of the colonial period."

"There was always a mechanism, legal mechanisms put in place in order for them to establish agreement on the ground, sign concessions, extend the jurisdiction of the British empire into new lands," he said. "This is important because it reminds us that part of the problem has always been how law has been used in order to lubricate this process of extraction."

Indigenous leaders from Nevada to Brazil say this latest push to mine minerals for military uses is the latest step in a long history of exploitation. "It is a legacy that we have to deal with," Krenak said. "And when we see on the news those companies growing, investing, getting support from the government, as nothing had ever happened to them or done by them, it makes us very sad."

Supreme Court lets Trump terminate TPS for Haitians and Syrians

By David Sobelsohn

WASHINGTON—Born and raised in Haiti, Fritz Emmanuel Lesly Miot works in a California laboratory, researching Alzheimer's disease. Miot has lived legally in the United States for 15 years. Laila Doe, a Syrian citizen, lives in Illinois, where she works as a behavioral technician for individuals with disabilities and cares for her elderly American-citizen mother and her teenage daughter. Doe has lived here legally for 13 years.

Donald Trump wants to deport them—Miot to Haiti, Doe and her daughter to Syria. Miot has diabetes. Doe's daughter knows little Arabic.

On June 25, in *Mullin v. Doe*, the Supreme Court ruled, 6-3, that the Trump administration can deport them immediately, even before their cases reach trial.

This, even though the State Department warns Haiti suffers from "kidnapping, crime, terrorist activity, civil unrest, and limited health care," and Syria still experiences "terrorism, civil unrest, kidnapping, hostage taking, and armed conflict."

Often suspected of having more resources than locals, longtime U.S. residents like Miot and Doe make prime targets for foreign kidnappers. For a diabetic like Miot, exile to a nation with "limited health care" means a likely death sentence.

What is TPS?

To provide sanctuary for people fleeing countries like Haiti and Syria, in 1990 Congress and Republican President George H.W. Bush created Temporary Protected Status (TPS). The statute authorizes the Secretary of Homeland Security to designate countries for TPS if "extraordinary and temporary conditions"—such as "armed conflict"—prevent those countries' citizens from returning "in safety." TPS status allows refugees to live, work, and attend school in the United States.

Because of the "extraordinary" conditions related to its civil war, Syria received TPS designation in 2012. After a devastating earthquake, Haiti received TPS designation in 2010.

The TPS statute requires the secretary periodically, "after consultation with appropriate agencies of the government," to review a designated country's TPS status. Since 2010 and 2012, Haiti's and Syria's TPS designations have been repeatedly renewed.

Nevertheless, in her first year in office, and without consulting with any other federal agency, then-DHS Secretary Kristi Noem cancelled TPS for both countries. Instead of following the TPS-mandated process, Noem followed Trump's lead.

As a presidential candidate, Trump spread the lies that Haitian immigrants "probably have AIDS" and that, in small Springfield, Ohio, they were eating neighbors' dogs and cats. As president, Trump called majority Black or brown countries "shithole[s]." He asked why the United States can't get "people from Norway [and] Sweden."

Other countries that had TPS status canceled include Burma (Myanmar), Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Venezuela. The administration has never stripped TPS status from a majority white country.

Meanwhile, despite generally denouncing immigration, Trump instituted a special refugee program for white South Africans, claiming—without evidence—that Black South Africans were systematically raping, maiming, and killing white citizens.

Unchecked executive power

In its 6-3 vote, in an opinion by Justice Samuel Alito, the Supreme Court sided with Trump.

To reject Doe's plea to avoid forced return to Syria, Alito relied on a TPS provision barring courts from reviewing the DHS secretary's TPS "determination" respecting "the designation, or termination or extension of a designation, of a foreign state." Alito gave a blanket interpretation of the word "determination" to include not just the decision itself, but the "act of coming to a decision."

So, he reasoned, the courts can't review anything a president's Homeland Security secretary does under the TPS statute, regardless of whether her acts follow the required procedures or not.

Congress might, in many cases, have a good reason for leaving final decisions touching on foreign policy to the executive branch. But, as Justice Elena Kagan pointed out in dissent, Doe did not ask the courts to second-guess Secretary Noem's final decision about Syria's TPS status.

To the contrary, Doe questioned whether Noem followed the procedures that the TPS law requires the secretary to follow before terminating a TPS designation. By contrast with foreign-policy decisions, enforcing procedural requirements "fall[s] smack in the middle of the judicial wheelhouse," she wrote.

That means, according to Kagan, that the court should have intervened to force the Trump administration to follow the law as it is written, but the majority chose not to do so.

If the TPS law prevents courts from forcing the secretary to follow its procedural mandates, the law effectively has no mandates. The secretary and the president can, in practice, bypass Congress and repeal the law themselves by ignoring its requirements.

Alito says racism can't be proven

Alito took a different approach in ruling Trump can send Miot back to Haiti. The court considered Miot's claim that Noem based her order, at least in part, on racism.

In doing so, the court purported to follow longstanding precedent that proving unconstitutional racial discrimination requires only showing racism was a "motivating factor." But, as Justice Kagan wrote in dissent, "a" factor doesn't mean the sole factor, or even "the dominant or primary one." Moreover, at this stage of the case, Miot didn't yet have to prove racism, just that—as the lower courts found—he'd made a "plausible" case.

For Justice Kagan, evidence of racist motive was "there, plain to see, in the president's statements." Trump's own words, she said, "fairly shout, in their racial undertones and overtones alike, that race entered into the President's resolve to remove Haitians from this country." They were "so repellent and racially inflected" that neither the Solicitor General, at oral argument, nor Alito, in his written opinion, could "bear to repeat" them.

Nevertheless, the court's right-wing majority found it "unlikely" Miot could prove race played any role at all in cancelling Haiti's TPS status. "None of the cited statements" was "overtly racial" and all "could rest on race-neutral justifications."

Conservative justices did not give examples of what they would consider "overtly racial," since Trump's rants somehow didn't fit the bill.

The impact to come

Currently, at least 330,000 Haitians live in the United States under TPS, along with over 60,000 Syrians. One-third of these Haitians work in health care, like Miot. Tens of thousands of others work in sectors as varied as hospitality, food service, and janitorial to meatpacking, construction, and more.

Syrian workers holding TPS are found in science, management, and arts roles in high numbers.

But the court's decision has implications beyond what happens to Haitians and Syrians alone. It could mean deportation for 1.3 million TPS-qualified U.S. residents, most with full-time jobs, most of whom have lived here for years.

Perhaps that explains why unions and chambers of commerce alike urged the court to reject the Trump administration's position. Already businesses complain they can't find qualified employees to fill jobs in some sectors.

Despite Alito's opinion, hope remains for Miot and Doe. The Supreme Court was reviewing only a preliminary order during the case, not an order finally resolving the case. The court's order did not dismiss the case, but rather sent it back to the lower courts. As Alito observed, the Supreme Court was only making a "predictive—not a final—decision about the outcome." Time will tell if the court's "prediction" was accurate.

But the Trump administration is wasting no time in showing that it saw the decision as a green light to proceed with deportations. Within minutes of the ruling, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) posted an image on X saying, "Temporary Protected Status is meant to be temporary." Almost instantly, right-wing social media personalities and bots amplified the same message again and again.

The TPS ruling wasn't the only immigration case win for Trump on Thursday. The same 6-3 majority also gave him the power to turn away asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border and granted border officials broad powers to deport lawful U.S. permanent residents.

"Never let anyone tell you this administration only goes after 'undocumented' immigrants," said José Palma, a coordinator at the National TPS Alliance. "By trying to kill TPS, they are attacking people who are living and working here legally, paying fees and taxes, following all the rules. They are de-documenting people."

UAW convention delegates told labor movement is 'at a crossroads'

By Noelle Belanger

DETROIT—"We are at a crossroads," United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain told the nearly 900 delegates assembled in the Motor City for the union's 39th Constitutional Convention last week. "One road is a righteous struggle for economic and social justice, and the other is devastation for our members and the entire working class."

The convention met under the slogan "Our Generation's Defining Moment" and was held as the UAW prepares for 2028—a year that will see coordinated contract bargaining with the Big Three automakers as well as the pivotal national elections.

In his keynote address, Fain called out the big monopolies responsible for exploitation, layoffs, and declining standards of living—the same forces, he said, who are promoting political division among the working class. He highlighted recent UAW battles in auto plants, including the Stand-Up Strike against the Big Three and the numerous walk-outs and strikes across the country, such as at Local 900 at Ford Michigan Assembly plant, Local 12 at Stellantis Toledo, and Local 2250 at GM Wentzville Assembly.

Fain acknowledged that there will be an uphill battle for the labor movement as it approaches 2028. In addition to the enemies labor faces in the workplace and at the ballot box, it also has to contend with internal contradictions within the union movement, including in situations where organizing wins still wait to manifest in contract wins. Other issues that remain include the reopening of the Belvidere Assembly plant in Illinois, and the threat of fresh plant closings across the country remain a significant risk.

Fain also called attention to the threat of artificial intelligence—AI—and technological advancements driving up shareholder value while simultaneously threatening the labor value of workers and driving up unemployment.



"Productivity and the value produced by our labor has gone off the charts, while wages that workers earn from that labor have stayed flat," Fain remarked. "The fruits of our labor have multiplied like never before, but workers aren't reaping the harvest. That's theft."

Continuing on themes he discussed at the AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention a few weeks ago, Fain also highlighted the necessity of building and developing labor's political independence.

"Just how we've changed how we bargain and how we organize, we're changing how we do politics," he said. "We're going to invest in candidates that have our backs, that share our ideals and principles. We've got enough billionaires and businesspeople in Congress that are bought and paid for—we need working-class people in the halls of Congress."

The connection of domestic struggles to international labor battles was another theme of both his speech and the proceedings overall. "We are building a global movement of workers everywhere!" Fain declared.

Building upon that principle of international working-class solidarity, IndustriALL General Secretary Atle Høie, one of the convention's guest speakers, called for joint efforts to combat the growing billionaire—now trillionaire—capitalist class in their egregious wealth accumulation.

"International solidarity is the only thing that can beat multinational companies," Høie pressed. "We need a strong U.S. in this fight, but first and foremost we need a strong UAW. The international trade union movement will stand shoulder to shoulder with you forever."

Abdul El-Sayed, a progressive candidate for Michigan U.S. Senate, also spoke at the UAW convention. The UAW recently endorsed his campaign. He spoke indignantly about how the cost-of-living crisis for workers is directly caused by big corporations and the billionaire class accumulating wealth off the labor of working people, further lining their own pockets, while also continuing to supply weapons to Israel and investing in never-ending wars.

"We pay more for the stuff we need to buy and get paid less for the work we do and watch as our tax dollars get misappropriated to buy bombs and tanks for other countries instead of for schools and healthcare for our own," El-Sayed asserted.

"The disease [of our politics] is the system that allows big corporations and billionaires and special interests to buy and sell our politicians in ways that leave them rigging the system against us," he continued.

El-Sayed's point about the spending of U.S. taxpayer dollars on weapons for Israel also carried over into the issue of investment of UAW members' money in the same cause. Among the noteworthy resolutions passed by delegates was one mandating the divestment of UAW funds from Israeli government bonds, a historic victory for international labor solidarity made possible by the movement for Palestine that took root in labor as the genocide in Gaza unfolded.

On a vote with two-thirds support, the UAW also voted to increase budget allocations designated for organizing efforts and to build up the union's strike fund, increasing the amount striking workers receive up to $550 weekly.

The UAW also bestowed Social Justice awards on a number of honored delegates and workers, including the Volkswagen workers in Chattanooga, Tenn., who just won their first contract after a long fight to organize their plant, and Local 1268 member Maria Medina, who dedicated her career to helping Spanish-speaking workers understand their rights and translated the UAW Constitution into Spanish for the first time earlier this year. A Social Justice award was also issued posthumously to civil rights and labor icon Rev. Jesse Jackson, who died earlier this year.

The next order of internal business for the UAW will be officer elections, with ballots mailed out starting on Aug. 21 and counting concluded by Oct. 6. Candidate forums are scheduled for July and August. Fain, the incumbent president, will be running on the United UAW slate, which includes candidates from his previous administration but also some top officers who were not in his camp during the last election.

The race for president features five other candidates: current Vice President Rich Boyer, Brian Keller, Tricia Geiger, Greg Mooney, and Will Lehman. None of these candidates are part of any slate as of yet. UAW slates must be declared by July 10.

Conventions such as this always have their debates, but there seemed to be acknowledgement from leadership, guests, and rank-and-file workers that unity and solidarity will be needed for the struggles the UAW will be taking on in the coming years.

The current anti-union, anti-democratic political landscape facing working-class people, along with the constant, accelerating wealth accumulation of the capitalist class, provide immense challenges for organized labor. The UAW delegates in Detroit, however, appeared ready for the fight.

Pride under pressure: Successful LGBTQ fightback depends on working-class unity

By C. J. Atkins



They want us afraid, silent, or even gone. That's the only honest way to read what the far right has been doing to LGBTQ people in America over the past year and a half.

Since Donald Trump returned to the White House, the federal government has been turned into a weapon aimed squarely at queer and trans communities, and the attacks have come so fast and from so many directions that it's hard to keep up.

But Pride has always been about finding each other and fighting back, and this Pride season, that's what millions are gearing up to do.

The scale of the assault

State legislatures have introduced hundreds of anti-LGBTQ bills in 2026 alone—nearly 400 tracked by the ACLU, with the Trans Legislation Tracker counting over 645 specifically targeting trans people. The bills span everything from healthcare bans and school censorship to identity document restrictions and employment discrimination.

In Kansas, lawmakers stripped trans people of the right to accurate ID documents, giving some residents less than 24 hours' notice—meaning a person could be fined $1,000 and jailed simply for driving to the DMV to comply. Other states, including Arkansas, Florida, and Indiana, have taken similar steps.

At the federal level, things have been even worse. Attorney General Pam Bondi—before she was canned by Trump—directed the FBI to offer cash bounties for information on trans activists, labeling them "domestic terrorist groups." The White House counterterrorism strategy document names "radically pro-transgender" people alongside drug cartels and Islamist militants as threats.

Medicare and Medicaid funding has been stripped from hospitals providing gender-affirming care to minors—care that every major medical association endorses. And transgender service members, some of whom have deployed multiple times, face mass discharge under a military ban that a federal court found was "soaked with animus and dripping with pretext."

These attacks go beyond what the media constantly calls a "culture war;" they constitute a state-sponsored campaign of persecution.

One struggle, many targets

What the whole working-class movement needs to understand about all this is that the same political apparatus leading this campaign against queer and trans people is running the same playbook everywhere else.

The voter ID laws being used to suppress Black voters in Louisiana, Tennessee, and elsewhere are cut from the same cloth as the ID bans stripping trans people of their documents. The ICE raids terrorizing immigrant families—separating workers from their children, dragging people away to detention camps—are enforced by the same administration labeling trans activists terrorists.

The gutting of reproductive rights, which has forced women to flee states for abortion access, shares its legal architecture with the laws banning gender-affirming healthcare. The defunding of DEI programs in universities and federal agencies targets Black faculty, queer students, women, and immigrants simultaneously.

These are not parallel struggles happening in separate lanes. They are a single, coordinated ruling-class offensive against the multiracial, multi-gendered working class. The same billionaires funding anti-trans legislation are also putting cash toward union-busting. The same think tanks writing model bathroom bills are drafting right-to-work laws and voter suppression legislation.

Queer workers are workers. Trans immigrants are immigrants. Black queer women face the intersection of every one of these attacks at once. The movement that wins will be the one that refuses to be divided.

Fighting back—and winning

Often lost in the avalanche of bad news, though, is the fact that people are fighting, and sometimes they're winning.

Down south, Equality Florida mobilized grassroots advocates to show up to committee hearings every single day of the 60-day legislative session. They sent over 6,000 emails, packed committee rooms, and made hundreds of calls.

The result? Four out of five anti-LGBTQ bills were stopped or neutralized—including legislation that would have let the state attorney general sue teachers and doctors for supporting trans youth, and a "Don't Say Gay or Trans" bill that would have spread the censorship from schools into workplaces. The grassroots beat the statehouse.

In Congress, Sen. Ed Markey and Rep. Pramila Jayapal reintroduced the Transgender Bill of Rights—a comprehensive resolution that would codify trans people's right to healthcare, shelter, safety, and economic security. It won endorsements from the AFL-CIO's Pride At Work, the ACLU, the National Women's Law Center, the Immigration Equality Action Fund, and dozens of other organizations—a coalition that looks exactly like what a united working-class movement should look like.

In the courts, trans service members and civil rights attorneys continue challenging the military ban, the prison policies, and the executive orders. Seventeen states, led by Minnesota, are fighting back against federal threats to cut school funding. The legal resistance is holding ground.

Eyes on November

The movement is under no illusions that courts and legislatures alone will save the day. The Human Rights Campaign has launched a $15 million electoral program—its "Let's Get Free – Vote Equality '26" initiative—targeting eight competitive House seats and Senate races in Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Ohio. The goal is a pro-equality majority in the next Congress and the capacity to halt the weaponization of federal power against LGBTQ people.

The numbers suggest this is not wishful thinking. LGBTQ voters are poised to make up close to 10% of the midterm electorate, and a full 92% say they will definitely vote (compared to 68% of non-LGBTQ voters). The National LGBTQ Task Force's "Queer the Vote" program is phonebanking key districts from Florida to Texas, linking LGBTQ turnout explicitly to the broader fight against anti-Black and anti-immigrant political forces.

The LGBTQ Victory Fund is pushing for strategic, winnable races at the state level, recognizing that attorneys general and secretaries of state are the frontline defenders of both voting rights and civil liberties.

HRC President Kelley Robinson put it plainly: "I think that this is the election that's going to be the sea change, not only for getting to a pro-equality majority but for changing the momentum on this fight for equality."

That sea change won't come from any single organization or any single community. It will come when queer workers and union members, Black voters facing suppression, undocumented immigrants living in fear, women fighting for their reproductive lives, and everyone else on the receiving end of this administration's cruelty recognize that they are, in fact, on the same side.

Happy Pride. Now let's get to work.

LABOR NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

This thinly veiled attempt to further undermine Cuba's social fabric aims to displace the role and take over functions that are the responsibility of the government. In so doing, they push anti-government propaganda, particularly the narrative that the government is incapable or unwilling to provide for its people. Meanwhile, even as Trump brags about the efficacy of his recent siege to reporters before boarding AirForce One, Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Cuba, Mike Hammer, claims there is no such thing as an embargo, let alone a blockade, and makes a show of his concern for the Cuban people, both on the island and in the diaspora community.

As a counterpoint, although Mexico has ceased selling oil to Cuba under the threat of U.S. tariffs, it has provided humanitarian aid in a way that upholds the sovereignty of the Caribbean nation and its international partners. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum sent 800 tons of essential goods in coordination with Cuban authorities, all while denouncing the U.S. government's extra-territorial aggression against countries trading oil with Cuba. She affirmed the principle of self-determination of all people and nations, warning the U.S. against regime change and offering to mediate talks between the two countries.

part 13 of this article will appear in 2 weeks

Sudáfrica: El Partido Comunista celebra la «Conferencia de la Izquierda»

Por Departamento Internacional del CPUSA

La conferencia organizada por el Partido Comunista de Sudáfrica (SACP) —que reunió a sindicatos, movimientos sociales de base y organizaciones de izquierda y progresistas— diagnosticó la actual inestabilidad de Sudáfrica como una profunda crisis estructural alimentada por las políticas neoliberales, la austeridad y una transformación democrática inconclusa tras 1994. Los delegados afirmaron que la tarea inmediata consiste en salvaguardar los logros democráticos existentes y, al mismo tiempo, avanzar con determinación hacia una auténtica democracia económica, la propiedad social y la hegemonía de la clase trabajadora.

La conferencia acordó crear el «Consejo de la Izquierda» como una instancia de coordinación permanente. Tras subrayar que este organismo no es un partido político ni participará en procesos electorales, los organizadores afirmaron que el Consejo respetará la autonomía de los grupos que lo integran, al tiempo que gestionará campañas conjuntas, la formación política y la movilización de masas.

La iniciativa se centrará de inmediato en un programa de acción articulado en ocho ejes temáticos, abordando cuestiones fundamentales como la crisis del costo de vida, la justicia en el acceso a la tierra y la sostenibilidad ecológica, además de asumir un compromiso internacionalista para impulsar la solidaridad de Sudáfrica con Cuba y promover el proyecto de ley contra el bloqueo.

Portugal: La lucha de los trabajadores derrota la legislación antilaboral

En una victoria decisiva para la clase trabajadora portuguesa, el llamado «paquete laboral» propuesto por el gobierno de derecha del PSD/CDS fue rechazado en el Parlamento el 19 de junio, tras casi un año de movilizaciones sostenidas que incluyeron dos huelgas generales. El paquete legislativo —respaldado por las confederaciones patronales y apoyado inicialmente por el partido de extrema derecha Chega— habría intensificado la explotación y socavado los derechos sindicales.

La lucha se desarrolló a lo largo de once meses y estuvo marcada por dos huelgas generales (el 11 de diciembre y el 3 de junio), importantes manifestaciones los días 20 de septiembre, 8 de noviembre, 13 de enero, 28 de febrero y 17 de abril, así como por mítines y acciones parlamentarias. La huelga general del 3 de junio contó con un respaldo casi total en los principales hospitales y centros de trabajo de todo el país. Los sindicatos recogieron más de 190.000 firmas en contra de las reformas.
La Confederación General de Trabajadores Portugueses (CGTP-IN) desempeñó un papel decisivo en la organización y la información a los trabajadores. El Partido Comunista Portugués (PCP) participó activamente desde el principio, llegando directamente a miles de trabajadores para exponer el contenido perjudicial de dicho paquete.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

July 11, 2026

U.S.-driven humanitarian crisis forces changes on Cuba

By W. T. Whitney, Jr.



The tide may at last be turning in Cuba's favor. Newly announced plans of the government there point to the beginning of rescue from the terrible humanitarian crisis currently weighing on the Cuban people. Prompting the crisis are the long U.S. economic blockade of the island and the U.S.-imposed oil blockade that began on Jan. 28.

Changes approved on June 19 at a special session of Cuba's National Assembly had multiple purposes, among them: increasing production and generating wealth for the sake of economic development, securing financial resources to pay for humanitarian relief, establishing guarantees of social well-being for Cuba's beleaguered population, and achieving full utilization of Cuba's farm land in order to build agricultural production.

Throughout the discussions leading to these changes, government leaders testified to their common purpose of protecting and strengthening Cuba's socialist model.

President Miguel *Díaz-Canel*, speaking at a special plenum of the Cuba's Communist Party, offered these major goals: "Macroeconomic stabilization and the recovery of foreign revenue, transformation of the economic and social model, stimulation and recovery of the agricultural sector, strengthening of accounting and cost management, and anticipating and mitigating the social costs associated with the necessary transformations of the economic and social model."

The rapid-fire developments of recent days follow media reports over months of horrendous grief throughout the island, mounting U.S. economic sanctions, threats of U.S. military attack, and Cuba's own preparations for a U.S. invasion.

Remarkably enough, only a rare word about Cuba's military defense appears in the statements and speeches accompanying these proceedings.

Consultations and planning sessions had been ongoing for weeks. The process yielded result 390 proposals to be evaluated by the National Assembly, of which 66.7% were accepted.

On June 12, *Díaz-Canel* held a press conference to introduce the government's strategic response to the unfolding disaster. The Central Committee of the Communist Party held an extraordinary plenum session on June 17 to consider the plan, and the National Assembly of 400 elected deputies met on June 18 and 19 to deliberate and give final approval.

One big reform, presumably relating to bureaucratic excesses, centers on governmental re-organization and re-distribution of governmental authority. The number of ministries is being halved, with work being distributed among those that remain. Much of the national government's decision-making authority will eventually end up with the governments of municipalities.

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

U.S.-driven humanitarian crisis forces changes on Cuba

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
These will soon be making arrangements for imports and exports, for pricing, for making supplies available to producers, for securing investments from abroad, and for establishing production goals. They will be accountable as regards financial transactions.

The concept of local autonomy, which is not new, encompasses strategic planning, land-use management, food sovereignty, community services, and promotion of local development. Local authorities will be supervising projects belonging to Cubans abroad.

State-owned enterprises get a boost in the form of "expansion of their powers and managerial autonomy." They are free to "engage in any lawful activity," set prices, and distribute profits. They will be paying increased wages and offering more generous pension benefits. Provincial and municipal governments will be able to merge or dissolve state-owned enterprises. Individuals and other "legal entities" are allowed to purchase shares in state enterprises.

The agricultural sector gets renewed attention, in line with Cuba's need for greater domestic food production, which has lagged. Now farmers and cooperatives gain usufruct rights for an indefinite period. Usufruct, instituted in 2008, is the means by which farmers secure the legal right to use state-owned land.

Allocation of land will depend on production needs. Cooperatives may now arrange for their own marketing, food exports, and imports of supplies. They may themselves secure loans and establish foreign currency accounts. According to *Díaz-Canel*, "There is no sovereignty with empty plates. The Cuban people's food will be treated for what it is: a matter of national security."

The government offered plans for social rescue. Wages and pensions will be increasing, and employment guaranteed. Social protection will depend in part on cooperation between state and private employers and the banking system. There will be "discounts or quotas for people at social risk."

Cubans will be receiving support in the form of medical transportation, sanitation improvements, and monthly deliveries of food packages to vulnerable individuals and families. From now on, there will be more priority given to services for individuals in trouble and less to assistance provided for everyone, equally.

The new order of affairs features energy transformation. Chinese-assisted transition to solar power, and wind power too, has advanced in the past year. Cubans on their own initiative will be free to buy imported electric vehicles of all kinds. Plans call for the role of private and foreign capital in financing the purchases of electric vehicles and small solar power systems. State-owned companies will be free to use "international platforms" to buy fuels and vehicles associated with the energy transition.

There will be new support for Cuba's tourist industry, which historically has provided the state with significant income. The COVID-19 pandemic and U.S. sanctions led to its deterioration.

Among market mechanisms taking effect are reliance on foreign investors, the aforementioned land arrangements, and sales of real estate to Cubans on the island and abroad. Other innovations include the use of joint ventures and private real estate management services to operate car rental agencies, marinas, and tourist agencies.

Banking reform is a big part of the new order. Changes will include formation of a private banking sector to be supervised by the state's central bank. Non-banking financial entities are on the way. Bank restrictions on Cubans' use of foreign currencies, the U.S. dollar included, for the purchase of imported goods will disappear.

Private currency-exchange bureaus and a digital foreign exchange market are anticipated. By way of removing bureaucratic obstacles, banks will use digital technologies, new software products, and artificial intelligence to enable access to funds. Financial and legal accountability will be strengthened. Market forces will determine pricing.

The overall goal of these reforms is that of promoting the flow of money so as to enhance production. *Díaz-Canel* declared that, "Every unit of foreign currency that enters the country must be channeled to finance production, imports, investment, wages, and infrastructure." And further: "Without wealth, there is nothing to distribute; we would be speaking of social justice in the abstract."

Díaz-Canel, speaking before the National Assembly, echoed remarks heard earlier in these several days of deliberation. Referring to "the longest, most criminal, most perverse, most unjust blockade in history," he declared that, "We are not giving up on socialism."

He added that, "Our discussion is about how, with our own skills, and our own effort, we are going to be capable of building socialism in a sustainable way.... We are not doing this because of pressure from the Yankees. We are acting in a sovereign manner, because we have arrived at a moment of maturity and reflection.... The first thing we have to do is produce. If we do not produce, if we do not generate wealth, what kind of social justice will we be defending?"

The president mentioned the largely unsuccessful attempts by Cuba's government in the past to institute economic reforms. Acknowledging implementation lapses and bureaucratic impediments, he insisted that, "Cuba does not need further delays; it needs solutions. It is not a matter of creating more offices or holding more meetings, but of achieving concrete results."

Indeed, the present moment is different. The current threat to Cuba's socialist revolution is as serious as was the U.S.-organized Bay of Pigs attack in 1961 and the fall of the Eastern European socialist bloc in 1991. Is the U.S.-imposed humanitarian crisis so dangerous now that Cuba's government is relenting on socialist methods and socialist purposes? Many of Cuba's supporters think not.

In fact, the grim realities and the suffering that Cubans have been enduring have left them little choice but to take action, now. What's happening perhaps amounts to a holding action in anticipation of new circumstances allowing, eventually, for a socialist future.

Cuba's socialist government, it seems here, deserves enormous praise for making rational changes that may enable humanitarian relief and that may also permit survival of both the government and Cuba's evolving form of socialism. Moreover, the U.S. government, Cuba's enemy, surely is learning that Cubans and their government are unified, resourceful, and full of resistance.

Trump's anti-communist crusade is a midterm panic move

By C. J. Atkins



In the space of a single week, the contours of the Trump administration's political strategy heading into the November midterms snapped into focus, and it is a strategy rooted in fear. Fear of a left that is winning elections. Fear of a working class that is organizing. And fear of what happens when ordinary people discover that the political system can actually deliver for them.

On Tuesday, June 23, federal judges in Fort Worth, Texas, handed down what can only be called political sentences. Eight defendants connected to a July 4, 2025, noise demonstration outside the Prairieland ICE detention facility in Alvarado received a combined 450 years in prison.

The most chilling case was that of Daniel Sanchez Estrada—a man who was not even present at the protest—sentenced to 30 years for moving a box of anti-fascist zines. His wife, Maricela Rueda, received 70 years for apparently asking him to move them. Others got 50 years. And Benjamin Song, convicted of attempted murder for firing a shot that wounded a police officer, received 100 years.

The Justice Department crowed that these were "the first sentencing of defendants affiliated with Antifa following President Donald J. Trump's executive order designating the group as a Domestic Terrorist Organization in September 2025."

Neither the involvement of any organized terrorist group nor the existence of a coordinated murder plot was ever proven in the courtroom. What was proven, to the government's apparent satisfaction, was that these activists wore dark clothing, used Signal, attended anarchist book club meetings, and possessed political pamphlets.

Then, on Friday, June 26, Trump stepped to the podium at the Faith and Freedom Coalition's conference in Washington to deliver his red-baiting sermon that served to reinforce the politics behind the Texas trials.

Coming right after a string of Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) victories in New York primaries—where candidates backed by Mayor Zohran Mamdani swept several congressional and state legislative races—the president went full McCarthy.

He called DSA candidates "hardcore, godless communists," warned of a "cancer" that is "permeating our country called communism," and declared communism "the most serious threat to our country since its existence." He called DSA members "animals" willing to assassinate opponents. He warned America would become "a Third World country in every way" and that people would "suffer or die" if Democrats won.

He accused his Democratic opponents of capitulating to the left within their own party. "They're not smart enough or tough enough to fight the plague that is happening right before your very eyes." The Democrats, he claimed, "are becoming a Communist party–not social Democrats. They are communists."

Though the reference to "social democrats" and the distinction between them and Communists suggest more serious political analysis on the president's part, the distinction was likely lost on his audience. Regardless, though they were meant to project strength, Trump's remarks were a sign of electoral desperation.

Unmistakable pattern

The editorial board of *Peoples World* warned last September that NSPM-7—Trump's National Security Presidential Memorandum—was reviving the worst excesses of McCarthyism. NSPM-7 ordered Joint Terrorism Task Forces to target Americans for supposed commitments to "anti-capitalism," "anti-Christianity," and "anti-Americanism." It was a list so sweeping it could ensnare virtually any critic of U.S. policy.

The Prairieland sentences are the inevitable product of that framework. As Sufia Khalid, defense attorney and deputy director of the National Security Criminal Defense Center, put it to *Democracy Now*: "Now anyone engaged in basic protests with the wrong political beliefs can be labeled a domestic terrorist, when they have no intention of violence, not engaged in any violence, not interested in any violence."

Judge Reed O'Connor, who decided the sentences for the defendants, made the political intent explicit, reportedly telling the courtroom he was ordering the maximum in each case because "the state wants to send a message to anyone who shares a similar ideology."

CONTINUE FROM PAGE THREE

These sentences—longer than any handed down to the Jan. 6 insurrectionists who participated in the attempted Trump coup of 2021, many of whom the president subsequently pardoned—reveal everything about what kind of dissent this administration is prepared to tolerate.

Right-wing political violence: pardoned. Left-wing political literature: 30 years behind bars.

Red-baiting as a midterm strategy

The timing of Trump's Faith and Freedom speech is no accident. With his approval rating hitting all-time lows amid persistent cost-of-living concerns, Trump is reaching for the oldest weapon in the reactionary arsenal: the Red Scare.

The DSA victories in New York—in Trump's own hometown—have rattled the White House, and the president has decided that smearing Democratic Socialists as communist assassins is the path to re-energizing his base.

The Communist Party USA wasted no time calling it out. "MAGA is going to lose the midterms, and Trump's getting desperate," CPUSA Co-chair Rossana Cambron said in a statement released to the media.

Fellow CPUSA Co-Chair Joe Sims drew a sharp line against Trump's characterization of DSA: "Democratic socialists are just that: democratic and socialist. They want reforms to relieve suffering. Stop the red-baiting."

As for their party, Sims said "Communists want to change the capitalist system fundamentally—before climate change, nuclear war, AI, or a pandemic kills us all." He added that the CPUSA is "for democracy and socialism—a Bill of Rights Socialism that puts people and planet before profits."

The party argued in its statement that Trump's red-baiting is a smokescreen for attacking working-class organizing, unions, and general democratic dissent.

"This is old news," Cambron said, "but the American people aren't going to buy it."

On the economic reality Trump has been busily distorting, the CPUSA was equally direct: "It is capitalism and the drive for maximum profits that is the greatest threat to this country—the housing crisis, price-gouging, and war-mongering are driving our crisis."

That message will likely resonate with the voters who turned out for Brad Lander, Darializa Avila Chevalier, and Claire Valdez in New York—candidates who ran on affordability and housing relief from a cost-of-living crisis the Trump administration has done nothing to address and much to worsen.

The bell tolls again

As *People's World* wrote last fall, when McCarthyite persecution of the left was at its height in the middle of the 20th century, the CPUSA issued an open letter to the nation: "The bell tolls not just for the Communists alone, but for the hard-won rights of all Americans." That bell is ringing again, louder now with each passing week.

The Prairieland defendants—trans people, tattoo artists, vegans, anti-ICE community organizers, book club members—will spend the better part of their lives in federal prison unless their appeals have some success. Their sentences, however, serve a bigger purpose. They are meant as a warning to every union organizer, every tenant association, every immigrant rights group in America.

But these warnings are aimed at groups of people who are already organized, already motivated, and already winning elections. Trump's tirade at the Faith and Freedom Coalition, delivered days after the Prairieland sentences landed, is not the sign of an administration in control of events. It is the sign of one scrambling to contain them.

The White House is stepping up its attacks because the left is stepping up its work. That is what desperation looks like, dressed up in the language of patriotism.

'The South Got Somethin' to Say': People's coalition faces down Georgia redistricting scheme

By Erica Meade

ATLANTA—This past week the Georgia State Legislature wrapped up a special session called by Gov. Brian Kemp to consider redrawing the state's voting maps, following a Supreme Court decision that voting districts no longer have to account for Black voter representation. However, Kemp's gerrymandering campaign, so far, is going nowhere.

Despite the initial reasons for the special session, just hours before lawmakers gathered, Republican leaders announced they had cancelled their plans to redraw the voting maps. In a letter to Kemp, Republican legislators cited the need for further judicial opinion and more public input before moving ahead.

While politicians rushed between committee rooms of the State Capitol, civil rights organizations took to the streets to object to the Republican governor's demands. Led by organizations such as BLM Grassroots, Black Voters Matter, the League of Women Voters, and the Georgia NAACP, activists from across the city and state put together a coalition to fight back against redistricting.

Under the name "The South Got Somethin' to Say," activists and organizers immediately planned a series of actions and protests to run the entire course of the special session.



In addition to the pullback on redistricting, other notable outcomes from the legislature include the delay of ending ballot counting by QR code and a failure to pass a bill that could raise sales taxes in Georgia.

Addressing the state's pivot from QR code ballots was also a priority for the coalition. At the moment, after voters make their choices in Georgia, they receive a printed page with a QR code that then they feed into a machine which reads and counts the results. In 2024, the legislature passed a bill that would ban QR code ballots starting in July 2026.

Earlier this year, during the legislature's regular session, lawmakers did not pass a bill establishing a new system to replace the QR code system. With backlash from civil rights organizations and no back up option for the existing system, Republicans had no choice but take the loss on their original plan to scrap QR code vote counting next month.

During the special session, however, Republicans in the State Senate added a provision to the legislation that requires the top two state elections to be hand counted. Despite the initial change, a State House committee later changed the provision so only the top two elections in which candidates finish within 0.5% of each other would require hand counts.

At a House Governmental Affairs Committee meeting last Monday, Brittany Burns of Black Voters Matter raised her voice against the legislation. In the meeting, she told lawmakers: "Hand counting is actually significantly more error-prone and more costly than machine counting. It's also slower, delaying the delivery of election results and risking certification problems."

As the legislation now stands, Georgia has a new deadline of January 2028 to end the QR code vote counting system.

The legislature also had to consider Kemp's intention of holding a referendum to allow voters to decide whether to lower property taxes and raise sales taxes. If passed in the House and Senate, Georgia voters would decide on the measure.

On the Republican side, lawmakers argued that voters should be able to make their own choice of how they spend their taxes. Democrats, opposed, brought up the fact that many Georgia residents are already struggling with cost-of-living issues. Adding more taxes on consumption would create more burden and less relief. Nonetheless, the legislation did not reach a two-thirds majority necessary to move the referendum forward.

One of the legislators inside the State Capitol fighting against these bills was Gabriel Sanchez, State Representative for House District 42. In an interview with *People's World*, Sanchez laid out the importance of civil rights groups coming together to fight attacks on voting rights, especially in the South.

With socialist election wins and union victories accumulating in the Northeast and on the West Coast, Sanchez believes "it's important to show that the South has the ability to fight for progressive values."

In response to the redistricting effort, Sanchez co-sponsored HR 11EX, which would create an independent commission to decide voting districts. The goal of the bill, he says, is to not allow legislators to decide how voting maps are drawn, given their inherent stake in outcomes as elected officials.

Even though 37 Democratic colleagues signed onto the bill, Republicans refused to hear bring it before the House Governmental Affairs Committee, essentially killing the bill during the special session.

Sanchez called the failure of Kemp's redistricting efforts a victory but cautioned voters not to lose sight of the issue. He believes that Republicans will revive the effort after the November elections.

As he sees it, redrawing voting maps now "would galvanize the Democrat voter base" and lead to widespread Republican losses. For now, Georgia Democrats and civil rights organizations are holding their breath. The decision to drop the issue was not a total concession by Republicans but rather a calculated short-term move to hold onto power in the long run.

As the daily rallies, press conferences, and public testimony showed, conceding is not in the plans for civil rights activists, either. The redistricting efforts in Alabama, Tennessee, and Louisiana would decimate the Black vote and representation in government. With leaders fighting in and outside of the State Capitol, voters want legislators to know: The South Got Somethin' to Say.

Oklahoma joins list of states banning Medicaid for gender affirming care

By Raven Raevsky

Oklahoma has joined a growing list of states targeting trans healthcare. And it's no longer only minors whose health access is under attack, as the legislature there passed a law in May that targets gender affirming care for adults. The law, SB 904, takes a dual-track approach to restricting access.

The first is suspending the ability of the state's public funds and Medicaid program (called SoonerCare) to pay for gender affirming treatments; the second is barring public properties from administering gender affirming care to patients, including both minors and adults.

The law contained an emergency clause that instantaneously triggered some of its provisions immediately upon passage, even though it doesn't officially go into effect until Nov. 1. The Oklahoma Health Care Authority announced on June 4 that it will deny insurance claims for procedures used to treat gender dysphoria.

LGBTQ advocates in Oklahoma, like Cole McAffee of the Freedom Oklahoma queer rights organization, were already reporting care disruptions for trans patients even before the bill became law. McAffee's warnings are backed up by reports of gender-affirming care losses in the University's Health system.

In a statement condemning Oklahoma's passage of the Medicaid ban, the Human Rights Alliance expressed being "particularly troubled by the expansion of these restrictions to adults" and argued that the law will place burdens on those facing "economic hardship, discrimination, and inadequate access to healthcare."

The efficacy of gender affirming care has been repeatedly affirmed by healthcare organizations in the United States and around the world, but that mattered little to Oklahoma legislators.

Section 1 of SB 904 specifies that the treatments covered in the bill are only banned if performed to affirm gender identities "inconsistent with the individual's biological sex," meaning that it will only allow the listed treatments if they align a patient's gender expression with their gender assigned at birth.

The bill's author, State Sen. Todd Gillihare, R-Kellyville, justified it on the grounds that Oklahoma's Medicaid program needs to be managed with "discipline and transparency." He argued that the state needs to set "boundaries around the use of taxpayer dollars." Other lawmakers, including State Rep. Ellen Pogemiller, D-Oklahoma City, however, retorted that it's "none of our business as lawmakers to decide who gets access to that [gender affirming] care."

The enactment of SB 904 adds Oklahoma to n a list of 11 other states restricting Medicaid from covering gender affirming care for adults. The major cause of renewed scrutiny of gender-affirming care for adults is the Supreme Court's ruling in *United States v. Skrmetti*, a case concerning a Tennessee law prohibiting gender-affirming care for minors.



The Supreme Court ruled that states could discriminate in the coverage of gender affirming care when it comes to minors and people diagnosed with gender dysphoria, a mental health disorder many trans people have when they can't express the gender identity they feel inside.

Despite the Supreme Court's ruling in *Skrmetti* being limited to minors, a number of states and appeals courts are inching up to banning healthcare for young adults. A ruling by the 4th Circuit Appeals Court in *Anderson v. Crouch* stated that "it is not irrational for a legislature to encourage citizens "to appreciate their sex" and not "become disdainful of their sex" by refusing to fund experimental procedures that may have the opposite effect.

In addition to the publicly funded insurance and care determinations outlined in SB 904, advocates are raising concerns that the law will have a chilling effect on private insurers as well.

In one report covering the national impacts of Medicaid denial of adult gender affirming care, the Senior Field and Policy Director at Transgender Education Network of Texas, Andrea Segovia, detailed reports of coverage denials in Texas, one of the states that banned Medicaid for adults.

Carmel Shachar, director of Harvard Law School's Health Law and Policy Clinic, predicts the efforts of states to restrict Medicaid access for adults will cause private insurers to argue "Medicaid's not covering, [so] we don't want to cover it."

To fight back against the national assault on gender affirming care, some representatives in the U.S. Congress are pushing to pass Rep. Pramila Jayapal's, D-Wash., House Resolution 1058, which would codify a Transgender Bill of Rights that protects gender affirming care for trans communities.

Additionally, some individual cities, like New York City, are increasing funding for trans healthcare. But with the far right holding power in Congress, the executive branch, and many states, organizing for queer rights during the midterms and beyond is a necessary part of the fightback.

RAPID RESPONSE: Restore Temporary Protective Status

By People's World



Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand, on the 250th birthday of our country, that Congress uphold the First Amendment rights of free speech and assembly now under threat.

Trump's directive NSPM-7 (National Security Presidential Memorandum on Countering Domestic Terrorism and Organized Political Violence), ordering federal law enforcement to target and prosecute dissenters as so-called "domestic terrorists," is a chilling abuse of power that can be unleashed on anyone. In Prarieland Texas, 15 anti-ICE activists tried under NSPM-7 have been sentenced to a total of 556 years in prison.

Congress must block Trump's attempt to get $166 million new funding for NSPM-7 FBI counterterrorism. Instead, pass the No Political Enemies Act SB 3646 / HR 7050 for accountability and defense of our country's foundational First Amendment democratic rights!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Supreme Court blocks Trump attempt to kill birthright citizenship

By Mark Gruenberg and John Wojcik

WASHINGTON—President Trump suffered a resounding defeat by the Supreme Court in one of their landmark rulings issued Tuesday that preserves birthright citizenship. In the ruling, 6 justices against 3 declared the executive order he issued on Jan. 20, 2025, limiting birthright citizenship was unconstitutional.

Had it become law, millions born without one parent being a citizen or permanent legal resident, and all people born of parents who had entered the country without documents, would have been excluded from citizenship. Since the implementation of the 14th Amendment after the Civil War, everyone born in the U.S. is automatically a citizen.

The defeat suffered by Trump on this issue follows several other serious defeats before the Supreme Court recently, including a ruling that declared many of his tariffs were illegal and another that he could not fire Lisa Cook from the Federal Reserve Board.

In this case, two justices Trump named—Amy Coney Barrett and Brett Kavanaugh—joined the court's three progressives in saying the president could not defy the Constitution's 14th Amendment and its absolute guarantee. So did Chief Justice John Roberts, who wrote the majority opinion.

"Nothing in the amendment has changed," Roberts declared.



The first sentence of Section 1 of the 14th Amendment reads: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside."

That prompted Barrett to ask Trump's Solicitor General during oral arguments, "Will parents have to bring papers into their babies' hospital rooms?"

Three justices, Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, and Neil Gorsuch, stood with Trump all the way, claiming his Jan. 20 executive order was both legal and constitutional.

Another who opposed the Trump executive order, Kavanaugh, agreed with the majority that the order violated the law but not the Constitution itself. That logic leaves the door open for Congress to change the law, something Trump already vowed to pursue. It also keeps an alternative interpretation of the Constitution alive to which conservatives can cling.

Celebration tempered by caution

Several progressive and labor groups hailed the ruling, including the AFL-CIO, though many warned Trump and his followers would not give up the fight.

"The Supreme Court upheld one of the fundamental promises of our Constitution: That every child born in the United States is a citizen of the United States," AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler's statement said.

Technically, there is one small exception: Children born here whose parents are foreign diplomats, though Shuler didn't mention that.

She mentioned Trump's war against immigrants by inference, in calling for the legalization of undocumented people through comprehensive immigration reform and a path to citizenship. Organized labor will continue to campaign for that goal, she vowed.

"This decision rejects the Trump administration's latest attempt to divide working people and attack the immigrant families who are part of the fabric of our communities, our workplaces, and our unions," Shuler said.

"At a time when working people are facing relentless attacks on their fundamental freedoms, the court made clear that constitutional rights cannot simply be erased by executive order."

"It's not immigrants who stand between workers and a good job —it's the bosses who exploit workers. When politicians target immigrant communities, they are targeting all of us."

The crowd outside the court broke into massive cheers and hugs Tuesday morning when word came of the decision. Labor's allies cheered, too. But Democracy Forward pointed out the real vote was 5-4, due to Kavanaugh's concurring opinion being based on a different rationale.

Rocio Saenz, SEIU's Secretary-Treasurer and the child of immigrants, sounded that same warning. So did Becky Pringle, the Philadelphia science teacher who heads the National Education Association. So did Labor's Council for Latin American Advancement, the AFL-CIO's constituency group for Latino workers.

"Today's decision offers a moment of relief for many first-generation Americans and immigrant communities. However, we have to have an honest conversation about what this case says about the current state of our country," Saenz said.

"President Trump tried to rewrite the Constitution to exclude the babies of immigrants," an estimated 300,000 yearly, according to other sources. "He doesn't care about the content of character, just race and economic status.

"This case should have never made it this far. None of this is happening by accident. This administration has aggressively tried to purge immigrants and their families from our country, rewrite history by attacking Black, brown, Asian American, and Pacific-Islander, Indigenous, and immigrant communities, and chip away at the rights of all Americans."

NEA President Pringle, too, sounded the same cheer-but-caution combination. She warned of further fights with the MAGA right to come. "We see through their attempts to turn us against each other based on where we were born or the language we speak," Pringle said of the Trump administration and the MAGA movement.

The LCLAA called on Congress and elected leaders to act now. "Reject policies rooted in hate, fear, exclusion, and scapegoating, and advance solutions that protect working families, uphold constitutional rights, and recognize immigrants as the backbone of our economy and an indispensable part of our nation's future," the constituency group declared.

United We Dream, the top organization of the "Dreamers"—migrants brought here as children whom Trump also wants to throw out of the country—declared the court's decision "should slam the door shut on further attempts to take a political hacksaw to the Constitution."

Other decisions of the day

The Supreme Court's other two rulings on the last day of its term cheered Trump.

One of them blew yet another hole in campaign finance law, allowing donors to dominate campaigns monetarily, overcoming the voices of voters with campaign cash. That decision said parties could funnel unlimited amounts of money to candidates, making it untraceable to individual and corporate donors.

In 2022, several GOP donors challenged the limit as a violation of the Constitution's 1st Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech. Later, then-Sen. J.D. Vance, R-Ohio, now Trump's VP, joined them.

The Republicans cited prior High Court rulings picking apart restrictions on the role of big money in politics and said limits "harmed our political system by leading donors to send their funds elsewhere," such as super PACs, which can raise unlimited funds but do not coordinate with candidates.

The court's GOP-named majority agreed.

"We have come to a point at which campaign finance regulations reviewed by the Supreme Court are almost presumptively unconstitutional," said Steve Vladeck, CNN Supreme Court analyst and professor at Georgetown University Law Center. "It's very difficult to imagine that the justices agreed to take up this case to buck that trend, rather than continue it."

One of the other significant decisions being celebrated by the White House was one upholding the legality of state bans on transgender athletes playing in girls' or women's sports.

That ruling allows the state of West Virginia, from which the suit came, and other states across the country that have similar rules, to continue banning transgender athletes from joining in women' s sports events.

In a 6-3 decision on party lines, the conservative justices asserted that laws prohibiting transgender women and girls from participating in sports programs at publicly-funded schools do not violate constitutionally-protected rights.

Notably, the ruling does not require any state to categorically bar transgender girls from participating on girls' sports teams, or transgender boys from participating on boys' sports teams.

The majority opinion holds that schools can determine eligibility for women's and girls' sports teams based on biological sex. It also holds that West Virginia did not violate Title IX, which bars educational programs that receive federal funding from discriminating based on sex.

Over 100 detained in anti-NATO demonstrations across Turkey

By Combined Sources



ANKARA—Turkish police detained more than 100 people on Sunday during nationwide anti-NATO demonstrations organized by the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP), as authorities imposed a blanket ban on protests in the capital ahead of the military alliance's summit this week.

Demonstrators took to the streets in six cities—Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Adana, Samsun, and Çanakkale—chanting "NATO, get out of the country" and "No passage to NATO" as riot police used tear gas to disperse crowds in Ankara's central Kızılay Square. Protesters there also voiced solidarity with Palestine, holding NATO and its leading members accountable for the ongoing genocide in Gaza. Several Palestinian flags were seen in the demonstrations.

"We have gathered today in many parts of Turkey to protest against NATO," TKP Secretary General Kemal Okuyan said in Istanbul. "We said that we would not hand over Ankara to supporters of NATO, that we would not allow Ankara to remain silent. We have fulfilled that promise."

In Ankara, where Turkish authorities have effectively turned into a fortress for the NATO Summit, TKP members, workers, and their allies held a massive march. Police intervened violently as protesters approached Kızılay, which resulted in multiple injuries. The TKP reported that seven of its members suffered severe head injuries, some sustained fractures to their arms and rib cages, and one underwent angiography due to a suspected heart attack.

Mass marches from Istanbul to Izmir

Thousands gathered in front of Istanbul's Taksim Square and marched toward Dolmabahçe, retracing the route of the historic 1968 action when students, led by Deniz Gezmiş, threw soldiers of the U.S. 6th Fleet into the sea.

The march was joined by delegates of the International Anti-NATO Summit meeting in Istanbul, who carried the World Peace Council's banner, which read "Yes to Peace, No to NATO."

Addressing the crowd in Istanbul, Okuyan drew a direct line from the struggles of the past to today. "Just as those who threw the soldiers of the 6th Fleet into the sea here decades ago restored the honor of this country," he said, "revolutionaries all over Turkey are doing the same."

In Izmir, protesters marched to the NATO base in Buca.

"NATO is the representative of the capitalist class, the bosses, the religious sects, the exploitative bandits who are dragging our country into darkness," said Senem Doruk İnam of the TKP.

"It is their armed force. They have implemented all kinds of evil in our country through NATO. They pointed those weapons at our intellectuals, our youth, our working people. They committed murders, massacres, and coups."

Demonstrations also took place in Samsun, where protesters chanted "Yankee go home," and in Çanakkale and Adana, where marchers carried banners saying, "We are marching for our country and our honor."

NATO's militarism under fire

The protests come as the Ankara NATO summit is expected to discuss increasing member states' defense spending to 5% of GDP by 2035—a longstanding demand from the Trump administration.

Demonstrators around Turkey carried banners reading "NATO wants war, workers want peace," "Budget for the people, not for NATO," and "No to NATO, no to war."

"We will not abandon our work with NATO today or tomorrow," Okuyan said. "We will follow up on this summit. We will follow up on the international decisions they made at this summit, and we will continue the struggle.

"We will continue until this country, our beloved country, becomes an independent, sovereign, exploitation-free, and socialist country. Until that day, we will continue the struggle. The bases must be seized, NATO must get out!"

LABOR NEWS

Cyprus: AKEL warns of dangers from British bases

By CPUSA International Department

Following the U.S.-Israeli attacks on Iran, the Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL) of Cyprus issued a strong condemnation of the strikes, calling them a violation of international law that threatens to turn the entire region into a full-blown conflict. The party warned that the presence of British bases on the island poses a direct danger to Cyprus and called on the government to ensure the bases are not used for military operations in the region. The party's position is for the removal of imperialist bases from their country and to not join the NATO military alliance.

AKEL emphasized that aligning Cyprus with the U.S. and Israel does not safeguard the interests of the Cypriot people and reiterated its longstanding demand for the dismantling of the British bases. The party called on President Christodoulides' government to take a principled stance based on international law and to take all necessary measures to protect the country from being drawn into the escalating conflict.

México: Maestros de la CNTE libran una lucha decidida por pensiones dignas

Por Departamento Internacional del CPUSA

La Coordinadora Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación (CNTE) inició una huelga indefinida el 1 de junio, con plantones permanentes en Rosarito, Ensenada y Tijuana, así como la ocupación del Instituto de Servicios Educativos y Pedagógicos. Los docentes en huelga también bloquearon casetas de peaje y el cruce fronterizo de El Chaparral.

Las principales demandas de los trabajadores son la derogación de la Ley del ISSSTE de 2007 y de la Ley del IMSS de 1997, así como el establecimiento de un nuevo sistema de pensiones y jubilaciones basado en la solidaridad. La huelga afectó a más de 400 escuelas con paros totales y a otras 200 con acciones intermitentes.

El Partido Comunista de México expresó su solidaridad con los docentes, subrayando que la lucha contra la privatización de las pensiones es una lucha de todos los trabajadores.

Tras dialogar con las autoridades federales y estatales, la CNTE levantó sus movilizaciones el 20 de junio, luego de obtener compromisos sobre demandas locales que incluían la basificación y resoluciones administrativas. No obstante, la lucha por un sistema de pensiones digno continúa.

Líbano: El Partido Comunista rechaza el acuerdo entre Israel y el Líbano

El acuerdo inicial alcanzado entre los gobiernos libanés e israelí para poner fin a la guerra provocó la indignación de la resistencia libanesa, incluido el Partido Comunista Libanés.

El partido rechazó este acuerdo, afirmando que «solo sirve a las aspiraciones israelíes». El acuerdo fue negociado por la administración Trump.

«Desde el principio, rechazamos el acuerdo de normalización sobre la demarcación de las fronteras marítimas con el enemigo israelí; ¿cómo, entonces, podríamos someternos ahora a este acuerdo de capitulación y rendición?», preguntó la secretaria general del Partido Comunista Libanés, Hanna Gharib. «No puede haber paz con una entidad que practica el apartheid y el genocidio. Unamos esfuerzos para derrocar este vergonzoso acuerdo».

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

July 18, 2026

Holy war, white republic: The right-wing origins of today's red scare

By Joe Sims

Trump's speech at the Faith and Freedom conference last week was a telling address with enormous implications.

The conference is an annual confab of evangelical Christians founded by Ralph Reed. It's a political gathering organized to rally the GOP faithful. And when talking about the GOP faithful, it's important to note that today there is almost no daylight between those who consider themselves Christian evangelicals and the mass base of the Republican Party. They are literally one entity. And this has been true for a couple of decades. It's also important to be aware that Christian nationalism has become the dominant tendency in this cohort, upwards of 65 percent. According to PRRI's extensive American Values Atlas data, two-thirds of white evangelical Protestants qualify as either Christian nationalists or sympathizers.

It's also important to point out that the modern evangelical movement has its roots in opposing school desegregation. It arose in defiance of a Supreme Court decision to deny tax-exempt status to private Christian schools in the South. Those schools were established after Brown v. Board as a way of avoiding integration. Paul Weyrich, a founder of the Heritage Foundation, and Jerry Falwell were the primary organizers of this white supremacist movement among Southern Christians. Ralph Reed, you'll recall, came out of the Moral Majority movement and the Christian Coalition and was one of its most prominent spokespersons until a corruption scandal involving gambling forced him to lower his public profile.

Trump uses anti-communism to rally his base

So that's who Trump was talking to. And the reason he was talking to them was part of the GOP effort to rally its base for the fall midterms. The important thing here is the subject he chose to address: communism and an alleged threat to the American way of life. And the reason is that in polling, opposition to communism tops the list of perceived concerns on the evangelical right, exceeding domestic economic and foreign policy issues. This belief has been consciously stoked since the time of Rev. Billy Graham, an old-school Cold Warrior, who preached that the only vaccine against communism was to be a born-again Christian.

Consider that since the 1950s and the moral victory of the Civil Rights movement over segregation, the far right has been in search of issues that resonate. Images of Bull Connor, police dogs, and fire hoses used against civil rights activists not only did not have broad appeal in the U.S. body politic but actually hurt the arch-segregationists.



It was only after several failed attempts to find an issue that Weyrich and Falwell happened upon abortion. It allowed them to regain their political footing and build a broader movement. Today they hope the issue will be saving white America from "godless" communism.

Marriage of Christian nationalism to the evangelical movement

Why, you might ask, do we use the term "saving white America"? The reason has to do with the far right's deeply embedded belief that people of color, and in particular people of African descent, are not only inferior but represent a subspecies.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Holy war, white republic: The right-wing origins of today's red scare

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
They're afraid of race mixing or, as Trump put it in a phrase borrowed from Hitler, "they're poisoning our blood." The point here is that there's a nearly 75-year direct line from opposition to desegregation to Trump's attack on Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) candidates and its use as a rallying cry against communism.

And here we've arrived at an aspect of MAGA that has not been given nearly enough attention: the marriage of Christian nationalism to the evangelical movement and the birth of a U.S.-styled clerical fascism, deeply rooted in white supremacy. Along with it comes the threat of Jim Crow and the revival of old forms of rule adapted to 21st-century conditions. And to anyone who thinks this is overstating the case, here are the words of Mr. Man himself — made at a press gaggle on June 29th: "I think it's [communism] the biggest threat to our nation there is, maybe since our founding. That includes World War I, World War II, September 11. It includes the Pearl Harbor attack."

So the question from their point of view is: How do you deal with a threat like that? What is Trump setting the stage for? And while you're considering that, allow us to briefly turn to the issue of the growing threat of political repression.

Using prosecutions for oppression

There have been several federal and state prosecutions over the past period. Among them: the FBI raid on the Ohio Organizing Collective for alleged voter fraud; the Texas Prairieland prosecutions of eight defendants in connection with an ICE protest, where the eight were given exorbitant life sentences for firing a weapon and transporting magazines, ranging from 100 to 30 years. Add to the list the June federal indictment of eight University of Michigan students for criminal harassment and "terrorizing" campus officials by placing fake corpses on their lawn and spray-painting their homes, and Chicago's Broadview 6 indictment of anti-ICE protesters, which collapsed due to prosecutorial misconduct.

In Minnesota, there have been attempts at mass indictments of local activists and state officials for obstructing ICE enforcement. There, subpoenas were withdrawn after a rebuke from a federal judge; and let's not forget the Stop Cop City RICO indictments of 60 activists.

And then there's the new targeting of philanthropy and nonprofit organizations by the Trump administration. The IRS has been directed to investigate and aggressively strip the tax-exempt status of nonprofits and foundations accused of "fomenting or financing" civil unrest.

Finally, there's the Cuba angle and the foreign agent charge. In May 2026, the Justice Department and the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control launched a massive inquiry into organizations mobilizing in support of Cuba. Acting under National Security Presidential Memorandum 7 (NSPM-7), federal investigators have compiled a list of roughly 145 nonprofits and political groups, including the Party and solidarity networks like the Venceremos Brigade.

A growing pattern of political repression

This is the growing pattern of political repression that is emerging, coupled with Trump's anti-communist tirade directed against DSA candidates running in Democratic primaries this year. It's a dangerous development on both counts. MAGA is panicking, I think, because their support in the coming midterms is extremely tenuous and they face a landslide defeat. Therefore, we must keep our eyes on the prize and keep the pressure on. This means broadening and deepening organizing for the election. The midterms must be the focus for the next four or five months, and that includes supporting and running our own candidates.

Build the party around the press

By C. J. Atkins



Lenin was not subtle about the relationship between a Communist Party and its newspaper. In What Is to Be Done?, he famously declared that a newspaper is "not only a collective propagandist and collective agitator" but also "a collective organizer." He compared the party press to the scaffolding erected around a building under construction — connecting the builders, coordinating their labor, and making visible the shape of what they were doing together. The newspaper was not a supplement to the party. It was, in a very real sense, the skeleton around which the party grew.

That idea was not merely theoretical for Lenin. He proposed building the revolutionary organization of the Russian working class around the distribution network of Iskra — the newspaper he helped found and edit in the early 1900s.

The agents who moved the paper from city to city, factory to factory, became the connective tissue of what would become the Bolshevik Party. The paper was the organizing tool, and the distribution was the organizing work.

For the Communist Party USA, that tradition has a long and living history. From the Daily Worker to the Daily World to the *People's Daily World* to the *People's Weekly World* and now to *People's World,* our press has always been more than a publication. It has been, at its best, the party's public face, its educator, its organizer, and its voice in the broader movements of the working class. The press is the link between the party and the movements, bringing Communist analysis to the movements while integrating the movements' experience into the party's thinking.

So why has it been so hard to actually build our party around our press?

The print vacuum

When *People's Weekly World* ended its print run in 2010 and transitioned to an online-only publication, it created a vacuum that the party was not fully prepared to fill. The decision was understandable on financial grounds — print costs had become punishing, and the internet seemed to offer a cost-effective alternative. The experience of the Obama 2008 presidential campaign left people all across the political and labor worlds with stars in their eyes when it came to the internet. But the transition cost us something that wasn't immediately obvious: the work of distribution.

For decades, party clubs had organized themselves in large part around the paper. Members had routes — neighborhoods they walked, workplaces they visited, picket lines they covered. Distributing the *People's Weekly World* was not just a task; it was a discipline. It gave members a regular, tangible connection to the party's political life. It forced conversations. A paper handed to a co-worker on a lunch break opens a door that a web page could not replicate at that time. The physical act of distribution was itself a form of organizing.

For new and younger members, distributing the paper was often their very first assignment. It was an early and practical education in what it meant to build the party around the press. You showed up, you took your stack of papers, you learned which shops and union halls would display them, and in the process you learned something fundamental: The press was not a passive product to be consumed. It was an active tool. When the print paper disappeared, that initiation disappeared with it. Newer members joining in the 2010s and after often had no lived experience of what it even meant to "build the party around the press." The phrase was an abstraction.

The transition to online-only presented challenges that were genuinely new. Posting an article to Facebook or forwarding it via email is not the same as putting a paper in someone's hands, and for many members, coming up with a way to recreate that experience has not been easy.

And there is the fact that all the various digital channels come with their own structural obstacles: algorithm updates throttle our reach with little notice, junk-mail filters intercept our e-blasts, and social media platforms increasingly deprioritize political content from smaller organizations.

The fund drive fades, and with it, the culture

Compounding the loss of the print edition was an organizational retreat that happened around the same time: the suspension of the annual *People's World* Fund Drives. These drives had always served a dual purpose. Obviously, they raised money. But they also regularly placed the press at the center of club life. Members who participated in fund drives were members who were thinking about the press, talking about it, and making the case for it to their neighbors, co-workers, and comrades.

The suspension of the fund drives coincided with a broader period of organizational decline, including a move away from the local club structures that had long been the basic unit of party life. The cumulative effect was to push *People's World* further and further to the margins of what members thought of as their primary work. The press became something the party had rather than something the party was organized around.

The fund drives have returned, thankfully. But neglect accumulated over years does not dissolve quickly, and habits that have lapsed do not snap back into place so fast, either. After a prolonged period of treating fundraising for the press as a secondary or optional concern, rebuilding that culture requires sustained effort and deliberate reeducation.

Some of the most successful means of fundraising — just like any other political task — are collective ones. Banquets, award luncheons, and movement solidarity events have always been among the most significant contributors to the *People's World* fund drive. In the districts that hold them regularly, these gatherings have become premier party-building events on the annual calendar — occasions not just to raise money but to bring together our partners, allies, and friends from labor and the broader movements in a setting that reminds everyone why *People's World* — and by extension, the Communist Party — matters. They are a demonstration, in miniature, of the united front in action.

Rebuilding the fund drive culture does not have to mean starting from scratch; it can start with a small event, expanding outward and learning from bigger districts what it takes to put on something that not only we in the party but our allies also look forward to.

Learning from what works

The honest accounting of these difficulties is not a cause for despair but rather for clarity. Alongside all the challenges discussed so far, there are also real and instructive experiments underway that get us started toward finding some answers.

Connecticut stands out. The Connecticut district never abandoned the practice of regular neighborhood and workplace outreach with *People's World* material.

CONTINUE FROM PAGE THREE
Their sustained commitment to distribution — week after week, route after route — helped them build a sprawling network of local party clubs that stands as evidence that the Leninist instinct was right: The organizing work of press distribution is party-building work.

In recent years, we have begun encouraging other clubs to experiment with local print editions — weekly digests in some places, monthly editions in others, depending on what capacity they have. The results have been encouraging, and many clubs and districts across the country have experience that we need to find ways of collecting and exchanging: Ohio, Michigan, Philadelphia, the *Southern Workers Voice* edition, and several more.

A local print edition gives members a dedicated collective task: meet together, discuss the content, plan out whose hands you want to put it into, print it out, fold it, and then go out to distribute it together. It provides a reason to gather that is also a reason to engage politically. It functions simultaneously as an internal organizing tool, an opportunity for political discussion and strategizing — and as an outward-facing one, building coalition through the stories chosen for local coverage while directing readers toward the main website.

Hand cards and flyers built around specific struggles — with QR codes linking to PeoplesWorld.org — have also proven effective at demonstrations and rallies. They are inexpensive, flexible, and easy to produce quickly. Special four-page print editions for significant events like May Day, Juneteenth, or No Kings Day, designed centrally and printed locally, have given clubs another way to show up at major moments with something concrete in their hands.

These approaches are yielding results. More people are contacting us wanting to write for People's World. The diversity of contributors is growing. The connection between club activity and press activity is being rebuilt, piece by piece. For a lot of members, People's World is back on their radar in a way that it wasn't a few years ago.

Local *People's World* social media accounts have become another meaningful form of focused "distribution." The @DCpeoplesworld account on Instagram stands out in this regard, having built a following of over 5,000 — and put it to work. Whenever there is a coalition event or a story worth amplifying in the District, they get it out immediately to the allies, activists, and movement organizations who follow them. Chicago and other clubs are actively building their own followings along similar lines, including on X. This work, too, is distributing the press. It is an extension of the same logic that used to motivate people to stand outside plant gates with stacks of papers: getting People's World content into the hands, feeds, and conversations of the people we need to reach, where they already are.

Lenin wrote that the party newspaper requires as many people "as possible to contribute their ideas and experiences." That remains the standard.

Every writer recruited, every club that takes up distribution, every fund drive participant is a step toward meeting it.

The website question

All of the print and distribution work described above is ultimately in service of directing people to PeoplesWorld.org as a daily source of news and a tool for organizing work. That makes the quality and functionality of the website a matter of real organizational urgency.

The current *People's World* website was built in 2015–16 and is now over a decade old. It increasingly presents technical problems, struggles with mobile compatibility, and is expensive to update without relying on the original developers.

A redesign would make *People's World* more flexible in the kinds of content it can feature and more accessible to the readers we need to reach. Given the financial constraints facing both the party and Long View Publishing, however, the timeline for such a redesign is uncertain — but it is a need that will only grow more pressing. It may be worth a special campaign at some point once we can get an idea of the cost involved.

Toward a People's World Conference

All of this points toward the need for a broader, more systematic conversation — one that goes beyond what I've put down here as a single individual. The suggestion has been floated that it is time to convene a National *People's World* Readers Conference. It is an excellent idea and worth serious planning, perhaps with 2027 as a target.

The old *Daily Worker* and *Daily World* used to hold periodic conferences that brought together readers, distributors, supporters, and contributors — from inside and outside the party — to assess how the press was doing and strategize about how to do it better. That kind of periodic gathering, rooted in practical experience and oriented toward practical improvement, is exactly the kind of collective thinking we need now. Questions of digital distribution, local print editions, fund drive culture, the website, and the recruitment of new writers and contributors all deserve more sustained collective discussion than they typically receive.

Building the press is building the party

Lenin understood something that the history of our own movement confirms: a Communist Party that is not organized around its press is a party that has lost one of its most essential instruments. The press is not a vanity; it is not only the concern of the comrades whose daily responsibility it is to produce; it is not just another item in our budget. It is the voice of the party and a voice for the movements — simultaneously an expression of what we stand for and a tool for building the forces that can fight for it.

That Leninist principle is one we need to do more to revive and inculcate among our members new and old.

We can no longer allow *People's World* to be just another task on a long list of things members have to do — especially not a task that is far down that list!

Luckily, we are not starting from zero. Connecticut has shown a model of local club building focused on the press. Local print experiments are showing that it can be adapted. Writers' groups and new contributor classes are showing that the pipeline of voices can be widened. The fund drive can once again become a regular feature of club life. Smart and constantly evolving use of social media is opening new channels for distribution and coalition-building.

The challenge before us is to take these scattered experiments and successes and make them standard practice — to rebuild, consciously and collectively, the culture of a party that understands its press as the scaffolding around which it builds itself.

When you build the press, you are building the party. That was true in Lenin's time. It was true in the era of the *Daily Worker*. It is true now, in the era of PeoplesWorld.org. The medium changes, and the methods of distribution are updated, but the core principle remains valid.

In many respects, the work of building the party around the press is just beginning again. Let's get to it.

USA at 250: The revolution we're still fighting for

By People's World Editorial Collective



Two hundred and fifty years ago this July 4th, a group of colonial merchants, lawyers, and planters put their names to a piece of parchment that shook the world. They declared, in the most radical language their age could imagine, that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed—and that when any government becomes destructive of that end, it is the *right of the people to alter or abolish it.*

The Trump administration, busy spending tens of millions on "Freedom 250" galas, demonstrations of military power, and AI-animated portraits of George Washington, would prefer we didn't dwell too long on that last part.

Historian Herbert Aptheker spent a career insisting that the American Revolution was no mere tax dispute—it was, as he wrote in his 1960 classic book on the subject, a "continuation of the pro-democratic struggles" of the colonial era, a genuine popular uprising. It was imperfect, constrained by the class interests of those who led it, and shot through with the original sin of slavery and built upon the ruins of the Indigenous nations whose lands were seized and lives sacrificed on the altar of expansionism.

The hunt for land and resources that drove European settlement and fueled the new republic's growth was never incidental to American capitalism; it was the engine of it, and the genocide it required was not a side effect but a deliberate policy carried forward by every administration from Washington to the reservation era and beyond.

The American Revolution was all of those things, but not only.

The artisans of Philadelphia, the farmers of Massachusetts, the sailors and dockworkers (including the Black and Indigenous ones) who enforced non-importation agreements with their fists weren't just extras in a merchant's drama. They were key players, fighting for something that mattered to them. That's the revolution worth commemorating—not the version of it being sold to us by the heirs of the ruling class who hijacked it.

Because hijacked it they did—from the very beginning. The Constitution that followed the Declaration locked slavery into place. Women still had no political existence.

The masses who did not own property could not vote. The promise of 1776 was written in the language of universal freedom, but the "liberty" the founders wrote about was intended only for their own class.

The Marxist tradition has always understood this dynamic: Every bourgeois revolution advances the cause of human freedom while simultaneously establishing new forms of domination. The American Revolution was no exception. It was, in the words used across generations of socialist analysis, an *unfinished revolution*—a revolution that created the terrain on which future struggles would be fought but that could not complete itself within the limits of the class that led it.

The next great step forward came drenched in blood. The Civil War and the brief experiment of Radical Reconstruction—that "splendid failure," as W.E.B. Du Bois called it—represent the Second American Revolution, the one that smashed slaveholder power and briefly extended citizenship, voting rights, and political power to formerly enslaved Black men across the South. Freedmen served in legislatures, schools were built, and land redistribution was on the agenda. The ruling class called it chaos, but it was one of democracy's finest hours on American soil. They violently crushed it, and a century of white supremacist terror followed.

Between those upheavals came another hard-won advance. The Nineteenth Amendment of 1920 was won from a resistant ruling class by generations of women who organized, marched, went to jail, and refused to be silent.

Yet even that victory was incomplete from the start—Black women across the South remained locked out of the voting booth by Jim Crow.

Then another wave came with the Civil Rights Movement, which forced democracy to mean something again—with the Voting Rights Act, the Fair Housing Act, and more. Millions of Black Americans, joined by labor, by the left, by people of conscience, bent the arc of history against Dixiecrat reaction.

This all shows the lesson that no amount of "Freedom 250" MAGA rallies or White House cage matches can obscure: Every advance of genuine democracy in American history has come from below, over the objections of those at the top. And every advance has been partial, contested, and vulnerable to rollback.

We are living in one of those rollback moments now. The Trump administration, the billionaire-funded demolition of regulatory government, the Musk-and-Thiel faction of the ruling class—none of these are aberrations in the story of American capitalism. They represent the system trying to shed the democratic pretenses it no longer finds useful.

They want an image of the revolution frozen at 1776—a founding mythology stripped of its radical content, useful for legitimizing power rather than challenging it.

But the American working class has its own history worth celebrating on this 250th anniversary: The great railroad strikes of 1877, when workers fought back with a fury that instilled fear in the ruling class.

The triumph at Flint in 1936-37, when autoworkers sat down and would not move until they had a union. The March on Washington. The Memphis sanitation strike. The mass movement to end the war on Vietnam. Dolores Huerta and the farmworkers. Stonewall 1969. Standing Rock. The teachers' rebellions of 2018 and 2019. The women's marches against Trumpism. The UAW's Stand-Up Strike. The Minneapolis General Strike against ICE.

All of these are episodes in the long, imperfect, incomplete march of the American people toward what the Declaration of Independence actually promised. It is a journey that points, however haltingly, toward socialism—toward a society where the people who do the work make the decisions, where the wealth produced by labor does not vanish upward into the pockets of those who own but do not work.

The revolution of 1776 is unfinished. The work of perfecting democracy—and ultimately transcending the class society that keeps sabotaging it—must still be completed.

On this July 4th, while the administration lights fireworks over a republic it is actively dismantling, let's remember that the real American tradition isn't the one being staged for the cameras. It's the one being carried forward by everyone fighting, right now, to make the words of the Declaration of Independence fully mean something for all of us.

That's the birthday worth celebrating.

Cuba is not our enemy

By Richard Grassl



Respecting each country's ability to make their own sovereign independent decisions is a principle of international law enshrined in the United Nations Charter. President Donald Trump's agenda of interference in the internal affairs of the Cuban government, especially since January 2026, has been an extension of his eagerness to violate the sovereignty of peoples around the world—Canada, Gaza, Venezuela, Mexico, Iran, Greenland, and Denmark, among others. It must be repudiated by every means possible.

Violation of another nation's sovereignty during peacetime destroys goodwill and leads to mistrust between governments.

Of course, it's no surprise that Trump would pursue such a path in foreign affairs. He's constantly sowing mistrust between the people of the U.S. and their own government here at home, so of course he extends it abroad.

To build opposition to Trumpism, we must take a clue from our Cuban neighbor.

The relationship between Cuba and the United States is long and complex. While Secretary of State Marco Rubio poisons the atmosphere with nonsense, calling Cuba a "failed state" and emphasizing "necessary regime change," Cuba has credibility in the eyes of the world. Such adventurist suggestions have no place in a world more interdependent and interconnected through science, technological advance, and environmental challenges. The old world order is outdated and unworkable.

The scope of imperial arrogance is magnified, though, by a complacent Congress unaccountable to its constituents. Groveling before a convicted felon twice-impeached by his political peers is a risky proposition when you still have to face the voters. Trump has proven time after time he is incapable of carrying out the duties of his office and provide leadership for the benefit of the 99% at home and around the world, so why would Cuba policy be any different?

For many years, the Cuban people have extended their hospitality and generosity to all visitors without conditions attached. Yet, because they chose their own independent political path, the U.S. government imposed an illegal, criminal blockade and sanctions for more than 65 years. This was punishment for Cuba and served as a warning to other nations to keep their distance.

Cuba's response? The country continues offering its hands in peace and friendship to discuss differences in a diplomatic setting in an open manner.

At this moment in history, solidarity with the Cuban people is more necessary than ever.

Cubans are at peace with the world; they are not a threat to U.S. national security. Creative resistance, unity of action, revolutionary patience, and collective security enable the Cuban people to survive, endure, and overcome difficulties against all odds. However, the energy blockade puts their right to self-determination at risk.

As Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel has asserted, "It is not in the concept of revolutionaries to surrender." The best option to resolve differences is to resume diplomatic negotiations on equal footing rather than exchanging hostilities.

Cuba's medical program offers professional healthcare services to needy countries when invited by other governments that lack adequate infrastructure. Their hurricane preparedness model and national anti-drug policy are acknowledged worldwide. Our countries have an opportunity to learn from each other. The possibility to open doors shuttered by stereotypes and isolation can dispel misunderstanding due to fear and ignorance.

Cuba is not the enemy.

The American people have a vital role to play during this critical period. There is not one single model of democracy that fits all needs. What will be remembered is who initiated the conversation first by holding out their hand in friendship.

The surest way to save our freedom is to fight to preserve our right to vote. Call, write, or email Congress to lift the U.S. blockade of Cuba and overturn the phony U.S. designation of Cuba as "state sponsor of terrorism." A better world is possible.

Stop the SAVE: Unions, civil rights groups fight voter suppression bill

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—Unions and civil rights groups are girding for another battle over a massive Republican voter suppression bill, the so-called SAVE (Safeguard American Voter Eligibility) Act.

Right-wing House Republicans demanded the GOP attach the SAVE Act to the annual military authorization bill, but their leaders said "no." The right-wingers then revolted, joining all the Democrats to scuttle the military bill on a procedural vote just before the July 4 congressional recess.

So, House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., to appease his radicals, who are led by Rep. Anna Paulina Luna, R-Fla., plans to insert it into yet another so-called "reconciliation" bill when lawmakers return on July 11.

Reconciliation bills are immune from Senate filibusters. They're supposed to only deal with tax and spending limits, such as President Donald Trump's so-called "Big, Beautiful Bill" did last July 4. The SAVE Act is now Trump's top priority, and Johnson is scrounging for ways to enact it.

Johnson says the key parts of the SAVE Act would virtually kill mail-in balloting and force voters to provide proof of citizenship every time they register to vote and/or go to the polls. He also contends it would eliminate "fraud in blue states."

Johnson did not provide any proof of such fraud. Neither did the measure's top sponsor, Trump, who's made it his #1 cause and who still lies about the 2020 presidential election being "stolen" from him. But the SAVE Act "will guarantee the mid-terms" for the GOP, he declares, and ensure that Republicans won't lose for "a hundred years."



Former Trump Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem disclosed the real objective of the SAVE Act, though, four months ago. It's "to make sure we have the right people voting, that we have the right people to lead this country." In plain English: Right-wing MAGA Republicans, and few others.

Estimates of how many people would lose the right to vote via the GOP's voter suppression bill start at 21 million, the number of women whose last names on their original voter registrations do not match their current names. Other numbers are higher.

The GOP plan drew the ire of the AFL-CIO.

"We must defend rule by the people and the right to vote," the labor federation decided, via a resolution at its Minneapolis convention in May. "We strongly oppose restrictive voter ID laws that disenfranchise segments of the population by disproportionately impacting workers, women, people with disabilities and communities of color.

"We advocate for policies that make it easier for all to vote through national standards for early voting, mail-in voting, time off to vote, and registration. We oppose any measures that block fair access to the ballot box and support the restoration of the franchise to those who have served their time.

"We will harness our power to defend our right to vote, defend our right to vote by mail or in person, ensure free and fair elections, and uphold the constitutional rights of all people in our country," the AFL-CIO declared.

The Communications Workers took their national campaign against the SAVE Act all the way to Alaska. There, unionized Association of Flight Attendants-CWA members mobilized outside the office of right-wing GOP Sen. Dan Sullivan to demand he oppose the measure.

The Republican voter repression bill would disenfranchise many voters in the North Star State. A large share of Alaskans are indigenous people, and most of them live in communities dependent on mail-in balloting, since they're accessible only by boat or bush plane.

The AFL-CIO, the Communications Workers, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, both big teachers unions, the A. Philip Randolph Institute, AFSCME, the Service Employees, and 44 other groups signed a letter saying they intend to marshal their forces against voter suppression.

They want companies to publicly join in "to discuss the urgent defense of voting rights and the collective political power of the communities we represent."

The coalition also demanded a full-scale "report on corporate political spending, contributions, and relationships connected to elected officials, organizations, and efforts advancing discriminatory redistricting schemes, or attacks on voting rights."

That may be a tough sell, since corporate boards, unencumbered by accountability, consistently support the MAGA Republicans who demand renewal of Jim Crow, or worse. That includes supporting Trump.

But even as the SAVE Act is stalled on Capitol Hill, the right-wingers have taken their campaign for it to red states, the Brennan Center for Law and Justice at New York University reports. GOP-run state legislatures are approving, and GOP governors are signing, their own versions of the law.

"Sixty-one years ago, LBJ urged Congress to join him in 'working long hours,' even 'nights and weekends,' to ensure the right to vote. Republicans and Democrats joined together. They recognized the fundamental right to vote is not a partisan issue," the Brennan Center said.

"We now have a president, speaking with the same tenacity and urgency, urging Congress to restrict that very right. We should not be surprised. But we should be prepared."

The Brennan Center reports that in the last year-and-a-half, SAVE Act-like laws "have been enacted in seven states," and elections for the 2026 midterms will likely be administered under proof-of-citizenship laws in five of them: New Hampshire, Wyoming, South Dakota, Ohio, and Utah. Two more, Florida and Louisiana, are waiting in the wings for 2027. Another six will have state SAVE Act proposals on their ballots in referendums this fall.

"Five more—Kansas, Mississippi, Kentucky, Indiana, and Tennessee—will require some individuals whose eligibility to vote has been challenged through citizenship verification checks provide proof of their citizenship to prevent their registration from being canceled," the Brennan Center added.

"And Arkansas, Kansas, South Dakota, and West Virginia will have ballot measures either making explicit that only citizens can vote or banning noncitizens from voting in elections, but these are largely symbolic and should not be conflated with SAVE Act-like laws that place documentary burdens on citizens to prove their status," the center said.

Good Trouble Lives On: 'Teach! Reach! Preach!' voting rights weekend

By Combined Sources



WASHINGTON—This Friday through Sunday, July 17-19, thousands of people across the country are expected to take part in "Good Trouble Lives On," the sixth annual national weekend of nonviolent, nonpartisan action carried out in remembrance of Congressman John Lewis.

This year's mobilization is being organized under the banner "Teach! Reach! Preach!" and forms a central piece of the broader Freedom Summer 2026 campaign to expand voter registration and beat back a wave of new restrictions on the right to vote. Over 600 separate events have been announced so far, with more being added to the list each day.

The weekend comes as Congress has repeatedly attempted to push through legislation that would block millions of Americans from voting, while state legislatures around the country advance similar measures.

Many voters will face new documentation requirements, changes to vote-by-mail rules, and other barriers when they go to cast ballots in November.

"We're witnessing a Jim-Crow era effort from states across the country working to restrict our freedoms and silence Black and brown communities," said Christine Wood, co-director of the Declaration for American Democracy Coalition, an initiative of Public Citizen.

"In the face of this rampant voter suppression, we must teach our community members on the ways they can make their voice heard, reach out to our neighbors to bring them into this movement, and preach to our loved ones about the moral necessity to carry the torch of the civil rights movement."

Good Trouble Lives On is explicitly rooted in Lewis's legacy as a civil rights leader and longtime defender of voting rights. "The fight started by John Lewis over 60 years ago on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala., still lives on like never before," said April Albright, national legal director of Black Voters Matter.

Barbara Arnwine and Daryl Jones, co-leaders of the Transformative Justice Coalition, framed the weekend as both a commemoration and a call to arms: "While the John Lewis Good Trouble Lives On Weekend of Action is an appropriate time to reflect on the rights that our ancestors fought for and won, it is also a time to reflect on the fact that those hard-gained voting rights were taken away by the U.S. Supreme Court and several state legislatures."

The weekend is a coalition effort, bringing together grassroots organizations, legal advocates, faith leaders, and community members. In addition to the groups already named, also participating are Asian Americans Advancing Justice, American Constitution Society, Black Voters Matter, Common Cause, SEIU, CWA, Urban League, Planned Parenthood, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, American Association of People with Disabilities, May Day Strong, League of Women Voters, U.S. Student Association, 50501, Our Revolution, and dozens more.

Organizers this year also announced a new partnership with Rock the Vote, which is powering a voter tool at goodtroubleliveson.org that lets people register to vote, check their registration status, request an absentee ballot, and pledge to vote.

"John Lewis taught us that democracy isn't something we inherit, it's something we have to protect and strengthen through action," said Kenneth Sandoval-Bushur, senior advisor at Rock the Vote.

The goal, organizers say, is a unified push to register voters from historically underrepresented communities—including young people, Black and brown voters, people with disabilities, people with low or no incomes, and people experiencing homelessness.

Minister Christian Watkins, senior government relations advocate for the Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, tied the effort to faith communities' obligations: "Congregations and communities of good conscience must continue the legacy of participating in this 'Good Trouble,' not as partisan performance, but as covenant responsibility."

The weekend unfolds in three phases.

Teach (Friday, July 17) features teach-ins, nonpartisan voter education, and radio broadcasts. The focus is on civic engagement, voting, and civil rights.

Reach (Saturday, July 18) centers on community events and "votercades" to connect people with voting resources and opportunities to get involved.

Preach (Sunday, July 19) closes the weekend with faith services and further civic education.

Organizers stress that all events are grounded in nonviolent action: Participants are asked to de-escalate confrontation, act lawfully, and leave weapons of any kind at home. The action does not endorse any candidate or ballot measure.



LABOR NEWS

8. Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

Resistance, Reciprocity, and Regeneration

Cuba's problems are not insurmountable. With a daily peak power demand of around 3,500 megawatts of energy for the entire nation, Cuba's needs can theoretically be met with moderate investment in sovereign, largely renewables-based energy infrastructure, as well as modernization of its thermoelectric plants. To put things in perspective, a conservative estimate of the average continuous power demand in the U.S. is between 400 and 500 thousand megawatts, with a peak exceeding 700 thousand. This breaks down to roughly 1.4 kilowatts on average per person in the United States, compared to Cuba's 0.35 kilowatts per person at max demand.

While Cuba's ongoing energy infrastructure projects are achievable, especially with the renewed urgency of their implementation, prolonged economic blockade has left Cuba in a precarious circumstance to finance the transition. However, it is key to underscore how the U.S. social and economic organization produces prodigious waste and overuse of critical resources, such as electricity. In contrast, Cuba's rationally organized distribution of resources and its general prioritization of essential human needs mean that it has the experience and vision to develop with greater efficiency and resourcefulness.

While much of Cuba's resourcefulness results from the limitations imposed by the blockade, its vision for overcoming its singular circumstances is more generalizable than one might think.

part 14 of this article will appear in 2 weeks

Israel: El Partido Comunista prepara su lista para las elecciones

Por Departamento Internacional del CPUSA

El Frente Democrático para la Paz y la Igualdad (Hadash), encabezado por el Partido Comunista de Israel (MAKI), se prepara para las próximas elecciones en Israel. Bajo el liderazgo de su recién elegido cabeza de lista, el camarada Yousef Jabreen, Hadash es la única voz que aboga por la solidaridad y la unidad entre árabes y judíos en la lucha contra Netanyahu y sus aliados fascistas y kahanistas, Ben-Gvir y Smotrich.

Hadash también aspira a revitalizar la Lista Conjunta, un bloque electoral que en su momento estuvo integrado por Hadash y los partidos palestinos: la Lista Árabe Unida, Balad (Alianza Nacional Democrática) y Ta'al (Unión Árabe). Hadash y sus aliados consideran que concurrir en un bloque electoral unido fortalecerá al electorado árabe y contribuirá a debilitar al bloque fascista.

El mensaje de Hadash a los votantes es que ellos representan la única resistencia legítima frente al fascismo y que los llamados «partidos de la oposición liberal» respaldan la ocupación, la opresión y la privación de derechos de los palestinos, al igual que Netanyahu y sus aliados. Hadash y sus aliados son los únicos partidos que abogan por la plena igualdad de derechos para todos los ciudadanos árabes, el fin de la ocupación y el establecimiento de un Estado palestino.

Asimismo, Hadash y MAKI mantienen su mensaje histórico, defendiendo los derechos laborales, la democracia, la justicia social y la paz.

Irlanda y Gran Bretaña: Los partidos comunistas condenan la violencia racista en Belfast

El Partido Comunista de Irlanda y el Partido Comunista de Gran Bretaña condenaron la violencia racista desatada tras un ataque con arma blanca ocurrido en Belfast el 8 de junio. Ambos partidos señalaron que elementos lealistas organizados y agitadores de extrema derecha intentaron aprovechar el incidente para sembrar el miedo y la división, atacando viviendas, arremetiendo contra negocios e intimidando a familias migrantes.

El Partido Comunista de Irlanda rechazó cualquier intento de responsabilizar a toda una comunidad por las acciones de un individuo, calificando los ataques de «pogromos» que evocan deliberadamente la violencia sectaria de las décadas de 1960 y 1970. Asimismo, el partido elogió a los sindicalistas, activistas comunitarios y residentes locales que se movilizaron para defender a las familias amenazadas.

«La extrema derecha no ofrece soluciones a los problemas que enfrentan los trabajadores», declaró el partido. «No puede construir viviendas, mejorar los servicios públicos, aumentar los salarios ni fortalecer a las comunidades. Su política se basa en la división, enfrentando a unos trabajadores contra otros mientras las causas reales de las dificultades sociales y económicas permanecen intactas».

El comunicado subrayó el carácter de clase de la situación, vinculando a los grupos de extrema derecha con los multimillonarios y sus esfuerzos por dividir a la clase trabajadora.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

July 25, 2026

Living under a fascist regime: What can each of us do?

By Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove

Harald Poelchau took a job with the Nazis in April of 1933. Just days before, the Reichtag had passed its Enabling Act, granting Hitler unchecked powers. Communists and trade unionists had been rounded up by the Gestapo and beaten in basements since Hitler assumed power as chancellor at the end of January, just two months before. On Poelchau's first day on the job, the Nazis announced a boycott of Jewish businesses. In his role as chaplain at Tegel prison, Poelchau would work for the Nazis for the next twelve years.

Today, a mural of Harald and his wife Dorothee covers the side of an eight-story building in the Charlottenburg neighborhood of Berlin, celebrating the actions they took to hide Jews and feed prisoners who would be starved during the terrors of the Third Reich. The Poelchau's were never caught—which is to say, they convinced the Nazis they were obediently serving the Fürher, even as they worked in secret to save lives. But this also meant that Poelchau participated in the execution of some of his own co-conspirators.

The Poelchaus are models of courage in the face of authoritarian extremism. But in their resistance, were they complicit?

The Poelchaus have been on my mind since I got back from two weeks in Germany and Poland with the Fellowship at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics (FASPE), an innovative, inter-professional program that immerses early career professionals in the story of the Nazi regime to ask this question: what can we learn from the decisions professionals made in the processes that led to the Holocaust and mass killings? (If you know or teach young professionals, you should encourage them to apply.)

Along with Rabbi Amy Wallk, I facilitated this year's cohort of clergy fellows—an exceptional group of young pastors, rabbis, and chaplains from the U.S., Canada, Ghana, and Nigeria. We made our journey alongside and in dialogue with cohorts of doctors and journalists—good conversation partners for questions about how clergy serve life and shape a public narrative in our work. As it turns out, they're also important conversation partners for anyone who hopes to offer moral leadership in the midst of an authoritarian crisis.



I should be clear: FASPE is a professional ethics fellowship that aims to make good use of history to fill a gap in so much professional formation. Yes, our journalism schools and medical schools and seminaries require ethics courses. But programs that compete for students in a market-driven education model have been incentivized to make professional ethics about what helps a person do well on the job. Don't steal from your clients. Don't sleep with your parishioner. Don't give up your sources. Don't cut corners for short term gain.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Living under a fascist regime: What can each of us do?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Ask anyone who's made these mistakes and they will tell you: these are important lessons to learn. But following all the rules of professionalism did nothing to prevent most doctors and journalists and clergy from facilitating mass murder in Nazi Germany. FASPE asks early-career professionals to think about what more their moral and ethical commitments require of them.

But FASPE is not a program to teach professionals how to resist authoritarianism. By design, it aims to expand the horizon of the ethical questions professionals ask by immersing them in a story of authoritarian horrors that everyone can agree was evil. When we consider a context where complicity with evil is a given—not something to be debated—it creates a space to ask what motivated the perpetrators to do the things that they did. "Monsters exist, but they are too few in number to be truly dangerous," Primo Levi wrote in his memoir about surviving Auschwitz. "More dangerous are the common men, the functionaries ready to believe and to act without asking questions." For two weeks, we ask fellows to get to know the functionaries of the Nazi regime—the young professionals without whom Hitler would never have been able to enact the illusions he articulated in *Mein Kampf*. We asked them not to imagine what they might have done to resist, but to try to understand why people very much like them decided not to resist.

Which is to say, we didn't study the case of the Poelchaus. Instead, we were immersed in the waters of the world they had to negotiate. We took time to understand what it felt like to be a university student in the 20s and early 30s of the Weimar Republic. We went to the Bebel Platz at the Humbolt University where Goebbels gave his famous speech in front of the pyre of burning books, that same spring when Poelchau started his new job at Tegel prison. We learned that it wasn't the Nazi propaganda office that planned the book burnings, but rather enthusiastic students who would go on to serve as young professionals in the Reich. These were Poelchau's peers. Many well-educated young Germans in the early thirties were enthusiastic about the Nazi program, just as the churches saw Hitler's movement as a sign of revival that could be good for the faith. The cathedral in Berlin held a service of thanksgiving the Sunday after Hitler became chancellor. People who resisted the Nazis weren't seen as defenders of their neighbors or of human rights; they were dismissed as radicals and silenced in public life.

As a pastor on the Nazi payroll, Poelchau never joined the Confessing Church, which challenged the Nazi Party when its most ardent supporters in the churches began to change traditional church teachings to conform to Nazi ideology. He is not remembered alongside the martyrs Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Alfred Delp. But he and Dorothee are remembered by Yad Vashem as "righteous among the nations" because they took action to save their Jewish neighbors.

Were they complicit in the regime's evil? Maybe so, but that wasn't the question that shaped their choices each day. In the face of an authoritarian crisis, the Poelchaus chose to act—not to change what they could not, but to do what they could. FASPE's insistence that we attend to the decisions that perpetrators made in an authoritarian crisis has helped me clarify the context for their resistance and for ours. Often we don't have anywhere to stand where we're not complicit in some evil. This does not absolve us of our moral responsibility.

Each of us makes choices every day. We can choose to act for life, even if we are complicit with death-dealing systems. We do not hold onto our humanity by trying to stand apart from the mess of this world. The Poelchaus are witnesses that we remain human by practicing moral agency amidst death-dealing systems.

A couple of years ago, I met a student while giving a guest lecture who told me about her vocation to become a trauma surgeon. I promised to pray for her, and we've stayed in touch. The hospital where she is now doing her residency is close to a private detention center that ICE uses to confine people they snatch from their jobs on the street. When she moved there, this young doctor reached out to me to learn about the community partners who are working to shutter this private detention center. She sees it for the real evil that it is, but she also recognizes that her hospital is the trauma center that cares for people who are suffering in terrible conditions there.

When a young man detained there was recently brought in by the private security guards with chest pains, she diagnosed his cardiac issue and informed the young man that he would need emergency surgery. Acting to save his life was what her most basic professional ethic required. But she also recognized she had a choice to make: would she allow him to go back to the conditions that were killing him, or would she take action to change his situation? She wrote an order stating that her patient would die if he was returned to the detention center. She made clear to the private prison company that they would be responsible for his death, and she secured his release to the care of his family.

That detention center is still full of people. It will not close until enough of us insist that we do not want to be the kind of people who pretend our well-being depends on the caging of our neighbors. In the meantime, we have decisions to make every day about how we will treat the people in front of us. I think the Poelchaus have stayed with me because they offer a more pointed challenge than even the martyrs. They do not ask me what I will do in that rare circumstance where I have to choose between my own life and my moral commitments; they ask me what I will do today, in response to the people in front of me, to serve life and build beloved community in the ways that I can.

Teachers' Gates, AFGE's Kelley, energize pro-worker crowd at NAACP

By Mark Gruenberg



CHICAGO—Between them, a Chicago teacher and a union president and preacher energized a pro-worker crowd on the last day of the NAACP convention in the Windy City.

The teacher was Chicago Teachers Union President Stacey Davis Gates, usually a history and social studies teacher in the city's public schools, when she isn't defending her students, her colleagues and her union against vitriolic attacks from President Trump and congressional Republicans.

The preacher turned union president was Government Employees (AFGE) chief Everett Kelley, whose union is Trump's prime target for destruction. He even calls AFGE an "enemy." It responded with a myriad of lawsuits, most of which AFGE has won in lower courts.

And in the end their messages melded: The rights workers and African-Americans fought so hard to win over the last century—and especially in the 1940s, 50s and 60s—are under the worst fire they've faced since the end of Reconstruction in 1877.

Kelley said there must be massive unity and solidarity all over the nation to win this new war Trump, his followers and MAGA launched and are waging against both labor and people of color.

Earlier, Auto Workers President Shawn Fain hit those themes in a brief speech to the full convention.

"The billionaire class is getting richer while we are in a struggle to survive," he declared. "The same forces that murdered the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. are still out there." While leading a movement in Memphis for union rights for Black sanitation workers, King was gunned down by white nationalists James Earl Ray.

"We the people must rise up for humanity and not let the bosses and the billionaires divide us...When we stand together, we can move mountains."

The context for Davis Gates's and Kelley's speeches at the NAACP's closing labor luncheon is the looming November election and the 2028 balloting beyond it.

That includes the possibility Trump would literally try to steal the results by sending troops into the streets to intimidate voters, seize ballot boxes, or worse.

And that flies in the face of U.S. history, especially the African-American history Trump and his regime are busily erasing.

"You are in a moment of history right now," said Davis Gates, one of organized labor's most outspoken critics of Trump and his policies, and particularly of their impact on and threat to African-Americans.

"We often learned that Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves," she remarked about Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, starting her history lesson.

She explained how the freedom resulted from much more than just the proclamation. Black workers left the plantations, and a plantation is a corporation, so their departure shut those companies down.

"And the federal government's first diversity, equity and inclusion initiative was the Freedmen's Bureau," right after the Civil War, Davis Gates said. It brought jobs, pay and most importantly education to the newly freed, formerly enslavde people.

It also brought them legal protection in the 13th, 15th and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, she elaborated. But all that was withdrawn, first when the last Federal troops left the occupied South and then when the Supreme Court legalized Jim Crow in 1896.

"But all this doesn't happen if the workers don't leave the plantation." During the Great Migration, they left for better working conditions and the prospect of more rights—a prospect sometimes unfilled even north of the Mason-Dixon line. Chicago had something to do with that, she added. Its Black-owned newspaper, the *Daily Defender*, carried messages South about "the battle against fascism" in the old Confederacy and the better opportunities for jobs, rights and respect, however limited, in Chicago, Detroit and other industrial cities.

Then Davis Gates fast-forwarded to labor and civil rights icon Bill Lucy of AFSCME, "who said every picket line is a civil rights line." Which is where AFGE President Kelley took up the thread, putting on his preacher's hat in addition to his union cap—after receiving an award named for Lucy.

"Their target is federal workers," Kelley said of the Trump regime. Trump has erased 37 union contracts covering a million federal workers, including 317,000 African-Americans, he noted.

"And now there are more than 500,000 people out of work" thanks to Trump, his Budget Director Russell Vought, hacksaw-wielding trillionaire Elon Musk and Trump War Secretary Pete Hegseth, though Kelley didn't cite the four by name.

CONTINUE FROM PAGE THREE

"They want to strip our union rights, fire people without cause and for 'efficiency." The fired include food inspectors, Social Security workers who handle claims, complaints and checks "and anyone who keeps this country running every day."

"It's not only economically wrong, but morally and spiritually wrong," starting from the time of Moses and Jesus, Kelley preached.

The response must be from the ground up, he declared. "Our power never came from a contract or a politician. It came from you," he said, pointing to the crowd.

"We cannot sit this one out," he said of the coming election. "We have to reach out and grab our freedom.

"Because if they can come after us federal workers, they can come after you."

Indeed, that plan was included in comments from Trump's White House staffers—during his first term.

And that's where CTU's Davis Gates and AFGE's Kelley converged. "If Blacks can leave the South, we can get those 317,000 jobs back," the CTU president declared. "What are we waiting for?!"

"Change is coming. Let's stand together. Let's win together," Kelley concluded.

The specter of communism haunts Donald Trump

By C. J. Atkins

A specter is haunting Donald Trump—the specter of communism. Over back-to-back holiday weekend speeches marking the country's 250th anniversary, the president delivered what amounted to a two-part anti-communist sermon, casting Karl Marx, the Communist Party USA, and the country's fast-growing democratic socialist movement as existential threats to the republic.

Speaking beneath the granite faces at Mount Rushmore on July 3, Trump told the crowd that "you can be loyal to Karl Marx or you can be loyal to America. You can be a communist or you can be a patriot. You cannot be both." He went further, calling communism a "mortal threat" to the country and insisting it posed a greater danger than "World War I, World War II, Pearl Harbor, or even 9/11."

Trump did not stop at Marx. He vowed the country would "vanquish communism quickly," then pivoted straight into his domestic legislative wish list, urging Congress to "terminate the filibuster" and pass the "Save America Act," a piece of voting rights suppression legislation, so that Republicans would "not lose an election for a hundred years."

Moments later he made the target of his rhetoric that night more explicit: "The Communist Party is made up of illegal immigrants, criminals, and everybody that doesn't want to work." In one sentence, Trump folded communists, immigrants, and the unemployed into a single undifferentiated enemy—using the language of anti-communism to launder a hardline immigration crackdown and a push to gut voting rules alike.

That the same speech included the line that "such doctrines can be given no quarter in a democracy because the first thing they do when they get into power is turn around and destroy it" reads as unintentional irony, given he heads an administration that has spent the past year working to restrict ballot access, jail protesters, and prosecute dissent while branding its critics as un-American.



The First Amendment protects the right to organize as a communist, a socialist, or anything else Trump dislikes. Treating political belief itself as disloyalty is the same move McCarthyism made 70 years ago, and delivering such attacks on consecutive nights of a national holiday suggests Trump intends to escalate that playbook rather than let it fade.

The following evening on the National Mall, after a two-hour weather delay, Trump kept up the theme, comparing the alleged threat to a disease: "It's like a cancer—you've got to cut it out and you got to cut it out fast." He added that communism "never worked, and it never will work," and that it "is a loser, and it always will be."

The tirades landed just weeks after Democratic Socialists of America-backed candidates, running with the endorsement of New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, swept the June 23 primary victories in New York. A similar progressive string of wins happened in Colorado.

Mamdani, for his part, used his own July 4 remarks to needle Trump without naming him, saying that "those ideals upon which our nation was built—they are strong enough to endure any authoritarian regime, but only if we reach for them."

And as for DSA, it announced that membership surged passed 120,000 on Independence Day.

For the Communist Party USA, the sudden presidential attention was met with something between alarm and vindication. Co-chair Joe Sims, responding in a video statement, reacted to being singled out by the president with a wry: "Oh my goodness, we're so back!"

Showing that Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims, he described the CPUSA's own program as fighting for "a Bill of Rights Socialism that puts people and planet before profits."

As *People's World* reported in the days before the two speeches—which followed a similar set of remarks at the right-wing Faith and Freedom conference—these outbursts reflect midterm panic more than strength. We traced it to a broader pattern: 450 years in combined federal prison sentences handed down in late June to eight defendants connected to a 2025 protest outside a Texas ICE facility, alongside Trump's escalating description of DSA candidates as "hardcore, godless communists" and "animals."

CPUSA co-chair Rossana Cambron put it plainly: "MAGA is going to lose the midterms, and Trump's getting desperate."

Anti-communism has been a recurring motif for Trump throughout his first and second terms as president and while he was out of office. It usually comes out whenever left and labor-backed candidates are gaining steam in elections or when the GOP is facing a big loss at the ballot box.

It was among the central themes of the Republican National Convention in 2020, and anti-communist attacks were deployed to win Florida and smear U.S. Senate candidate Jon Ossoff of Georgia in that year's election.

Back in 2023, Trump said he'd "deport" communists if he was re-elected.

And last fall, in 2025, when Mamdani was on the verge of winning the New York mayor's race, the president accused the candidate of being a communist.

At the time, the CPUSA's Sims, in an appearance on The Daily Show, said that "any effort to put forward an idea of a more equitable distribution of wealth is labeled socialist or communist in an effort to just dismiss it out of hand. It's called red-baiting."

He also asked Trump and other Republicans, "What are you guys afraid of? This idea that Communists control everything is such a worn-out, tired, false, fake, counterfeit notion that's been abandoned time and again by the American people."

Trump's rhetoric, while driven by domestic political concerns, must also be situated within a wider geopolitical anxiety about the position of U.S. capitalism in the world economy, especially with the growing power and influence of China. The new Cold War launched abroad is another side of the anti-communist, anti-socialist rhetoric and attacks at home.

Whether the short-term part of the strategy works in November is still to be seen, but Trump's past efforts to stir up anti-communist panic among the American people have largely fallen flat, at least beyond the hardcore MAGA voting base. That old strategy just doesn't light the fires of fear like it did when Trump's mentor, Roy Cohn, and Sen. Joe McCarthy deployed it back in the 1950s.

But an administration reaching for the ghost of Karl Marx, the 19th century's most famous revolutionary, while moving simultaneously to rewrite voting law and stir up anti-immigrant sentiment, is not merely refighting the Cold War. It is testing how far the definition of disloyalty can stretch and how much of the Bill of Rights can be folded in along the way.

But with every anti-communist stump speech, it becomes more apparent that Trump and the elements of American capitalism who've aligned with MAGA—just like ruling classes before them throughout history—are trembling.

The 2025-26 Supreme Court in review

By Patrick N. Chapin, J. D.



If you are reading this article, the 2025-26 term of the Supreme Court of the United States has come to an end. The High Court voted along ideological lines in its highest profile cases. Cases involving transgender healthcare, religious parent opt-out rights, voting rights disputes, and national injunctions were determined by 6-3 votes. The recent term of the Roberts Court has drawn intense scrutiny from labor advocates, civil rights groups, and immigrant rights organizations because multiple rulings have been viewed as narrowing protections for employees, racial minorities, LGBTQ people, and undocumented immigrants. The following term review and analysis, although not exhaustive, examines some of those cases.

High-profile 6-3 ideological decisions

One of the Court's most consequential rulings involving immigration and undocumented immigrants came in *Trump v. CASA*. Despite being widely described as the "birthright citizenship case," the Supreme Court in *CASA* did not decide whether President Trump's executive order restricting birthright citizenship was constitutional but rather addressed a procedural question, to wit: Can federal district courts issue nationwide injunctions that prevent the federal government from enforcing a policy against anyone in the country, including individuals who are not parties to the lawsuit? Justice Barrett wrote for the majority.

The conservative majority determined that universal injunctions "likely" exceed the equitable authority granted to the federal courts by Congress. Moreover, the Court went on to say that federal courts may generally provide relief only to those plaintiffs before them. Ultimately, the Court partially stayed the lower-court injunctions and directed lower courts to determine a path of narrower relief sufficient to protect the case's named plaintiffs. The Court did not go so far as to rule that Trump's executive order was constitutional and declared the only issue before it was to determine the scope of judicial remedies, not the legality of birthright citizenship. Justice Sotomayor wrote the principal dissent, joined by Justices Kagan and Jackson.

The dissent argued that the majority elevated procedural concerns over constitutional rights and if the federal policy is unconstitutional, courts must be able to stop its enforcement universally. The decision, however, does not preclude plaintiffs from seeking relief through class actions, state lawsuits or declaratory judgment actions. The ruling did not directly decide the constitutionality of efforts to restrict birthright citizenship. Thus, the 1898 case of *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* remains the law of the land and holds that a child born in the United States to noncitizen parents who were legally domiciled here was a U.S. citizen at birth. But immigrant rights advocates argue that *CASA* makes it harder to block federal immigration policies nationwide while litigation proceeds and favors aggressive executive enforcement actions while at the same time weakening judicial checks.

This issue of gender affirming care restrictions came before the Court in the case of *United States v. Skrmetti*. This case challenged a Tennessee law that prohibited physicians from prescribing puberty blockers or hormones to minors for the purpose of gender transition, while permitting some of the same medications for precocious puberty and certain endocrine disorders. Plaintiffs argued the Tennessee law violated the Equal Protection Clause because it discriminated based on sex and transgender status.

Chief Justice Roberts, writing for the majority, declared the Tennessee law did not classify individuals based on sex or transgender status in a way that would require heightened constitutional scrutiny. The Court characterized the Tennessee law as simply regulating medical treatments based on age and purpose for which the treatment is prescribed. The Court noted that Tennessee had asserted a legitimate interest in protecting minors when addressing scientific uncertainty related to pediatric gender transition treatments.

Roberts's decision fell in line with judicial restraint, which was a recurring theme throughout his opinion, i.e. whether Tennessee's policy violated the Constitution.

In her dissent, Justice Sotomayor argued that the majority mischaracterized the law. The dissent contended that Tennessee's statute necessarily classifies based on sex because a physician must know a patient's sex to determine whether treatment is lawful. And because Court precedent involving sex discrimination required a heightened scrutiny of judicial review, reasoning would conclude *Skrmetti* required at least an intermediate scrutiny analysis. *Skrmetti* is the Court's most important transgender rights decision to date because its ruling upheld Tennessee's law and strengthened the legal position of more than two dozen states that enacted similar restrictions.

In *Mahmoud v. Taylor*, a school district in Montgomery County, Maryland required elementary school students to participate in instruction involving LGBTQ+ inclusion storybooks without providing religious parents notice and an opportunity to opt out their child's attendance. Muslim, Catholic, Orthodox Christian, and other religious parents objected to the school district's elimination of an existing opt-out policy. The school board argued the books were intended to promote inclusion and respect for diverse identities and that widespread opt-outs created burdensome administrative difficulties.

The Court held Montgomery County violated the Free Exercise Clause of the Constitution when it required elementary school students to participate in instruction involving LGBTQ+ inclusive storybooks absent an opt-out policy. The Court's holding is that government burdens religious exercise when it compels children to participate in instruction that poses a "very real threat" to the religious beliefs parents seek to instill in them. The majority relied heavily on *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, which protected Amish parents from compulsory high school attendance requirements.

In dissent, Justice Sotomayor argued the majority dramatically expanded the Free Exercise doctrine because public schools routinely expose students to ideas that differ from their families' beliefs. Moreover, the Court has never considered exposure a constitutional injury. The dissent went further and warned the decision threatens the traditional mission of public education by allowing parents to demand exemptions whenever instructional content conflicts with religious beliefs. A criticism can be made that the majority opinion provides little guidance on which instructional content triggers a constitutional burden on religious exercise. The *Mahmoud* decision is one of the most significant First Amendment and education decisions to come out of the Roberts Court. From a constitutional law perspective, *Mahmoud* may be remembered as the education counterpart to other major Roberts Court religious liberty cases, such as *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District, Carson v. Makin,* and *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia.*

Not since *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013) has the Court decided a more consequential voting rights case than it did on April 29, 2026 when its decision was announced in Louisiana v. Callais. The case arose after Louisiana created a second majority Black congressional district in response to earlier litigation finding that its previous map likely violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

White voters challenged the new map as an unconstitutional racial gerrymander. The fundamental question for the Court was: Can a state intentionally use race to create majority-minority districts in order to comply with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act? The Court's answer was no, unless the state can satisfy a more demanding standard than lower courts had previously applied.

Justice Alito, writing for the majority, held that because Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act did not actually require Louisiana to create a second majority Black district, Louisiana lacked a compelling interest in justifying race-based districting, therefore making the map unconstitutional under the Equal Protection Clause. The Court affirmed the lower court's conclusion that Louisiana's District 6 was an unconstitutional racial gerrymander.

Justice Kagan's dissent argued that the majority effectively rewrote Section 2. The dissent further contends that Congress deliberately adopted an effects-based framework after earlier Supreme Court decisions made intentional discrimination difficult to prove. The dissenters argue the majority disregarded decades of precedent, imposed requirements not found in the statute, and substantially crippled one of the Voting Rights Act's principal enforcement mechanisms.

On June 2, 2026, the Court, in a 6-3 vote, granted Alabama's emergency request to use a congressional map that reduces the number of majority Black districts before the 2026 elections. The ruling is in line with *Callais* and widely viewed as another major limitation on Voting Rights Act districting claims.

Immigration and undocumented immigrants

In *Urias-Orellana v. Bondi*, the Court unanimously decided that federal courts of appeals must apply a highly deferential substantial evidence standard when reviewing immigration agency determinations that an asylum applicant has not established "persecution" under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

Urias-Orellana addresses one of the most important questions in asylum law, to wit: How much authority do federal courts have to second-guess immigration judges and the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). This case is one of the most important immigration decisions during the Court's term. The *Urias-Orellana* decision does not change the substantive definition of asylum, but it significantly reduces the likelihood that federal courts will overturn asylum denials once the Immigration Judge and BIA have ruled against the applicant.

Viewed alongside *Trump v. CASA, Urias-Orellana* reflects a recurring theme: greater deference to executive branch immigration decision making, narrower judicial intervention; and an emphasis on statutory limits on judicial review. Unlike *CASA*, however, *Urias-Orellana* was not ideologically divisive. It represents a rare area where all nine justices agreed that Congress instructed courts to defer substantially to immigration agencies.

Noem v. Vasquez Perdomo is a case in which the plaintiffs challenged immigration sweeps conducted in the Los Angeles area. A federal district court found that plaintiffs were likely to succeed on claims that immigration officers were making stops based on factors such as apparent race or ethnicity, speaking Spanish or with a Spanish accent, being present at locations where day laborers congregate, bus stops, car washes, and agricultural workplaces.

The Court, by a 6-3 vote along ideological lines, stayed the lower court's injunction. Justice Sotomayor, joined by Justices Kagan and Jackson, in a sharply worded dissent, argued that the lower court had found substantial evidence that individuals were being stopped because they looked Latino, spoke Spanish, were low-wage earners, or appeared at locations associated with immigrant workers. And that those factors, even combined, do not create reasonable suspicion under the Fourth Amendment.

The Court has also shown an openness to Trump administration efforts to terminate or narrow Temporary Protected Status (TPS) protections for migrants from countries such as Venezuela, Haiti, and Syria. Cases involving TPS are viewed by advocates as particularly important because they affect hundreds of thousands of immigrants who have lived and worked legally in the United States for years. *Noem v. National TPS Alliance* was the Court's most important TPS ruling of the term.

The Trump administration sought to terminate TPS protections for hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans. A federal district court blocked the action, but the Supreme Court, by a 6-3 vote, granted the government's emergency stay application, which allowed the administration to proceed with TPS termination while litigation continued. This matters because the Court did not decide the ultimate legality of the TPS termination, but it permitted the policy to take effect pending appeal. Critics argued the ruling exposed TPS holders to loss of work authorization and possible deportation, while supporters argued the TPS statute gives the Secretary of Homeland Security broad discretion. This decision reflects two glaring themes of the Roberts Court — deference to executive immigration authority and skepticism toward broad lower court injunctions.

After the Supreme Court's stay order, the Ninth Circuit ultimately ruled that Secretary Noem exceeded her statutory authority in attempting to vacate and terminate TPS designations for Venezuela and Haiti. The court held the TPS statute did not authorize the actions taken by DHS. The Ninth Circuit emphasized that Congress intended TPS to be a predictable and stable form of temporary protection and concluded that the Secretary's actions conflicted with the statute. Stand by — the Supreme Court may ultimately review the merits of those rulings.

Blanche v. Lau is one of the most important immigration cases of the term. The case concerns the rights of lawful permanent residents, those with green cards returning from brief trips abroad when they have been accused, but not convicted, of crimes. Lau became a permanent resident in 2007. In 2012, New Jersey charged him with trademark counterfeiting. Before the criminal case was resolved, he briefly traveled to China and then attempted to return to the United States. Normally, a lawful permanent resident returning from a temporary trip abroad is treated as already admitted and does not have to seek readmission.

However, immigration officials invoked an exception allowing a lawful permanent resident who has "committed" certain crimes to be treated as seeking admission. Instead of formally admitting Lau, they paroled him into the country pending resolution of his criminal case.

The issue before the Court was whether border officers must possess clear and convincing evidence at the time of reentry that a lawful permanent resident committed a crime involving moral turpitude before treating the person as an applicant for admission? The Second Circuit Court of Appeals said yes, but the Supreme Court disagreed. Justice Thomas, writing for the 6-3 majority, focused on statutory text.

The majority emphasized that Congress did not impose a clear and convincing burden at the border, and the government's burden of proof applies at removal proceedings, not necessarily at the moment of inspection at the border.

Justice Jackson, in her dissent, emphasized a basic principle: People are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

In *Mullin v. Doe* (consolidated with Trump v. Miot), a 6-3 majority ruled for the Trump administration and held that the TPS statute largely bars judicial review of decisions to designate, extend, or terminate TPS. The Court reversed lower court injunctions that had prevented the termination of TPS protections for Syrian and Haitian nationals. The Court's majority broadly interpreted the applicable federal code. The Court did not completely eliminate judicial review but made it a higher hurdle to clear.

Employees and Labor Rights
The conservative majority of the Court has continued limiting the power of federal agencies that regulate workplace safety, labor standards, and discrimination enforcement. While not always framed directly as "anti-worker," these rulings are widely seen by unions and worker advocates as weakening federal protections by making it harder for agencies to interpret and enforce labor laws expansively.

Labor advocates argue that aggressive immigration enforcement has a chilling effect on wage theft complaints, union organizing, and discrimination reporting among immigrant workers.

The Court's recent jurisprudence emphasizing textualism and skepticism toward broad agency authority has encouraged efforts to narrow doctrines such as "disparate impact" to the extent that civil rights organizations argue this weakens workplace discrimination protections for racial minorities and women.

Mifepristone
On May 14, 2026, the Court issued an emergency stay blocking a ruling by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that would have required women to obtain mifepristone in person. The stay order allows patients to continue receiving prescriptions through telehealth appointments and have the medication delivered by mail or picked up at pharmacies nationwide.

Mifepristone was approved by the FDA in 2000 and is used in combination with misoprostol to terminate early pregnancies. It accounts for roughly 63% of U.S. abortions as of 2023. In 2023, the FDA eliminated the in-person dispensing requirement, allowing telehealth prescriptions and mail delivery. Louisiana challenged this rule, arguing it undermined the state's near total abortion ban and violated federal law. The 5th Circuit initially sided with Louisiana, temporarily reinstating the in-person requirement, which prompted the Supreme Court's emergency intervention.

Access to mifepristone remains uninterrupted in states where abortion is legal, including telehealth and mail delivery. Patients in states with abortion bans may still face legal complexities, but telehealth providers in legal states can continue serving them under shield laws. The ruling is temporary and the case will be returned to the 5th Circuit for a full merits review, and further appeals to the Supreme Court are possible. Misoprostol, the second drug in the regimen, is not affected by this ruling and can still be used independently, though with slightly higher failure rates.

Gun Possession and Drugs
A unanimous Court ruled that the federal government cannot prosecute a person on charges they violated a federal law when knowingly possessing a gun while being an unlawful user of a controlled substance (see *United States v. Hemani*). Ali Danial Hemani, a daily cannabis user, was charged with violating federal law. Justice Neil Gorsuch, writing for the Court, emphasized the government was seeking to "automatically strip Hemani of his Second Amendment right to possess a firearm" based only on a showing that he "regularly uses any amount of any controlled substance." Gorsuch asserted his conclusion because the early U.S. laws on which the government relied to support these restrictions "targeted different kinds of people, did so for different reasons, and operated in different ways."

Takeaways from This Term of the Roberts Court
The term revealed several recurring patterns in the Roberts Court: (1) greater deference to executive authority in immigration enforcement; (2) reduced willingness to allow nationwide judicial blocks of federal policies; (3) skepticism toward expansive interpretations of civil rights statutes; (4) limits on federal administrative agencies; and (5) stronger emphasis on originalism and textualism.

Finally, earlier this year President Trump was not pleased with the Court's February ruling striking down his global tariffs. So much so that he posted on Truth Social that Roberts and the other justices were disloyal and unpatriotic. Roberts, who authored the tariff ruling, used a March appearance at Rice University's Baker Institute to publicly rebuke the escalating trend of personal, hostile attacks aimed at judges, declaring that such rhetoric is "dangerous" and "has got to stop."

Tenth Street Freedmantown: The forgotten Texas town founded by emancipated slaves

By Dahj Voytek

DALLAS—Founded in the decades following Emancipation in the southeastern edge of Dallas, Texas, lies the Tenth Street Freedmantown. Founded by former enslaved people in the 1880s, to this day, Tenth Street remains one of the largest and most intact Freedman's towns in the United States.

One of the first transactions for this land was done in 1869, when white landowner William Boales sold an acre to Sam Eakins for the purpose of creating a cemetery. Founded near Oakcliff, the new town was just outside city limits to avoid the rampant racism and violence within the city but close enough in walking distance so that its new residents could access food and supplies.

Segregation wasn't the only reason they avoided the city of Dallas. In 1867, William H. Horton, an agent from the Freedman's Bureau, researched and compiled records of offenses by racist elements that often resulted in death or severe injury to Black people.

Horton found evidence of lynchings, beatings, shootings, and whippings, as well as a dragging of one victim through the Trinity River bottoms, between 1865 and 1867. For the spring grand jury session in 1867, he found mention of 13 murders of freedmen and Unionists.

With segregation kept firmly in place through such horrendous acts of violence, Black people were forced to create their own social and cultural institutions. By 1878, the city directory listed seven African American churches in or near Freedmantown.

Rev. Allen R. Griggs of New Hope Baptist Church established a grammar school in the 1870s, opening the way for other schools to eventually open. The residents, while limited in what professions they could legally take, were quite diverse in the areas within which they worked.

They were teamsters, laborers, draymen, carpenters, barbers, expressmen, preachers, servants, blacksmiths, farmers, woodsawyers, porters, brickmakers, plasterers, engineers, and laundresses. Some owned their own businesses.

By the turn of the century and for several decades after, Freedmantown was a thriving community, even for many who arrived there penniless.

So, what happened? Why did a booming and thriving city eventually find itself in deep trouble? It started with two distinct events. The success of the town was largely due to its proximity to two railroads—the north-south Houston and Texas Central (H&TC) and the east-west Texas and Pacific (T&P).

In the 1940s, the H&TC railroad tracks were removed for the construction of Highway 75. The east and west sides of Freedmantown were cut off from each other by a dangerous, virtually impassable barrier created by the railroads. A number of shops and homes were demolished to make way for the highway.



Then the final blow came two decades later in 1962, when the Woodall Rodgers Freeway demolished most of Cochran Street, forcing more homes, businesses, and families to relocate as they were effectively now shut out of downtown Dallas. City planners had planned the racist destruction of the town and used "convenience" as the excuse for uprooting many lives.

Dallas to this day remains one of the most economically segregated major cities in America. The intentional destruction of the once proud Freedmantown paved the way for the creation of Uptown in the 2020s. Chain stores, massive apartments, and a theater now sit on the land of people who were forced out after having built such an incredible community from nothing.

While advocacy and preservation groups are attempting to protect what is left of this once thriving town, it's necessary to learn and preserve the history of Freedmantown and understand what has happened, and continues to happen, to Black communities across the United States.

Our society has a lot of work to do, a lot of wrongs that need to be righted, and we start by learning the history of where we live and how the very infrastructure of our cities was used to cause purposeful harm to Black communities. What happened to Freedmantown eventually hurt all working-class communities in and around Dallas, and the same story played out in other locations where similar things happened.

We cannot fully divest from racism without understanding how deeply rooted it is in the fabric of American society. In Dallas, for instance, we cannot even commute to work, drive home, or exist in our own cities without driving down the roads that were built to snuff out a thriving Black-owned community.

Eventually, the effect on all working-class people is devastating. The living and housing crisis that has swept across the nation and is hurting all working-class people is fueled in large part by what was done to the Black residents of Freedmantown.

LABOR NEWS

Greece: KKE warns against so-called "World Anti-Imperialist Platform" courting far-right

By CPUSA International Department

The Communist Party of Greece (KKE) has issued a sharp polemic against the so-called "World Anti-Imperialist Platform" (WAP), accusing it of advocating "tactical cooperation" with the Trump administration and European far-right forces. In a commentary published in the party's central organ Rizospastis, the KKE said:

"The so-called 'luminaries' of the 'World Anti-Imperialist Platform' — in which, unfortunately, certain Communist Parties also participate — have struck again... Now, the WAP's 'interpretation' goes so far as to make room even for Trump. Such views stem from a complete detachment from the struggles of the working class, from erroneous opportunist theories about the imperialist system, and from the refusal to fulfill the duty of the working class and the peoples to develop an independent strategy against the bourgeois classes and imperialist alliances.

"Based on their crude analysis — dividing bourgeois forces into 'globalists' and 'chauvinists' (Trump, Le Pen, Orbán) — communists are urged to side with the latter and establish forms of tactical cooperation with them.

"We had our suspicions from the stance of the so-called 'American Communist Party' (supporters of MAGA communism), which participate in the WAP and supported Trump. Yet some persist with the same narrative, portraying Trump as a 'pacifist' and seeking to draw the communists into 'tactical cooperation' with him, or even with Le Pen, Orbán, and the other figures of the far right in Europe and beyond. This once again exposes their dubious role.

"This reflects profound confusion. It does not take many words to demonstrate that the lack of principles, adventurism, and vulgarization of revolutionary theory by the opportunists lead, through various channels, into the arms of the bourgeois classes.

Naciones indígenas se movilizan para salvar el Monumento Nacional Bears Ears

Por Albert Bender

Las naciones tribales continúan movilizándose frente a la ofensiva del rapaz régimen de Trump para reducir el Monumento Nacional Bears Ears, en el sur de Utah. El 13 de julio, mediante una orden ejecutiva, Trump decretó una reducción drástica del 90 % de la superficie del Monumento Nacional Bears Ears. Esto implica que 1,24 millones de acres perderán la protección que otorga dicha categoría. En un plazo de 60 días, los terrenos excluidos quedarán expuestos a la codicia empresarial, haciéndose vulnerables a concesiones para la extracción de minerales, reclamaciones mineras y otras formas voraces de explotación del territorio.

Se está preparando el terreno para nuevas batallas legales en torno a uno de los paisajes más sagrados del territorio indígena. Naciones tribales de todo el país respaldan la campaña para salvar Bears Ears.

Las principales organizaciones indígenas que encabezan la lucha para salvar el monumento sagrado son la Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition (Coalición Intertribal de Bears Ears), el Bears Ears Youth Council (Consejo Juvenil de Bears Ears) y Women of Bears Ears (Mujeres de Bears Ears). La Coalición, fundada en julio de 2015, está integrada por cinco naciones tribales: la tribu Hopi, la Nación Navajo, el Pueblo de Zuni (Bender trabajó anteriormente como abogado para el Pueblo de Zuni), la tribu Ute Mountain Ute y la tribu indígena Ute. El Bears Ears Youth Council es una organización cuyo objetivo es empoderar a los jóvenes de las tribus de la Coalición para que desarrollen y cultiven la custodia de las tierras y áreas sagradas. Women of Bears Ears es una organización basada en el liderazgo matrilineal, dedicada a proteger los 1,9 millones de acres del Monumento Nacional Bears Ears.

En abril de 2021, Women of Bears Ears publicó un artículo de opinión en el *New York Times* titulado «Women of Bears Ears are asking you to help save it» (Las mujeres de Bears Ears les piden ayuda para salvarlo).

La medida de Trump constituye el episodio más reciente de una lucha de años por preservar Bears Ears, un paisaje venerado desde tiempos inmemoriales por las naciones indígenas debido a su importancia espiritual, cultural e histórica.

La primera designación de Bears Ears como monumento nacional fue realizada por el presidente Obama mediante una proclamación presidencial emitida el 26 de diciembre de 2016. Esta medida otorgó un estatus de protección a 1,35 millones de acres, una superficie menor a la propuesta presentada por las naciones indígenas, que abarcaba 1,9 millones de acres en la región de Bears Ears.

En diciembre de 2017, Trump redujo la superficie del Monumento Nacional Bears Ears en un 85 %, recortando drásticamente el área protegida de 1,36 millones de acres a solo 201.800 acres. Esta medida ejecutiva abrió miles de acres de tierras indígenas sagradas a la minería, el pastoreo y otros proyectos de desarrollo comercial. Dicha acción contravenía la legislación federal establecida en la Ley de Antigüedades. En octubre de 2021, el presidente Biden restauró plenamente los límites de Bears Ears y los amplió, devolviendo al monumento los 1,36 millones de acres originales.

Las naciones tribales están colaborando con ecologistas y conservacionistas en sus esfuerzos por salvar el sagrado Monumento Nacional Bears Ears.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

August 1, 2026

Bea Lumpkin, ¡Presente! — A friend remembers

By Chris Baehrend

My newest best friend was a sparkplug, firing for worker justice. Among her first memories was on the playground at age six, arguing with another girl about the moral excellence of communism.

A teacher, an author, a professor, yet Bea didn't rely on her powerful analytical skills alone to win socialism; she organized. One week into a job at a radio parts factory, at age 14, Bea walked to the union hall at lunch with her first paycheck to sign a card—with 50 of the 100 other workers at her worksite, all 14- to 16-year-old girls, in tow.

Her strategic wisdom, generosity of spirit, and eloquent advocacy have contributed to countless battles won and inspired generations of unionists, activists, and working people to stand for justice and be their best selves.

She had a great life, a good death, and she bequeaths us a liberatory and urgent legacy. Her legacy is to set us in motion to win a better world. So, to help you on your way, here are a few inspirations and wisdoms I learned from Bea.

Ending racism sets us all free

In honoring Bea, we must at the same time honor her lifelong partner and fellow lion of the labor movement, Frank Lumpkin. Bea fell in love with Frank's family of Black, southern communists before she met Frank. Her heart and her head aligned, a prism, many-colored and bright.

Bea taught me that the fight for racial justice must be at the center of any successful fight for working-class emancipation. The imperative for racial unity in the fight for justice was the pole of Bea's moral compass. Racism is an essential pillar of capitalism, and capitalism won't fall until racism does. So, the task of uniting workers in an inter-racial, inter-generational, multi-gendered coalition was her and Frank's life's work.

Frank Lumpkin was called "the Saint of Chicago" by leading newspaper columnists for founding and leading the Save Our Jobs Committee on a 17-year campaign after Wisconsin Steel maneuvered in bankruptcy to defraud Frank and 3,000 other workers of their pensions. Even their last checks bounced.



Yet with Bea organizing at his side and never accepting pay for the work or even reimbursement for expenses, Frank kept the displaced Black, white, and Latino workers united, which was the key to their eventually winning tens of millions for the workers.

Always bring a crowd

That was the title of Bea's biography of Frank, and she practiced that advice daily, especially in her labor organizing.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Bea Lumpkin, ¡Presente! — A friend remembers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
Bea was amongst the most prescient strategic thinkers in the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), as a member for 50 years and a delegate for 15.

Her legacy of militant organizing for worker power also resounds in the Illinois Federation of Teachers, the American Federation of Teachers, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (organizer), the Cook County College Teachers Union, United Electrical Workers, the Coalition of Labor Union Women (founder), United Steelworkers, Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR), the Chicago Federation of Labor (delegate), the Illinois Association of Retired Americans, and most recently in CTU's Climate Justice Committee and Intergen, an initiative to build progressive, intergenerational power across racial lines.

Build a united front
Bea knew that labor must lead in the fight to defeat the rising threat of fascism today. But we need a grand coalition against such powerful forces, and labor is strategically positioned to assemble that coalition.

So, we need women's rights groups, like the Coalition of Labor Union Women, of which Bea was a founder, as was Frank. We need to join or form Environmental Justice organizations, as Bea did, founding the CTU's Climate Justice Committee. We need a multi-generational movement, the kind that Bea has cultivated for years through Intergen, which she also founded.

In a fight as existential as this, we need to build the maximum power possible. Employing a lesson from the fight against fascism in World War II, during which she also organized, Bea was clear that we may need strategic partnerships with organizations with which we differ radically on other issues, even those elements of the ruling class which are opposed to fascism.

Cultivate your loves
We should all enjoy a taste of that better world at home. Bea delighted in her children, Carl, Jeanleah, Paul, John and her generations of grandkids, including her grandson Soren, a fellow teacher, CTU activist, and companion.

For Bea, that home might be a camping trip from Paris to Moscow in 1965 or a Vietnamese restaurant, or a picket line. Her bonhomie knew no bounds. In her profound generosity of spirit, many comrades and friends also became family for Bea.

That communism was a fundamental act of love for Bea and Frank is clear from the story of their falling in love:

"I don't know what Frank saw in me. But slowly, I fell in love. He had an unexpected strain of poetry that drew me to his side. When he first stroked my face, he said, "There are so many beautiful faces." Had he told me that I was beautiful, I would have paid little attention. That's what all men say at a moment like that. I was moved by the way he put it; we were part of a world of beautiful faces."

Joy in the struggle
That was the title of her autobiography, not because she enjoyed fighting, but because she knew in her bones that a better world is possible, with actions. Because we are connected to that better world as we bring it to be, as together our labor builds it, as together we struggle to make it possible, as we manifest it together through solidarity.

On a trip to Cuba in 2001, Bea and Frank visited something of an outpost of the better world at a steel plant. Imagine you worked at a factory where you could bring your kids in the summer and which organizes trips and activities for them, with beaches and cabins available to you.

Imagine free medical and dental clinics there and a cultural center with theater, gyms, basketball courts, and a professional quality baseball field. Add air-conditioned dining rooms, a special bus service for pennies, a barber shop, and you can even bring your dirty clothes from home for the free laundry.

The fact that you do not work in a factory like this is not an accident of history, but the result of deliberate choices made by ruling classes, decisions that can and must be unmade by workers taking power for themselves, and we must start with worksites, sites of production—hence unions are key.

"Our immortality, Frank and I believed, is in helping new life flourish," Bea wrote in Joy in the Struggle. Bea taught me that when we live our lives so that all may be free, we live forever when it happens. Joy in the struggle is as much about the pleasure of comradeship as it is a way of devouring immortality by anticipation. When we stand together against injustice, we are realizing the best in everyone.

Be tenacious!
Fifteen months before she passed, I offered to give Bea a ride home from a CTU House of Delegates meeting. She said, "Thanks, because my heat and power are out." I was nervous as we drove to her condo, since she was 106 years old and lived on the 23rd floor. When we pulled up, the heat and power had been restored. I offered to ride up on the elevator with her. She said, "Nah, I'm gonna take the stairs. I do most nights."

I asked her how she does it. She said, "Oh, it's easy. You just start, and you don't stop."

That tenacity combined with hope and crowned with liberation is perfectly illustrated in an anecdote from Joy in the Struggle, in which Bea and Frank jumped into a stream that flowed into a cave:
"The water was not deep, but the stream plunged into darkness. Only a tiny pin-point of light could be seen.



It was far through the water, maybe a mile. Cautiously, I pulled myself through the water, towards the light. I was scared and there was no turning back.

"For a long time, I swam but the light was still tiny and faint. After a while, it got a little larger.... At last, I emerged from the cave into broad sunlight. A lot of people were swimming in the river, and I was no longer alone. My love was waiting for me on the river bank."

See you in the stream.

See you on the stairs.

See you in the streets.

See you in that brighter world we will continue to build, with Bea Lumpkin, ¡Presente!

Sorry, climate change is still dangerous, no matter what nonsense Trump emits

By Genevieve Guenther and Michael E. Mann

As the climate-change landscape evolves, new forms of scientific disinformation emerge. Just this week, President Trump spread one of the latest false claims: that the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) announced the world does not face climate catastrophe, and that it's "alarmism" to acknowledge that currently projected amounts of global heating might be dangerous.

"After 15 years of Dumocrats promising that 'Climate Change' is going to destroy the Planet, the United Nations TOP Climate Committee just admitted that its own projections (RCP8.5) were WRONG! WRONG! WRONG!" Trump wrote, quite incorrectly, on Truth Social. "Unlike the Dumocrats, who use Climate Alarmism nonsense to push their Green New Scam, my Administration will always be based on TRUTH, SCIENCE, and FACT!"

Even in light of the Trump administration's gutting of American science and the president's well-documented reckless disregard for the truth, this post stands out as patently, particularly absurd.



But Trump's new climate-denial talking point is a weaponized version of new developments in climate science. Trump's typically bombastic disinformation—if casually combined with a real debate within the climate community about one climate projection—will muddy the public understanding of science enough that Americans on both sides of the aisle might be left with an incorrect and dangerous belief that they no longer need to worry about the climate crisis.

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So, what is RCP8.5? And why is the president claiming that the United Nations now says its climate projections are "wrong"?

RCP8.5 is a scenario that climate scientists have used in earth-system models to research possible impacts of global heating. A scenario is a hypothetical emissions trajectory anchored in socioeconomic projections, such as the future price of energy or the future enactment (or repeal) of climate policy. In these scenarios, a hypothetical emissions trajectory leads to a certain quantity of warming by a particular date. Scientists use scenarios to try to project what will happen if future emissions are low, medium, or high. RCP8.5 was a high-emissions scenario. It hypothesized that future emissions would lead to a lot of new energy being trapped in the climate system—8.5 watts per square meter of extra energy, to be exact—and a temperature rise of 5 degrees Celsius by the year 2100. This much heating would have been a result a dramatic rise in coal use—up to 6.5 times more coal burned in 2100 than today.

When RCP8.5 was first proposed, clean energy was expensive, and coal cheap. But since then clean energy has become very cheap. Between 2009 and 2024, the price of electricity generated by solar power plunged 88 percent, below that of coal and methane gas. So it no longer seems likely that developing nations will meet increasing energy demand with fossil-fuel sources like coal rather than solar, wind, and batteries. Globally, 86 percent of all added power capacity last year was from renewables. So when scenario modelers at the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP) released updated scenarios last month, in preparation for the development of a new generation of earth system models that will feed into the next Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, they lowered their high-emissions scenario.

The new high-emissions scenario hypothesizes a backsliding of progress, where current climate policies are rolled back, clean-energy development slows, and fossil-fuel use expands. This scenario leads most likely to a temperature rise of about 3.5 degrees Celsius by 2100, but the range of possible heating by that date spans from 2.5 degrees to 4.3 degrees Celsius. The scenario also projects more heating after 2100, since global emissions fail to shrink to net zero. Indeed, the new high-emissions scenario projects that the world could heat up to RCP8.5's 5 degrees Celsius by 2150, just 50 years later.

The new suite of scenarios also has a "medium" emissions trajectory. This scenario assumes that currently implemented policies are not rolled back, but frozen in place, and it leads to about 3 degrees Celsius of heating by 2100, again with more heating in the 22nd century until emissions drop to zero.

Some scientists may wish to emphasize the positive in these developments. There is indeed value in showing that climate solutions exist, climate policy is being implemented to some degree, and that these incidents are already, at least hypothetically, making the future less dire than it might have been otherwise.

But what we wish to convey to the public is that the future remains far more dire than many are acknowledging. As important as it is to acknowledge progress, it is equally important to counter the disinformation that says we no longer need to worry about the climate future—whether that disinformation comes from the president or from purported climate experts.

First of all, current generations are still at risk of seeing a temperature increase like the one projected under RCP8.5. Remember: Scenarios are hypothetical emissions trajectories that are fed into earth system models to study climate impacts. They do not in themselves include "climate sensitivity," a measurement of how Earth responds to carbon emissions, or so-called "carbon cycle feedbacks" that can amplify this response. The lead author of the paper that announced the new scenarios, and the convener of CMIP, Detlef Van Vuuren, has said: "Even with a lower emissions scenario you can still end up with a forcing of RCP8.5, only as a result of having back luck on the climate feedbacks." And it seems like climate sensitivity is not going to be low. This means scientists can't rule out warming over 4 degrees Celsius in the next 75 years, which would be unimaginably catastrophic.

Second, 3 degrees Celsius, the 2100 outcome of the medium-emissions scenario, would also amount to catastrophic, civilization-threatening levels of warming. According to the most recent IPCC report, 3 degrees Celsius of heating would mean that, for around three months of the year, the entire East Coast of the United States—from Maine to the Midwest and the Great Plains—and half of California would be exposed to "hyperthermic conditions that pose a risk of mortality." Southern California, the Southwest, the Deep South, and Florida would be this fatally hot nearly half the year.

Finally, although climate models have done a remarkably good job predicting the observed warming when fed the actual history of human carbon emissions, they have likely underestimated the effect global heating is having on critical impacts such as ice sheet collapse, sea level rise, and increasingly devastating and deadly weather extremes. It is becoming clear that climate impacts are emerging on the worse side of the range of possible outcomes. This means that even a world 2.5 degrees Celsius warmer could look much like the 4+ degree Celsius world of RCP8.5.

It would be quite the pyrrhic victory to celebrate the marginal bending of a hypothetical emissions curve only to find ourselves in a world where—among a multitude of other, interlocking, compounding disasters—it becomes difficult to grow food in Southeast Asia, Africa, California, and Europe; the world enters in irreversible economic crisis because the housing sector becomes uninsurable; and 4.7 billion people experience potentially lethal heat.

The world is making progress on climate change, but it's wholly insufficient to the scale of the challenge.

In a world where President Trump is trying to eradicate American scientific research into global heating, block the development of clean energy, and force aging and uneconomic coal plants to remain open—while Democrats are being counseled not to focus on climate change—it's all the more important that we not allow ourselves to be lulled into complacency. Future carbon emissions scenarios will be determined by politics.

But the warming associated with those emissions is determined by physics. Those who fail to acknowledge the fundamental difference between these two things, are as naïve or as mendacious as Donald Trump.

Climate change is real. And it's dangerous. Yes, we can solve it. But later is too late. Even with the new scenarios, the need to drive emissions down to net zero and halt global heating remains as urgent today as ever.

Thousands rally in Japan to block right-wing attack on democracy

By C. J. Atkins



Braving scorching summer heat, 25,000 people rallied outside Japan's National Diet building on July 20-21, part of a wave of protests at more than 270 locations across the country. The target of their anger: Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's push to gut proportional representation in the lower house of parliament, a move critics say is designed to silence women and opposition parties alike.

The rally, live-streamed to tens of thousands of other viewers, was the latest and largest mobilization against a bill backed by Takaichi's Liberal Democratic Party and its coalition partner, the right-wing Japan Innovation Party (Ishin), that would strip 45 of the 176 proportional representation seats from the 465-seat House of Representatives—a roughly 10% cut. Under the proposal, those seats would disappear automatically unless a ruling-opposition panel struck a deal on broader electoral reform within a year.

Proportional representation seats, unlike single-member district seats, are allocated according to a party's share of the national vote. That system gives smaller parties and independent voices a foothold in parliament they would otherwise be denied.

It also guarantees higher female representation, as it is usually the smaller parties that name more women to their lists. This aspect of the attack on democracy is generating particular outrage because the prime minister advocating is a woman.

Slashing those seats would overwhelmingly benefit the LDP and its allies while squeezing out the Japanese Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party, and other minority forces that depend on the proportional tier to win any representation at all.

The Japanese Communist Party has been at the forefront of the fight against the cuts. At the Diet rally, JCP Policy Commission Chair Yamazoe Taku told the crowd that the party's pressure campaign, combined with a broader public outcry, had for now stopped the ruling coalition from forcing the bill through.

"This is because many citizens raised their voices and made their concerns visible," Yamazoe said. Social Democratic Party leader Fukushima Mizuho also addressed the rally, and Iha Yoichi, a House of Councillors member from the "Okinawa Whirlwind" group, sent a message of solidarity.

But organizers made clear the fight is far from over. Speaking for the rally's organizing committee, Hishiyama Nahoko warned that the scheme could resurface when the next extraordinary Diet session convenes.

"Cutting the number of proportional representation seats is tantamount to arguing that female lawmakers and opposition parties are unnecessary, as well as to declaring the intent to destroy democracy," she said, urging the crowd to keep up the pressure to stop any new bill from being introduced.

The protest also took aim at two other pieces of legislation Takaichi's government rammed through the Diet on July 17: a law criminalizing "desecration" of Japan's national flag, which opponents view as a tool to intimidate dissenters and critics of the government, and a revision to the Imperial House Law that enshrines male-only succession to the throne in Japan's constitutional monarchy.

Hishiyama connected the two, telling demonstrators that the flag law's vague standard for what counts as a punishable offense is "the most terrifying thing" about it, and that locking in male-only succession—despite the popularity of Crown Princess Aiko—shows "just how far behind Japan is" on gender equality.

Hishiyama also flagged Ishin's push to use a one-week extension of the special Diet session to pass its flagship bill establishing a "secondary capital" in Osaka, calling on the public to resist further attempts by the ruling bloc to bend the Diet's calendar to narrow partisan ends.

The "secondary capital" idea is a pet project of the Ishin party, which is based in Osaka. It has put forward the idea under the cover of disaster-preparedness, saying the country needs a "backup" capital city in case of disaster.

The notion is widely seen as a political deal between Ishin and the LDP that would funnel huge amounts of public funding to Osaka in exchange for supporting the ruling party's agenda.

What is unfolding in Tokyo is not simply a parliamentary dispute among political parties.

It is a grassroots nationwide mobilization—one in which the JCP has played a leading organizing role but that reaches far beyond party lines into a broader public defense of democratic representation, women's equality, and dissent itself.

Zelensky, Netanyahu meet with Trump at White House as imperialist wars converge

By Combined Sources



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu came to Washington, separately, for meetings with President Trump, following a Ukrainian drone strike on an Iranian cargo vessel in the Caspian Sea and a new intensification of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran.

Both leaders attended the memorial service for Senator Lindsey Graham, a key Trump ally. Zelensky and Trump discussed expanded air-defense capabilities, including domestic production licenses for Patriot interceptors, which the president reportedly agreed to grant. Netanyahu's talks focused on military aggression against Iran and Lebanon, as well as the expansion of the Trump-Netanyahu-backed Abraham Accords.

The back-to-back White House meetings underscored the interconnections of the Ukraine and Middle East imperialist wars and U.S. imperialism's involvement—a convergence dramatically illustrated by the July 25 drone attack, which marked the first known Ukrainian strike in the Caspian Sea.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky confirmed the operation, describing it as having achieved "very good results" and stating it targeted ships involved in transporting military cargo from Iran to Russia. Iranian authorities identified the vessel as the "Anna," a dry cargo ship, and maintained it was engaged in civilian commerce, carrying steel from Russia's port of Astrakhan to Iran's Anzali Port.

The Caspian, an inland sea bordered by Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, has grown in strategic importance since the onset of sanctions and war, and serves as a key logistics corridor between Moscow and Tehran.

Iran warns of retaliation

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi condemned the attack as a violation of the UN Charter and accused Zelensky of carrying it out at Israel's urging.

Iran summoned Ukraine's senior diplomat in Tehran, filing a formal protest. Iranian officials described the strike as "a hostile act threatening the security of all Caspian littoral states" and warned that Iran would not leave attacks on its citizens and property without a proper response.

The strike occurred amid a broader Ukrainian-NATO campaign against Russian energy infrastructure. Reports indicated Russian refineries had been hit at least 194 times since January, reducing refining capacity by roughly one-third and creating fuel shortages inside Russia.

At the same time, Iran has again closed the Strait of Hormuz, and Houthi forces in Yemen have threatened the Bab el-Mandeb strait, disrupting two of the world's most important shipping lanes.

Analysts estimate that approximately 20 to 25 percent of global oil capacity is affected, forcing tankers onto longer routes and driving up shipping costs, insurance costs, and energy prices, especially in developing countries.

Tensions surged on Tuesday as Iran launched an attack on a U.S. military base in Jordan. Simultaneously, joint U.S.-Saudi forces targeted alleged Iran-backed forces in Iraq, and Houthi forces in Yemen claimed responsibility for a missile strike on a Saudi oil tanker.

The combined effects of the war are already reaching consumers worldwide, however, with higher fuel costs leading to increased prices in freight, food, and manufacturing.

Left-wing groups warn of escalation dangers

Anti-war organizations and left-wing political parties in the United States have cited the Caspian strike as evidence that the conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East are dangerously merging. The Communist Party USA continues to demand an end to both imperialist wars, congressional oversight of U.S. military action, and urged the working class to organize immediate, broad, loud, and peaceful resistance.

"The U.S. working class does not benefit from the forever wars being waged in our name by the U.S. government of billionaires," the CPUSA asserted.

The party argued that working-class families are already bearing the costs through higher fuel and food prices and that resources should be redirected from the war economy to domestic, peaceful needs. Other peace organizations have echoed these concerns, warning that the convergence of the two wars increases the risk of a broader generalized war.

Reports indicated the Trump administration is considering an expanded range of military operations in the war on Iran, including possible ground operations and strikes on nuclear-related sites.

As Iran vows retaliation and Ukraine signals readiness for additional strikes on both Russia and Iran, tensions across the world show no sign of easing.

NAACP opens convention with call for mass mobilization to defeat MAGA

By Mark Gruenberg and John Wojcik



CHICAGO—For decades, the NAACP has gone to court and combed the halls of Congress, defending and expanding voting rights for African-Americans. In its 117 years of existence, it has never been one to leave lobbying and pressure on elected officials to the racist corporate powers that have seen that as their exclusive domain.

Now, faced with an existential threat from the racist right to all the gains made since the Civil Rights Movement, the organization has decided to hit the streets in an unprecedented election effort. NAACP Board Chairman Leon Russell told the opening session of the group's convention in Chicago Sunday about the new priorities.

As part of its focus on the elections, Russell announced the NAACP would undertake a record-breaking $20 million voter registration and mobilization drive "to motivate six million to 10 million voters" who did not cast ballots in the last two elections to do so. Russell said the NAACP plans to recruit "tens of thousands of volunteers to join the crusade to turn out millions of us this November."

It will target voters in 14 states and 33 congressional districts, with the full list expected to be hashed during discussions by delegates at the convention over the next few days. The plan reflects the recognition by the NAACP as well as other civil rights organizations that drastically increasing Black voter participation through registration and other efforts is a critical step in defeating MAGA.

Many at the convention have noted that Trump may very well be planning to ignore the results of the coming elections in places where he disagrees with the outcome, and that is why he is promoting the use of military in cities, especially in Washington, D.C. The fear is that troops in the streets could be part of a plan to kill free elections or to deal with protests. The answer, they point out, is to counter with the biggest ever turnout of voters.

This is where Russell's call comes in: "We must move 60% or more of all eligible voters to the polls" to overcome the offensive, he said, led by the Trump administration and aided by the courts against people of color.

Russell's declaration came in a keynote address full of sharp jibes again aimed at Trump. Other speakers, from Democratic Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker to local activists, issued similar warnings. What to accomplish—a progressive pro-civil rights landslide in November's election—and how to achieve it dominated the session.

And not just for 2026, at least one speaker added, but for 2028, too.

The NAACP has been active in the anti-Trump movement. It has filed more than 70 lawsuits to stop his grasping and often unconstitutional moves to grab total power. It opposes his denigration of people of color and his effort to write them and their huge contributions to U.S. history out of the record. It still will, Russell said.

After all, as another speaker pointed out, Trump openly has his vicious and violent ICE agents detain, deport and often shoot to kill people in Black and Latino communities, along with white people who support them.

Shades of the freedom rides of the 1960s, with ICE taking the role of Southern white racists, were evident in the remarks of several. One speaker listed the names of riders whom white racists killed in that era, including a white woman from Detroit, Viola Liuzzo.

But more than Trump is the problem, Russell told the 1,688 delegates and alternates gathered in a great hall of Chicago's McCormick Place for a convention whose theme, from the Constitution, is "We the people."

"Today the authoritarian is restricting the administration of justice," Russell declared. Trump's Congress meekly agrees "and judges dependent on his whim alone have" let Trump "send a swarm of officers to harass and assault people" as well as fire tens of thousands of workers.

Russell called the perpetrators "disgraced DOGE"—Trump's now-dead Department of Government Efficiency—"and oppressive ICE," his Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents.

"Their acts may be considered just bad fruit from diseased trees, but when bad fruit is mixed with good fruit," the good fruit is infected, too. The infected fruit are people who stand by and acquiesce. Russell urged attendees not to do that.

Using a New Testament analogy, Russell said, "We have the ability to remove the diseased trees and the bad fruit...from the executive and legislative garden just as the founders did 250 years ago."

The authors of the Declaration of Independence did so, he noted, even though they didn't live up to their own noble ideals. They were white men of property who shut out everybody else, including enslaved Black people and women.

The history of the U.S., Russell proclaimed, is a constant struggle to bring more people—those groups plus immigrants—into the words of the Declaration about all people being created equal.

Illinois Gov. Pritzker provided contrasts between both Chicago and Illinois history and his administration's anti-Trump actions on one side and Trump's violent crusade against migrants and their allies on the streets of Chicago. That includes ICE helicoptering at midnight atop a building in Chicago's South Shore and rousting out and rounding up the inhabitants. Most of them were citizens.

It also includes ICE shooting one Chicago woman driver seven times. Somehow, unlike the Minnesotans, Memphis residents, and Latinos in Boston and Houston whom ICE and other agents shot, she lived.

"Illinois has been at the forefront of the struggle for freedom and equality" ever since Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, a non-white, was the first permanent resident of what is now Chicago, Pritzker noted.

The three-million-person city is now 29% Hispanic, one-third African-American, one-third white, and the rest every other race.

Illinois also gave the nation crusading African-American journalist Ida B. Wells, said Pritzker. It's elected more African-American members of Congress than any other state. It will add its next U.S. Senator, Democrat Juliana Stratton, to that list. And it gave the nation the late civil rights leader Jesse Jackson and "a young community organizer" who eventually went from Chicago to the White House, Barack Obama.

"But such progress is not inevitable," the governor warned. "It requires people willing to sacrifice. None of this is by accident. It is because Black America shows up, reminding us of the painful part of our history while giving us hope for the future."

The NAACP is also stepping up its activity in another important area: building and strengthening its alliances with the labor movement. The agenda at the convention here will include discussions and planning with major unions and organizations, with particular focus during the Monday session. Claude Cummings, president of the Communications Workers of America, is expected to play a reading role.

RAPID RESPONSE: Hold the Line—No SAVE Act!

By People's World

Hold the line — NO SAVE Act!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand they hold the line for voting rights and democracy!

Congress must refuse to be pressured to pass the SAVE Act or the reconciliation bill with the SAVE Act attached. The only voting emergency is the frantic, manufactured power grab to take voting rights away from millions of eligible voters of color, working class voters, and women with no passports or who changed their name in marriage from that on their birth certificate.

Congress must take immediate action to guarantee safe and secure elections. Say NO to the SAVE Act and YES to the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act reintroduced with 220 co-sponsors HR 14 / SB 4884. Say YES to the Right to Vote Act S 4484 / H.R. 9437 introduced last week to establish clear protections for voters and help ensure that every eligible voter can exercise their constitutional right to vote.



Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Medicare For All advocates relaunch drive

By Mark Gruenberg and John Wojcik

CHICAGO—Stressing democracy, affordability, and comprehensive coverage, more than 300 organizations—including unions, locals, and union-affiliated organizations—relaunched the drive for single-payer government-run Medicare For All. In addition to seeing it as a fix to healthcare, they see it as a major step in fixing an economy that President Trump has been rapidly ruining.

It is the cost of healthcare that fuels much of the affordability crisis felt by Americans, and it is the present system of giving inordinate power to healthcare corporations and the lawmakers they control that fuels much of the attacks underway on democracy.

Lawmakers beholden to those companies are the very same ones busy undermining democracy in many ways, including and especially by attacking and limiting the right to vote.

When it comes to the economy, both Medicare for All advocates and the lawmakers who oppose it understand well that healthcare is the second biggest sector of the economy, with perhaps Wall Street being the only one larger. Right-wing lawmakers get much of their financial support from companies in the health industry determined to maintain that position.



The objective of Medicare for All advocates, according to the letter the Chicago-based Physicians for a National Health Program (PHNP) circulated, is to build a mass movement to force politicians to establish single-payer and get rid of the rapacious and care-denying insurers in 2029.

The campaign organizers figure it will take two election cycles, now and 2028, to create the correct political conditions to push single-payer through. It will take that long to overcome what is now a hostile Congress, past a financially loaded health-care complex full of oligopolies—and elect a new president succeeding GOPer Donald Trump.

"Our democracy is struggling," began Dr. Diljeet K. Singh, the successor to Dr. Quentin Young of Chicago as president of the Physicians for a National Health Program. "We need an agenda working-class people and everyday Americans can rally behind. Without one, far-right, fascist politicians are filling that void.

"The fascist agenda redirects people's rightful anger at our system's failures to unjustly place blame on immigrants, low-income people, and people of color...Failing to provide transformational policies and hope to the working class allowed fascism to rise and hold on to power.

"It's time to challenge the corrupt CEOs who profit off despair. To show people real solutions that can work."

"No one can fix our rigged economy overnight. Our structural inequality is decades in the making. But one piece of the solution is to take on one of the largest industries in our country: Health care."

"Halfway measures allow corporations to continue profiting off the sick," she declared.

"The boldest possible reform, Medicare For All, brings together the broadest possible movement." What won't do that is "overly complex incremental measures"—a jab at the Obama-era Affordable Care Act —"that prop up the same systems we're seeing fail under the weight of attacks by Trump and Republicans.

"The American people are hungry for bold ideas that reform fundamental institutions that have failed them for too long. And they are looking for leaders who will take on powerful interests and fight for working people."

Singh urges readers to kick-start the movement via letters and e-mails to lawmakers now, but PNHP recognizes that crafting the system and gathering the massive support will take time.

That's also why it enlisted the 325 groups. They include National Nurses United, which has led the campaign for single-payer within its home state of California and within the AFL-CIO for decades, along with its affiliates in California, D.C., Michigan, Minnesota, and New York.

Other international unions signing the letter are the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, the Professional and Technical Engineers, the United Auto Workers, and the Postal Workers.

Locals and allied groups joining in are Teachers/AFT Retirees in Washington State, the Charlotte-Metrolina Labor Council and Communications Workers Local 3641, both in Charlotte, N.C., the Committee of Interns and Residents of the Service Employees, the Institute for Policy Studies' Poverty Project, and the Maryland State Education Association.

Also signing on are chapters of Jobs With Justice in Missouri and Portland, Ore., AFSCME's Minnesota and the Dakotas Retirees Chapter, the Minnesota AFL-CIO's Retirees Council, One Fair Wage, and the Movement of Rank and File Educators of New York City's United Federation of Teachers.

Outside progressive groups include every single Chicago area chapter of Indivisible, several Democratic Socialist local organizations, and the Sunrise Movement.

The single-payer advocates already have popular opinion on their side, Singh pointed out.

"In fact, 90% of Democratic voters and 63% of all voters support Medicare For All. Americans believe the government should guarantee health care to everyone, and anything less means tens of millions of people in the U.S. continuing to suffer from the lack of necessary care and the prospect of medical debt if they do seek care."

PNHP will also have to overcome the immense financial clout of the medical-insurance complex, which now consumes more than one of every five dollars of U.S. output of goods and services, second among all sectors only to finance and real estate.

That same complex is also generous to politicians, and often holds them in its sway. When Democrats ran Congress, the financial clout of the health insurers blocked it, and the GOP would scream the Democrats were imposing socialism.

And in the March 17, 2026, Democratic primary for an open U.S. Senate seat in Illinois, the eventual winner, Lieut. Gov. Juliana Stratton hung the fact that Rep. Robin Kelly took more than half of her campaign contributions from medical and pharmaceutical campaign finance committees around Kelly's neck. Kelly retorted, "I'm not a cheap date."

Kelly finished third in the race. Stratton, who refused corporate campaign cash but benefited from a campaign finance committee established by her boss, Gov. J.B. Pritzker, won. Another hopeful, Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, who outraised and outspent the other two combined, finished second.

LABOR NEWS

Cuba resists: Sovereignty under the boot of U.S. imperialism

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

Indeed, Cuba offers a vision of a future in which human need is prioritized, and energy consumption is efficient and sensible. Meanwhile, oil monopolies and private utility companies in the U.S. will continue to artificially drive up energy demands and encourage waste to secure ever-growing profits. Solidarity with Cuba also means learning from their system and seeing them in many ways as a leader in environmentally and socially responsible development.

While narratives of suffering rightly emerge from critiques of the blockade, media manipulation often coopts them to create the impression of state ineptitude or societal collapse. Therefore, solidarity also requires a recognition and active support of the creative strategies Cuba already employs to overcome its compounding crises. Effective solidarity work directly challenges the imperial project of the blockade, links Cuba's struggles to working-class struggles at home, and seeks to empower Cubans to manage and develop their own sustainable solutions.

This concludes this series.

Irán: El Partido Tudeh evalúa el panorama político y reclama una alternativa democrática

Por CPUSA International Department

Tras el anuncio de un acuerdo marco entre Irán y Estados Unidos para poner fin a la guerra, el Partido Tudeh de Irán publicó una evaluación exhaustiva de la situación política. Si bien celebró la aparente desescalada, el partido sostuvo que Irán permanece en un estado de «limbo político» en el que no parecen inminentes ni una paz duradera, ni reformas significativas, ni el colapso del régimen.

El Partido Tudeh condenó enérgicamente las acciones militares de Israel y Estados Unidos contra Irán, calificándolas de actos de agresión y violaciones del derecho internacional. Se prestó especial atención a la destrucción de depósitos de agua en la provincia de Hormozgán, hecho que el partido calificó de crimen de guerra. Asimismo, el comunicado criticó duramente las amenazas del presidente Donald Trump contra Irán y las deliberaciones sobre el control de los recursos petroleros iraníes y del estrecho de Ormuz.

El Partido Tudeh sostuvo que el desafío más grave para la República Islámica no es la presión externa, sino su profunda crisis interna: inflación crónica, depreciación de la moneda, aumento de la pobreza, creciente desigualdad social y dificultades económicas generalizadas. El partido destacó el resurgimiento de las protestas laborales, estudiantiles, de pensionistas y sociales, lo que demuestra la institucionalización del descontento público en toda la sociedad iraní.

El Partido Tudeh concluyó que ni los conflictos militares ni los acuerdos diplomáticos pueden resolver los problemas fundamentales de Irán: la pobreza, el desempleo, la corrupción, la discriminación y la falta de libertades democráticas. Hizo un llamamiento a crear un movimiento social amplio, democrático e inclusivo, capaz de unir a trabajadores, mujeres, estudiantes, docentes, jubilados, intelectuales y fuerzas políticas progresistas. El partido subrayó que la democracia y la justicia social deben ser conquistadas por el propio pueblo iraní mediante la organización colectiva, la lucha y la movilización popular.

Chipre: AKEL avanza en las elecciones nacionales

El Partido Progresista del Pueblo Trabajador de Chipre (AKEL) obtuvo buenos resultados en las recientes elecciones parlamentarias. El partido aumentó su porcentaje de votos y mantuvo sus escaños, lo que demuestra su creciente influencia y su compromiso de abordar las presiones económicas y promover un cambio progresista.

El partido aspira a construir una amplia mayoría social para lograr el cambio de cara a 2028, centrándose en cuestiones como los salarios dignos, la vivienda y la cuestión de Chipre. AKEL afirmó que intensificará su presencia en la sociedad y continuará sus esfuerzos en favor de una federación bizonal y bicomunitaria.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

August 8, 2026

Warehouse workers in Canada approve collective bargaining agreement with Walmart

By Luis Martinez



MISSISSAUGA, Canada—In a historic moment for organized labor, 800 Walmart workers at a warehouse in the Toronto suburb of Mississauga voted overwhelmingly to approve their first-ever collective bargaining agreement with the retail giant. The workers are members of Unifor Local 252, and their vote marks the first time that a union contract has been reached with Walmart anywhere in North America.

The contract vote, which passed with 93% approval, caps a nearly two-year organizing drive at the Walmart facility. Workers here first voted to unionize in 2024, marking a breakthrough in labor's long and difficult history with the company, which is one of the most anti-union corporations in the world.

The new two-year agreement includes several hard-won provisions: wage increases of up to $5 per hour in the first year with a 3% increase in the second, a "me too" clause ensuring all Walmart warehouse workers receive wage increases (not just some), job security protections, and reparations for unfair labor practices stemming from Walmart's denial of wage increases to its workers.

Organizing against a behemoth

Both the U.S. and Canadian trade union movements have historically struggled to organize Walmart, the largest private sector employer and one of the largest monopolies in North America.

In the United States, the Teamsters, UFCW, and SEIU all launched campaigns, with the Teamsters beginning organizing efforts in the 1980s.

But Walmart founder Sam Walton, whose anti-union stance was shaped by his exposure to anti-union tobacco companies in the South, stifled progress. In *Public Affairs*, Rick Wartzman described Walton's tactics: "All of this was illegal, but that didn't seem to give Walton any pause."

Walton died in 1992, but his anti-union legacy persisted at the company. As neoliberal austerity laws gutted labor militancy, the fight for workplace democracy at Walmart became harder in both the U.S. and Canada.

In an exclusive interview with *People's World*, Unifor organizer Justin Gnopsky detailed the history of organizing Walmart in Canada. Before the Mississauga victory, previous attempts focused primarily on retail stores, led by UFCW Canada.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Warehouse workers in Canada approve collective bargaining agreement with Walmart

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

"There's two cases here in Canada where a union was certified with Walmart," Gnopsky said. "It did not reach a collective agreement, unfortunately, but they were certified."

In one notable UFCW case, workers won a union vote, but as Gnopsky recounted, "Walmart had broken the law there." Under Quebec law, the province's labor minister could impose arbitration if bargaining stalled. On April 29, 2005, just months after that provision took effect, Walmart responded by completely shutting down the organized store.

The company avoided bargaining with organized labor by closing stores or particular parts of its operations—like its tire and lube auto centers—entirely. This history convinced Unifor to try focusing on distribution and logistics centers rather than retail outlets.

The road to unionization

The push to organize came from workers' frustration over stagnant wages. "They had just lived through the pandemic," Gnopsky said. During COVID-19, Canadian essential workers received so-called "hero pay." But as soon as lockdowns ended, Gnopsky said, attitudes from employers shifted.

"It's back to minimum wage for them," he said. "If they don't like it, hit the bricks because everyone else is looking for a job. That's what these workers were told."

As the cost of living rose with rapid inflation—driven largely by corporate profit-maximizing—Walmart distribution workers began exploring their options. Organizing efforts began in late 2023. By early 2024, Walmart had become aware that something was up.

"The company would send security guards out whenever we went to sit there," Gnopsky said. "There'd be like eight of them. It was intimidation."

Despite the coercion, organizers persisted, collecting more union cards and preparing for ballot elections and legal challenges from the company. The union applied for a ballot vote in August 2024, and on Sept. 13, 2024, the union was officially certified.

The fight for a contract

Between September 2024 and May 2026, Walmart employed its classic delaying tactics. "These guys slow-roll everything they can," Gnopsky said.

During that period, Walmart granted wage increases to non-union workers, outsourced jobs to temporary workers and contractors, and engaged in other actions aimed at undermining the union.

But the workers' steering committee—made up of longtime employees of the facility—remained persistent.

"We have a strong group of folks," Gnopsky said. "A lot of these people have high seniority, and they have respect. They're what we would call the natural leaders within the workplace."

During this time, Unifor succeeded in organizing two more bargaining units with Walmart in Alberta and British Columbia. After those victories, Walmart gave non-union workers another wage increase, Gnopsky said.

Despite the slow-rolling and other unfair labor practices, a collective bargaining agreement was reached in May 2026.

A win for the Canadian labor movement

Gnopsky emphasized that patience is key to organizing. "You have to be invested in the time," he said. "Spending the time with the committee and building them up."

That advice comes as Canada's labor movement seeks to reverse declining union density, which has fallen from 37.6% in 1980 to 30.4% in 2023. While the drop has been far less severe than in the United States, the trend is steady.

For decades, Canadian workers have faced setbacks from austerity and free trade agreements like NAFTA. Corporate profits in Canada grew more than 800% between 1980 and 2023, according to an Oxfam report. In just the past few years, the wealth of "Canada's richest 40 billionaires grew by almost $95 billion—more than 20%."

In an attempt to revitalize the labor movement, the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) and the Communications, Energy, and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP) merged in 2013 to form Unifor. The union's constitution allocates 10% of national dues revenues—at least $10 million annually—to organizing.

In the aftermath of COVID-19, Unifor and other Canadian unions have seized on growing worker dissatisfaction, launching campaigns and building solidarity. Unifor supported locked-out workers at a Co-Op refinery and launched a "Warehouse Workers Unite" campaign. It was because of the latter that workers at the Mississauga Walmart warehouse reached out to Unifor.

While Unifor is not formally part of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), its recent organizing victories—including the landmark Walmart agreement—demonstrate that despite decades of austerity and recent pro-corporate measures by Liberal Prime Minister Mark Carney's government, victories for organized workers are still possible.

Warehouse workers in Canada approve collective bargaining agreement with Walmart

By C.J. Atkins

NEW YORK—With just over a hundred days standing between the country and the November midterm elections, the Communist Party USA's National Committee gathered here July 11-12 with a single overriding message: Everything now runs through the fight to break MAGA's hold on Congress.

That was the frame co-chair Joe Sims set in his keynote, delivered a week after the country's 250th anniversary.

"This meeting of the National Committee must be focused on the November midterms," Sims told the gathering. "There's no question before the party, the working class or the U.S. people that's more important. Everything revolves around defeating the MAGA forces. You name it: labor rights, civil rights, women's rights, LGBTQ rights, the environment, peace, and indeed democracy itself."

Sims argued the political winds are shifting.

"If the election were held today, the generic ballot suggests a 5% advantage for beating the GOP in the House," he said, adding that "so far, the primaries show that momentum is on democracy's side." Taking the Senate out of Republican hands, he acknowledged, may be a tougher challenge.

Sims pointed, however, to Democratic Socialists of America wins in New York City and Colorado as evidence of "a deep radicalization" underway in the working-class electorate.

He tied that momentum to a shift among organized labor, tracing it back to the January ICE occupation of the Twin Cities and the killings of Renee Goode and Alex Pretti, through the AFL-CIO's Fred Redmond joining a *People's World May Day town hall*, to Liz Shuler and Redmond's endorsement of May Day itself.

"That was big," Sims said. Still, he cautioned against overstatement: "Was that stamp enough? No. A lot more needs to be done ideologically, politically, and programmatically."

"Socialist moment" vs. anti-communism

A recurring theme was the CPUSA stepping out from the shadows electorally. Citing wins by Dom Shannon and Cesar Ruiz De Castilla in Philadelphia along with party members now preparing campaigns in Columbus, Peoria, Kansas, and Brooklyn, Sims declared: "I say, run comrade run! We've got to strike while the iron is hot. And that means we've got to start running under our own colors."

A number of candidates from the CPUSA, running as part of broad, community-rooted coalitions, have been elected to public office in various locales around the country in the past couple of years, and Sims said there needs to be more of that.

He described decades of caution around open Communist identification as "rubber bands" left over from a more repressive era: "The time has come to cut those rubber bands.



They're a drag on growth, they contribute to inactivity, and they curb party initiative."

Sims pointed to polling—a March 2025 YouGov/Cato Institute survey showing 62% of adults under 30 favor socialism and 34% favor communism — as proof that "the socialist moment" has returned, quoting one young communist's Instagram post that "Gen Z loves communism."

He balanced that optimism with a warning about escalating repression: FBI raids on the Ohio Organizing Collective, life sentences of 30 to 100 years for eight defendants in the Texas Prairieland prosecutions, federal charges against University of Michigan students, the collapsed Broadview 6 case in Chicago, RICO indictments of 60 Stop Cop City activists in Atlanta, and an IRS effort to strip non-profits of tax-exempt status.

He also cited a Justice and Treasury Department inquiry compiling a list of 145 organizations tied to Cuba solidarity, including the CPUSA. "Sitting on the sidelines may well result in the democratic opposition sitting in jail," he said. "If the past is prologue to what's coming, they'll come after the communist left first."

Sims closed by describing an exchange billionaire Elon Musk had on X after being urged to abandon "classical liberalism" because "universal suffrage leads to universal suffering." Musk replied, "I have wised up." Sims's retort: "Musk and Co. are not the makers. Actually, you and I know they're fakers. It's the working class that are the makers... We are coming for the fakers—that's why the socialist moment is rising again, so let the shaking begin!"

115 days to flip Congress

Political Action Commission chair Joelle Fishman put numbers on the task: a net gain of three seats flips the House, four flips the Senate. "We have 115 days to organize a massive voter turnout so big it can overcome all the neo-fascist attempts to steal this election and shut down democratic rights," Fishman told the National Committee, formally launching the party's "Solidarity Summer/Fall" campaign.

CONTINUE FROM PAGE THREE

Fishman described an eight-point program built from district and club discussions at the party's recent elections conference: concentrating resources on priority races, plugging into the AFL-CIO's "Labor 2026" voter program, joining the Freedom Summer/Fall coalition's July 17-19 "Good Trouble Lives On" voting rights mobilizations, supporting May Day Strong-style actions, backing Communist Party candidates already in the field, using *People's World* as an organizing tool, expanding club membership, and drafting a bilingual national platform.

"People are looking for transformative politics based on their needs and dreams, not corporate dark money and AIPAC," she said.

People's World presented an outline of its plans to cover all the key midterm races, particularly those being targeted by organized labor, whether they are national, state, or local. It was noted that a number of labor movement figures have recently made positive remarks about the role the publication plays in its reporting.

The AFL-CIO's Redmond, for instance, said on May Day that *People's World* is "spreading the gospel of this movement far and wide" and that it tells the "important stories about working people and families in a way you just do not hear anywhere else."

Editor John Wojcik pointed out that *People's World* is "one of the few outlets that has helped spread the news about the AFL-CIO's decision to place 50,000 'election protectors' in the field in the weeks leading up to Election Day" and said that coverage like this helps build the publication's reputation.

Strikes multiply, union density still low

The Labor Commission's report described a labor movement "in a period of motion." It noted SEIU's return to the AFL-CIO after two decades, delegates' pledge to organize two million new members and mobilize two million new voters for the midterms, and the UAW's convention vote to divest union funds from Israel.

It also flagged active fights: 1,700 Colorado Teamsters locked out by Cargill, over 800 Indiana Steelworkers locked out by BP for more than 100 days, and Michigan nurses on strike against Henry Ford Hospital Systems for eight months.

"These examples demonstrate that workers are ready to fight, and it's happening everywhere," the report stated, while noting union density remains "barely 10%" and urging CPUSA clubs to put young members into shop-floor jobs.

Fights on multiple fronts

The African American Equality Commission's report tied the "Freedom Summer 2026" mobilizations to the Supreme Court's gutting of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, urging clubs to build coalitions against what party leadership has termed a "Civil Rights Counterrevolution" and to keep pressure on the Target boycott.

The Peace and Solidarity Commission and International Department both flagged the tightening U.S. blockade of Cuba as an urgent priority, urging members to lobby for congressional bills to end it, while the Organization Department reported facilitating coordination on the Target and Cuba campaigns and pointed to continuing weaknesses in dues collection and communication with the South.

Taken together, the reports pointed to a party trying to convert a favorable electoral moment, and a rising interest in socialism among younger voters, into organization on the ground before November.

The closing political summary given by Co-chair Rossana Cambron drove home the point that although the people's movements and the CPUSA are in the midst of major fights, they are also in a moment of opportunity.

"As a party, we are moving in a direction that will have an impact. We may not be able to fully see it right now, but history tells us that's the case," Cambron said, encouraging members to stay motivated and to remember their long-term goals.

She also urged party leaders, members, and candidates to "let people know who we really are" in the course of their coalition work. Visibility "beyond our immediate circle," she argued, is a means to ensuring the party has allies when attacks come while also enabling Communists to "be proactive in building community."

"What we do today lays the basis for what we will be able to do tomorrow," she said.

Ceuta border catastrophe kills dozens; racist right seizes anti-immigrant opportunity

By Luke Rotello

Over 50,000 people crossed from Morocco into the Spanish colonial exclave of Ceuta on July 30, only to face a series of mass deportations and military deployments by the Spanish government. The number of lives lost so far—mostly to drowning or crushing during crossing—could be as high as 90.

Racist reactions and diplomatic retaliation from far-right politicians and governments around the world, meanwhile, have spiraled into a continental crisis.



Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni temporarily ordered the closure of Italy and Spain's air and sea borders and called for the suspension of free movement rights for Spanish citizens guaranteed under the European Union's Schengen agreement. Santiago Abascal, leader of the Spanish extreme-right Vox party, repeatedly described the immigrants as "an invasion."

Spain's center-left Socialist government, led by Pedro Sánchez, characterized the crossings as a "violation of sovereignty," directing blame at Morocco's government for engineering or allowing the incident. Sánchez faces growing diplomatic pressure for its opposition to the Iran war and genocide in Gaza—stances which could have factored in the mass border crossings.

Court distortions

At a surface level, a June 29 ruling by Spain's Supreme Court is at the center of the crisis. Its decision found that migrants intercepted at sea while trying to reach Ceuta or Melilla, another Spanish-controlled exclave on the north African coast, cannot be summarily deported under the country's "hot return" procedure, since they do not cross the physical border infrastructure the law refers to.

The ruling requires Spain to process such migrants through ordinary immigration channels instead—a stronger due-process protection, but a narrow one, since it says nothing about migrants' eventual right to remain.

Sánchez's government has said human trafficking networks in Morocco seized on the ruling, telling prospective migrants that reaching Ceuta by water now guaranteed a legal process and an effective path to stay in Spain. Whether that message reflects a genuine misreading of the decision or a deliberate exaggeration by smugglers—and whether Moroccan authorities eased their own border enforcement in response—remains disputed.

In the ruling's wake, Madrid has moved to install floating barriers in the water off Ceuta, which it argues will let it intercept and return migrants before they reach shore, satisfying the court while preserving fast deportations.

A deadly border, and a leverage point

Ceuta and Melilla, each with a population of around 80,000, are the two major cities among a set of Spanish exclaves along the northern coast of Morocco. Together, the exclaves are the European Union's only land border with Africa, and are often sought as a point of entry by immigrants and refugees in west Asia and north Africa.

The hostile geography regularly compels undocumented people and asylum seekers to swim for several kilometers around the border fence.

The border's militarization owes in large part to a set of agreements between the European Union and Morocco, which annually commit hundreds of millions of euros to Moroccan immigration enforcement. The agreements compose one part of "Fortress Europe," the EU's system of border controls. Migrant support groups say it has cost tens of thousands of migrants and refugees their lives since 2014.

Morocco wields its authority over the exclave borders as a form of political leverage against Spain and the EU generally, and the ongoing Ceuta crisis is the latest in a series of mass migration events facilitated by the Moroccan government.

In February 2014, Moroccan and Spanish authorities shot rubber bullets at migrants attempting to swim across the border, killing 17. Two people were killed in a similar incident in 2021, when Morocco facilitated the entry of over 8,000 immigrants into Ceuta in response to Spain hosting Brahim Ghali, president of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), for medical treatment.

The SADR's territory, situated in Western Sahara, is partially occupied by Morocco, which combats any international recognition given to the republic. In 2022, 23 people were killed by Moroccan forces at the Melilla border, when more than 2,000 attempted to break through the fence.

The Moroccan government is not alone in treating refugees, asylum seekers, and economically precarious people as a political weapon. Donald Trump, Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and other ideologues of the MAGA movement have sought to turn Spain's border policies into a talking point for November's midterm elections in the U.S.

Joining with Abascal, Trump told a cabinet meeting that the crisis "looks like an invasion." Attempting to divert domestic fears away from ICE's terrorism and toward racist caricatures of immigrants, Cruz accused Sánchez of granting amnesty to "millions" of men from Africa, claiming that the Socialist government "hates the West."

Geopolitical maneuvers

Sánchez met with Abdelmadjid Tebboune, the recently re-elected prime minister of Algeria, on July 20. The meeting was the first of its kind since 2022, when the previous Sánchez government ended nearly 50 years of formal neutrality to endorse Morocco's occupation plan for Western Sahara. Algeria, a long-time supporter of the Sahrawi independence struggle, largely froze diplomatic relations in response.

However, the deepening energy crisis in Europe, exacerbated by U.S.-Israeli attacks on Iran and closure of the Strait of Hormuz, brought the two governments back into negotiations. Seeking expanded access to Algerian natural gas exports, Sánchez and representatives of Spanish industrial monopolies promised stronger bilateral ties and greater Spanish investment in other sectors of the Algerian economy.

Given long-standing tensions between Algeria and Morocco over the former's support for the SADR, the meeting was taken as a provocation by the Moroccan government.

The U.S. and Israeli governments, now closely aligned with the Moroccan monarchy and right-wing European administrations, have sought to isolate Spain and Algeria alike. In addition to diplomatically recognizing the state of Palestine, Spain has refused to participate in the Iran war, banning American use of jointly-operated military bases for military actions that it deems illegal under international law. In response, the Trump administration has threatened the suspension of bilateral trade and ratcheted up diplomatic pressure through its reactionary allies across the region.

All these factors are widely seen as relevant context for the mass crossing at Ceuta on July 30.

Left reaction

Communist and workers' parties across the region responded quickly and forcefully to the unfolding events.

The French Communist Party (PCF) stated that "no dispute concerning Algeria, Western Sahara, or Ceuta can justify using people as geopolitical weapons." The Communist Party of the Workers of Spain (PCTE) condemned "military deployment, repression, summary expulsions without legal guarantees, and the further militarization of borders," while situating mass migration in the context of displacement by imperialist war, divestment, and resource theft.

The parties will continue to confront anti-immigrant violence as they confront far-right movements in the lead-up to elections next year.

In defense of Cuba against Marco Rubio's lies and damnation

By Rob Warzyniak

Last week, the State Department released a 100-page document titled "Cuba: The Capital of 21st Century Communism." Those 100 pages contained a multitude of outright lies, excoriating damnations, and the creation of a mythical nation of epic proportions, hellbent on destroying the U.S. I can only hope that whoever wrote the report stretched before that reach, lest they pull a hamstring.

The attack on left-leaning people and organizations by the Trump administration is not new, nor are the attacks on Cuba since the revolution. Still, those who occupy the White House are escalating their attacks by accusing the Cuban government of carrying out a "campaign of subversion" that has "infiltrated the highest reaches of the U.S. government, recruited and cultivated generations of American activists [and] backed an unprecedented wave of leftwing terrorism on American soil." Quite a statement, especially from a nation that is responsible for multiple acts of terrorism around the globe, including in Cuba.

A year and a half ago, the U.S. removed the $10 million bounty on the now Syrian leader, Ahmed Al-Sharaa, after he led the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad. Sharaa was the head of the rebel group Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS), which the U.S. had designated a terrorist group. But since Sharaa acted in a manner that was beneficial to U.S. foreign interests, he got a pass. Plus, one of the many ever-changing reasons for the continuing war with Iran is to stop an authoritarian regime from acquiring a nuclear weapon. And yet, the Trump administration is currently in talks with the authoritarian Saudi Arabian government to assist them in developing their nuclear program. Since right-wing terrorism is as American as apple pie, it not only gets a pass, it gets a helping hand.

While continued attacks by the U.S., from trade embargoes to sanctions to blockades, have decimated Cuba, the people have persevered, and that is something that Secretary of State Marco Rubio cannot stand. Back in May, Rubio said Cuba poses a "national security threat" to the U.S. For those with a short memory, this remark from Rubio came after the U.S. bombed an elementary school in Iran, killing over 100 children.



And for those who might not have been alive to witness it, or who have an even shorter memory, the invasion of Cuba by U.S. forces in the Bay of Pigs came before the Cuban missile crisis.

The violence perpetrated by the U.S. on the Cuban people has escalated to a humanitarian crisis. Fuel shortages caused by a U.S. oil blockade have led to electrical blackouts, food shortages, and death. The nationalized healthcare system in Cuba leads to better health outcomes than what passes for healthcare in the U.S., despite spending far less than we do. A higher life expectancy and a lower infant mortality rate are outcomes to be proud of, and being able to access healthcare at no charge and no risk of going bankrupt should be the envy of our politicians. Since many of our politicians openly accept bribes from for-profit health insurance companies in the name of "campaign donations," we remain one of the few countries not to guarantee healthcare to its people.

The ruling class in the U.S. hates free healthcare so much that they are actively denying it to people in Cuba. Surgeries are being postponed or, in emergency cases, done by flashlight. Medicine is continually in short supply, and ambulances are unable to transport people due to empty fuel tanks.

While the State Department writes a 100-page manifesto denouncing Cuba that is heavy on accusations and light on evidence and substance, the White House and political pundits on conservative news networks express shock that the idea of socialism and what it has to offer is appealing to anyone. Here's what they don't understand: Cuba didn't introduce Communism to the U.S.; the ruling class did.

The working class has always organized around issues that affect them the most, and the ruling class continually ignores them. When the workers say that rent is too high and mortgages are out of reach, the conversation doesn't turn to making housing affordable. Instead, the landlord organizations and mortgage companies throw more money at their politicians to make the problem go away, and in turn, these politicians equate fair housing practices with communism. When the workers say that wages have not kept up with production and inflation, the politicians pass laws that destroy unions while business owners spend millions on anti-union propaganda. Instead of a conversation about how much democratic control the workers should have over their workplace, the ones in charge say that's socialism, and the conversation ends.

It is far easier to scream "communism" than to explain why someone who is working 40 hours a week cannot afford housing and healthcare. The ones in charge know this, and they know if the working class starts to organize, then the ruling class is in trouble. That is why the U.S. is so fixated on destroying Cuba, because the Cuban people organized, overthrew their oppressors, and took their lives into their own hands. As soon as the working class starts asking questions about who owns what, who works for whom, who gets paid, and who gets rich, the people sitting in their ivory towers get nervous. The U.S. government cannot allow that to happen here, so it does everything in its power to prevent it.

What the Cuban people have done since the revolution is show the world what a country can do when it throws off the shackles of its capitalist colonizers. Attacks on leftists are not new, and the public's acceptance of their demonization will eventually pave the way for other groups to be harassed and jailed. We've seen this before, for when the first Jewish people arrived in Dachau, they found it already full of leftist dissidents. We either learn from history, or suffer under our own ignorance.

Stop the attacks on The People's Forum!

By Communist Party USA



The Communist Party USA condemns the House Ways and Means Committee's subpoenas of The People's Forum, Tricontinental Institute for Social Research, and BreakThrough News. Committee Chair Jason Smith alleges that these organizations are linked to the Communist Party of China. It's the old foreign agent charge: McCarthyism 2.0 in action. The attacks open the door to further political repression against the entire progressive and left movement.

These organizations are being targeted for mobilizing against the genocide in Gaza, defending immigrant families from ICE, and opposing Washington's illegal blockade of Cuba.

Anti-communism being used in attacks against people's organizations, including labor, is one of the oldest anti-democratic weapons of the ruling class, being used today to deepen fascist politics. This is an attack on the entire working class as part of the ongoing MAGA efforts to undermine democracy and dismantle civil rights. The extreme right uses Red Scare politics to justify the elimination of voting rights, to attack unions, to criminalize peace and solidarity, all in the effort to clear the path for unfettered billionaire rule.

We know this playbook. Our own Party was ravaged by the McCarthy era of the 1950s. Our leaders were jailed for thinking and teaching. Our members were blacklisted, and free speech was effectively criminalized. Many other democratically minded people were caught up in the witch hunts, resulting in lost jobs, ruined careers, and in some cases lost lives.

We refuse to stay silent in the face of these ongoing assaults on democratic rights.

We demand the House Ways and Means Committee withdraw these subpoenas.

We will defend every organization and every individual who refuses to be intimidated by MAGA and stands up for peace, democracy, and workers' rights.

NAACP and unions plan closer cooperation as November election looms

By Mark Gruenberg

CHICAGO—The NAACP, the nation's oldest civil rights organization, and the union movement plan closer cooperation in the fight to defeat MAGA and the Trump administration, which both call an enormous threat to workers and people of color.

NAACP Executive Director Derrick Johnson and board chair Leon Russell announced that closer collaboration in back-to-back remarks at a special labor-oriented session on July 20 during the organization's convention here.

Both said that while unions and the NAACP share the same goals and labor often worked hand-in-hand with civil rights leaders—providing money and people power—the reverse was not always apparent. And there needs to be more collaboration at the local level between union locals and NAACP local chapters, they said.

That will change, the two leaders promised. And the change could appear in a variety of ways, and not just in the electoral battle to defeat the MAGA forces of Donald Trump and his retrograde Republicans, who want to take the country back to Jim Crow or before.

"Let's keep our eyes on the same prize," Johnson urged.

The cooperation with labor will be "around more than collective bargaining," Johnson said. "For instance, now they"—the right wing—"are even using your pension dollars against you" in investments and also refusing to invest in homes or businesses of communities of color, he explained.

That comparison should ring a bell in the nation's urban areas, particularly Chicago, the site of the convention. The first fully documented case of financial discrimination—redlining Black loan applicants who had the same background and finances as white applicants—was documented there in 1961.

It led to later legislation forcing financial institutions to disclose their loan patterns and office locations, showing which areas, invariably communities of color, are redlined and "unbanked."

"And as things"—other issues and corporate practices—"evolve technologically, we have to evolve, too," said Johnson.

Russell took a different tack, but reaching towards the same cooperative goal. "We can talk all we want here about workers' rights, but we have to stop talking and start organizing," especially jointly around common issues, he said. "And we have to make sure our (NAACP) branches are connected to local union leaders."

Connection also starts at the top and that also needs improvement, according to NAACP and union leaders. Only recently have three international union leaders, including Teachers/AFT President Randi Weingarten and National Education Association President Becky Pringle, joined the NAACP board.

NEA is the nation's largest union, and Pringle, a Philadelphia science teacher, is African-American.

New York City civics teacher Weingarten heads the nation's third-largest union is Jewish and an activist in the LGBTQ movement.

Before them, the most prominent union leader on the NAACP board was the late Bill Lucy, the AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer, a founder of labor's constituency groups for African-American workers and a key force behind Dr. Martin Luther King's civil rights campaigns.



That includes the 1968 campaign where King was murdered while leading labor's support for unionization of the mostly Black sanitation workers of Memphis, Tenn. Lucy, in turn, was preceded by A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first African-American majority union.

Randolph, one speaker said, forced FDR into integrating defense industries, which aided workers of the Great Migration from the segregated South to cities of the North. Randolph's leverage was to threaten a 250,000-person march on Washington in 1941. King took that up 22 years later.

As part of the session, rank and file unionists discussed questions facing both groups, ranging from the threat of artificial intelligence taking away jobs to, for the first time in this conference, discussing how to reach the millions of people in the U.S. who are turned off by a political system that does not meet their needs and thus do not vote.

"We have got to encourage the six million who are not voting and who don't think about voting," said Russell. The number is the NAACP's minimum target for new voter registrations and mobilization between now and Election Day, in a $20 million campaign it announced the day before.

"They don't understand that an attack on diversity, equity, and inclusion" by the Trump administration "is an attack on them. They don't understand that an attack on health care," and specifically the Affordable Care Act which former President Barack Obama pushed through Congress, "is an attack on them.

"All of the gains we made in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s" are in danger, Russell declared.

One union leader whose local stretches from lower Manhattan to Newark, N.J., a city which is majority people of color and a large number of poor, also pondered the problem in a conversation with *People's World*.

"They're taking away things that threaten them," he said of the GOP's slashes against voters of color. "If voting was not a threat to them, they wouldn't take things away."

But while the leaders raised the problem of reaching and motivating non-voters, they said more must be done in the way of solutions.

The consensus, among both the union presidents and the rank-and-file members who spoke, was to find common ground to appeal to workers of all races, creeds, genders, and political views.

They cited common-sense issues such as keeping food safe or ensuring you can fly safely. One worker, LaQuita Honeysucker of the United Food and Commercial Workers, raised the food safety issue, as did Government Employees (AFGE) President Everett Kelley.

Another solution for representing the working poor who are not voting, both among unions and at the NAACP, is not just to support collective bargaining, but to ensure union contracts nationwide expire on the same day, said Julia Lewis of Unite HERE. Doing that "at 48 hotels and one casino" ensures bosses cannot play off workers against one another and provides a sense of solidarity, too, among the low-paid workers, Lewis added.

"We're attempting to negotiate them into restoring the staffing levels" they had before the coronavirus pandemic hit, Lewis explained. The hotel chains wail that business is still below 2019 levels and they can't afford to hire more workers. The workers, Lewis said, are loaded up with two or three or four rooms to clean rather than one. They know the bosses' complaints aren't true.

Among Trump's firings, Kelley said, were federal food inspectors. And a disproportionate share of the 317,000 total of feds whom Trump and trillionaire Elon Musk axed were African-American women.

AFGE member Darrell English raised the air safety issue. He's a Transportation Security Officer—a screener—and the two recent GOP-prompted federal shutdowns led 2,100 of his colleagues to quit for other jobs.

The TSOs had to work for three months without pay. Now, Trump wants to fire 8,400 more TSOs out of the remaining 45,000. News reports which surfaced after the Chicago session says he also wants to privatize the entire TSO workforce at two larger airports, including busy and prominent Washington National, the airport most lawmakers use to fly to their home states.

Airport screening by privatized workers was prevalent before the al-Qaeda attacks almost 25 years ago and it was ineffective at best, Kelley has said before. It's now in effect in 200 small airports.

"It isn't enough that Trump and the right" want to prevent workers of color "from climbing the ladder to the middle class" through unionization, Kelley said. "They want to pull the ladder away.

"If they can do this to Black workers protecting our food and keeping our flying safe, they can do it to you," he warned the crowd.

"This our generation's fight" for worker rights and civil rights, Kelley urged. "Will you march with us? Will you stand with us? Will you pray with us? And will you fight for us?"

"Yes," the crowd roared back.

RAPID RESPONSE: Medicare for All!

By People's World



Medicare for All!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand Congress enact Medicare for All: S. 1506 (Senator Bernie Sanders) and H.R. 3069 (Reps. Pramila Jayapal and Debbie Dingell).

Happy birthday to Medicare! For 61 years, Medicare/Medicaid has been a lifeline for seniors, disabled and low income individuals.

Medicare for All would give comprehensive, high-quality healthcare based on patient need, not on profit, for everybody.

Instead of improving and expanding Medicare/Medicaid, the Trump administration is recklessly increasing costs for medications and imposing work requirements for eligibility, which must be rejected. This includes seeking to privatize Medicare by the so-called "Medicare Advantage" scheme.

Listen to the majority who support Medicare for All to solve the health care crisis for working-class families. Become a sponsor and urge its passage without delay!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

LABOR NEWS

Greece: KKE warns against so-called "World Anti-Imperialist Platform" courting far-right

By Daniel Delgado and Ellen Von Zur Muehlen

The collapse of this construct — which now goes so far as to advocate regular cooperation with governments like Trump's — knows no limits. Their attempt to grossly distort the lessons of the October Revolution and the Bolsheviks, of the USSR's struggle to defend the world's first workers' state, is futile.

"The Leninist legacy is clear: to exploit every crack, split, and difficulty within the bourgeois camp, while subordinating necessary maneuvers to the main objective — the overthrow of bourgeois power, the construction and defense of socialism."

Iran: Tudeh Party calls for peace movement against "devastating war"

The Tudeh Party of Iran has issued a call for the formation of a broad peace movement, both inside and outside the country, to immediately halt the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran. In a recent expanded Central Committee meeting, the party stated that the war has placed the country's territorial integrity in grave danger and that the Islamic regime is using the conflict to cover up their legitimacy crisis and suppress dissent.

The party called for national unity in the face of the imperialist attacks, the rebuilding of Iran's peace movement, and proposed the formation of an international committee to mobilize global public opinion against the war, urging all progressive forces to unite in the face of the catastrophe.

India: Derrotas electorales y la contraofensiva del CPI(M) y el CPI

Por CPUSA International Department

En mayo, la coalición gobernante de Kerala liderada por los comunistas, el Frente Democrático de Izquierda (LDF), perdió el poder estatal. El sentimiento predominante de rechazo al oficialismo tras diez años de gobierno eclipsa los importantes logros alcanzados en el estado, entre ellos la erradicación de la pobreza y reformas de gran alcance en la administración local, la educación y los servicios de salud. Aun así, el LDF obtuvo el 37,6 % de los votos, lo que sugiere que es probable que vuelva a gobernar en el futuro. Las mayores pérdidas se produjeron en el estado de Bengala Occidental — anteriormente progresista—, donde el intolerante BJP se hizo con el control por primera vez en la historia del estado, imponiéndose al gobierno corrupto y prolongado del Trinamool Congress.

La firme resistencia de los partidos comunistas de la India tras estas derrotas fue inmediata, al igual que la represión contra el CPI y el CPI(M). En Bengala Occidental, el CPI(M) y el CPI lideran la resistencia frente a la eliminación masiva de nombres de los censos electorales y contra el acoso violento y el desalojo de los pequeños vendedores de alimentos en Calcuta.

Más de 2,7 millones de personas en todo el estado de Bengala Occidental se vieron privadas de su derecho al voto debido a una supresión de nombres sin precedentes llevada a cabo por la Comisión Electoral de la India. Los comunistas han impugnado esta medida ilegal y aguardan el fallo del Tribunal Supremo.

Inmediatamente después de las elecciones, la alianza BJP-Hindutva agredió y desplazó a vendedores ambulantes, quienes se encuentran entre los sectores más marginados de la ciudad. Asimismo, establecieron «centros de retención» para migrantes indocumentados que llegaban al estado. Jóvenes y estudiantes comunistas han luchado activamente para proteger estos pequeños negocios de la ofensiva, enfrentándose directamente en toda la ciudad a la violencia de grupos parapoliciales vinculados al BJP.

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Why Americans no longer trust the Supreme Court

By Patrick N. Chapin, J.D.

There is no objective way to measure whether the Supreme Court has become more political than judicial. But several observable trends have led scholars, journalists, and the public across the political spectrum to conclude that politics plays a larger role on the Court than in earlier periods.



Patterns in voting often fall along ideological lines in recent years. Abortion, presidential powers, gun rights, affirmative action, administrative law, and voting rights have frequently been decided 6-3, with the Court's "conservative" justices in the majority and its "liberal" justices in dissent. While unanimity remains common in routine cases, the politically prominent ones often divide predictably.

Since the 1980s, the confirmation process has become increasingly political. The Senate's rejection of Robert Bork, the controversial Clarence Thomas hearings, the Senate's refusal to consider Merrick Garland, and the rapid confirmation of Amy Coney Barrett shortly before the 2020 presidential election are all examples of how the process has become intensely partisan. These events have reinforced the perception that Supreme Court appointments are political contests.

Recent decisions involving presidential immunity, executive authority, abortion, administrative agencies, environmental regulation, and election law directly affect national politics. Despite the Court applying legal principles, the practical consequences are highly political.

Polling over the past several years has shown that confidence in the Court has fallen substantially compared to historical levels. Many Americans now view the Court through a partisan lens.

There are others, however, who argue the Court remains primarily judicial. Every Court decision and opinion relies on constitutional text, statutes, precedent, or judicial philosophy. Even sharply divided cases often contain lengthy legal analyses rather than political arguments. Cases less likely to grab headlines are frequently decided unanimously. There are also notable cross-ideological coalitions, with conservative and liberal justices occasionally joining together depending on the legal issue.

Many disagreements within the Court reflect competing methods of constitutional interpretation — originalism, textualism, living constitutionalism, and pragmatic or purposive approaches. Supporters argue these are genuine legal methodologies rather than merely political preferences.

History shows the Court has always been political in some sense.

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Why Americans no longer trust the Supreme Court

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

The Court has long issued decisions with enormous political consequences, including Dred Scott v. Sanford, Brown v. Board of Education, Bush v. Gore, and most recently, Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization. Each generated accusations the Court was acting politically.

Researchers have documented increasing ideological polarization among the justices over recent decades and generally agree that ideological blocs are more stable today than during much of the mid-20th century. The appointment process has become more polarized, and public perception has followed suit.

Whether the Court has become more political than judicial ultimately depends on how one defines those terms.

However, there is broad agreement that the appointment and confirmation process is more political than it was several decades ago. The Court is deciding more cases with major political implications, and ideological divisions among the justices are more visible in many high-profile cases.

Critics argue that ideology increasingly determines outcomes, while defenders contend that differing judicial philosophies lead to different interpretations of the Constitution. Both perspectives have support among respected legal scholars, and the available evidence does not conclusively establish that the Court has ceased functioning as a judicial institution. What is clear, however, is that the Court's legitimacy hinges on public trust — and that trust is eroding.

One year on, our nation's capital is still under military occupation

By People's World Editorial Collective



A year ago this week, National Guard troops rolled into Washington under orders from Donald Trump, who invoked crime rates that were actually at 30-year lows to justify putting soldiers on street corners in the capital of a country that has historically refused military rule at home.

Twelve months later, the "temporary" deployment has become a fixture of the city's landscape, extended by the administration all the way past the next general election of 2028 and on through Inauguration Day 2029. What began as an emergency has been made permanent by presidential decree.

The bill for Trump's order runs into the billions. What started out costing nearly $1 million a day has climbed past $3 million, with total costs projected between $2.5 and $3.4 billion by the time it's scheduled to end (if it ends).

That money could put a roof over the head of every unhoused person in D.C., along with all those in most of the states whose governors shipped Guard members to the capital. Instead, it buys soldiers standing post at Metro stops and lending muscle to ICE raids in Black and brown neighborhoods. It's the kind of work that no military training ever anticipated and which no democracy should require of its troops.

This occupation was never really about safety.

It was a testing ground, an attempt to find out how much of the capital could be placed under federal military control, how compliant could a Democratic mayor be made, how far could red-state governors be enlisted in occupying a majority-Black city before the country objected.

And D.C. is not alone: Armed Guard units remain stationed under the same 'crime' pretext in Memphis and New Orleans, both majority-Black cities, making clear this was never a one-city experiment but a template.

Meanwhile, the courts that ruled the deployments illegal have been simply ignored or overruled via appeals to judges more friendly to the administration. That is the shape fascism takes when it doesn't need to announce itself: a slow accumulation of facts on the ground that no ruling and no election can undo.

D.C. has not accepted this quietly.

Free DC, the coalition dedicated to protecting D.C. home rule, has organized demonstrations, initiated letter campaigns, and put pressure on the governors, Democratic and Republican alike, who send troops to Washington. Activists on the ground, like those with the D.C.-based Claudia Jones School for Political Education, have helped build the case for community control of police and D.C. statehood as the only lasting answers to a government that treats home rule as optional. The D.C. Council has publicly demanded governors recall their Guard units.

And everyday residents, 79% of whom oppose this occupation, have kept marching and insisting that a capital under military watch is not a capital that belongs to its people.

Their resistance matters because Washington was never meant to be a proving ground for authoritarian rule, and every city, from Los Angeles to Chicago, watching what happens here should understand that D.C.'s fight is theirs, too. A year of occupation is a year too many. Aug. 11, 2027, should serve not as another anniversary to observe but as a deadline to organize against—one that ends the military takeover of our capital.

Life of Bea Lumpkin celebrated in Chicago

By Brandon Chew

CHICAGO—"I'm so proud of you. Keep kicking ass." Those were the final words that the late Beatrice Lumpkin said to United Steelworkers President Roxanne Brown when the two met up for the last time recently.

But it is Bea Lumpkin whom all workers should be proud of, Brown told a crowd of nearly 200 people who gathered at the Chicago Teachers Union Center on Sunday, Aug. 9, for a celebration of Lumpkin's life.

A union organizer and academic who spent more than 90 years committed to struggling for a better world for working-class people, Lumpkin was lauded by labor leaders, elected officials, family, friends, and comrades.

"I wouldn't be where I am, and so many female labor leaders would not be where we are, without Bea Lumpkin," Brown said. "She paved paths for us that we didn't even know existed; she allowed boulders to be moved out of our way."

Known affectionately as Bea, Lumpkin was a former Chicago Public Schools teacher and math professor at Malcolm X College. She died in June at the age of 107. A lifelong member of the Communist Party USA, Lumpkin was a co-founder of the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

She also played a role in the "Save Our Jobs Committee" alongside her husband Frank, after Wisconsin Steel abruptly shut down its Chicago plant in an effort to cheat workers out of their last paychecks, pensions, and benefits. She remained active in civil rights and workers' rights activism well into her eleventh decade, having taken part in recent "No Kings" protests.

Sunday's event was moderated by Lumpkin's sons, Paul and John Lumpkin, and welcomed members of the CTU, the United Steelworkers (USW), and other unions; progressive politicians like Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson and Rep. Jesús "Chuy" Garcia; along with several of Bea's colleagues and loved ones.

"When she passed away, it was a sad day for us," John Lumpkin told attendees inside the CTU's Jacqueline B. Vaughn Hall. "It was a sad day for so many in this room and around the country who got to know Bea. But today is not just a day to be sad. Today is a day to rejoice. We got 107 years, and we have a lot to celebrate."

John thanked the CTU for providing "one of the many homes for Bea" and for being a place of support after Lumpkin's "quote unquote retiring." He then introduced CTU President Stacy Davis Gates, who said Lumpkin lived a "visionary" and "transformative" life.

"The justice we seek, the equity we deserve, and the liberation we are going to win comes in struggle," Davis Gates said. "It comes in solidarity, and it comes in an uncompromising fashion for our values and our humanity.

"I want to tell you that Bea's life cannot be remembered in caricature.



It must be remembered in the power of her action, the power of her faith, and the power of her resilience.

"I am humbled and honored to have you all here to remember a woman that helped us build the most powerful union in this country, a woman of high moral integrity and character. We should all be so blessed to hear the remembrances of our sister, our leader, our fearless fire in justice, equity, and liberation."

Similar sentiments were expressed by the country's top labor leader, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler.

"Like so many women in labor, I walk the path Bea helped build. She and the sisters who came together in 1974 to found the Coalition of Labor Union issued a declaration to the world: We weren't going back. Without Bea and that generation, I wouldn't be here," Shuler said. "She pushed open those doors and then held them open for the rest of us."

The AFL-CIO president said Lumpkin stands as an inspiration. "She lived her values. Equality, solidarity, and justice were in her bones, and she believed in action." Shuler told attendees, "The things Bea fought for are under attack, and the greatest tribute to her legacy is to carry her work forward."

Lumpkin's son Paul took to the stage to thank those in attendance and noted that Aug. 3, which would have been Lumpkin's 108th birthday, was officially "Bea Lumpkin Day" in the City of Chicago, thanks to a declaration from Mayor Johnson.

"I am truly honored to be one of two mayors that Bea actually got along with," Johnson jokingly said of Lumpkin, calling her a "towering figure in the labor movement." He added that Lumpkin was an "unrelenting advocate" for fully funding schools and public institutions and serves as "an inspiration for all of us."

"As you see and witness fascism at its most potent state that you've seen in a generation, I don't think it's a coincidence that the very areas in which the Trump administration is attacking were the demands of the formerly enslaved: education, housing, healthcare, transportation, good-paying jobs," Johnson said.

"Those were literally all the areas in which Beatrice Lumpkin was fighting for. She was the living definition of what it means to be a devoted human being.

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"She believed every generation has a responsibility to leave the world more just than the way we found it," the mayor added. "That legacy she leaves with us today. So now more than ever, we have to hold true to not just her memory but to what she fought for."

Shortly after Johnson's remarks and a brief musical performance, Roberta Wood, the former secretary-treasurer of the Communist Party USA and a longtime friend of Lumpkin's, spoke about how Bea always made sure to bring a "revolutionary plus" to everything she did.

"Bea shared the 'plus' that capitalism can't be reformed, it can't be made nicer because it generates exploitation, domination, and division. Her vision was a vision she shared of a different society, a different economic system: socialism," Wood said to applause.

Wood said Lumpkin believed that from "every continent of the world, human innovation and invention had escalated human productivity to the point where it's now objectively possible to feed, to house, and cure every human on earth."

She went on to tell a story of when she first visited Lumpkin's home in Chicago and complained that her flashlight had malfunctioned at work.

"She quickly ducked into her room and came back with a soldering iron and repaired the broken connection.

She said, 'I always keep a soldering iron in my top dresser," Wood said to laughs from the crowd.

"You know, most of us keep our jewelry, some odds and ends and our underwear in the top drawer, things we use every day. But of course, Bea kept her soldering irons."

"And workers, we love our tools, don't we?" Wood continued. "And like all workers, Bea used the tools passed on to her from previous generations. And I'm not just talking soldering irons here.

"The tools Bea employed and refined, as workers do, were unions, books, strikes, petitions, demonstrations, picket lines, solidarity, stories, marches on Springfield, marches on Washington....

"She kept these tools in her top drawer, and now she leaves them to us to improve on and to wield collectively together. So, let's take up the tools that she and her generation have refined and passed down to us. Let's keep them in the top drawer and let's use them every day."

Wood closed by saying that a moment of silence "doesn't make sense" for Lumpkin, because "Bea was a badass revolutionary." Instead, Wood called for a "moment of outrage, a moment of noise, a moment of determination, and a moment on our feet" before leading the crowd through the following chants: "We're loud! We're proud! We always bring a crowd!" and "We make, good trouble! There's joy in the struggle!"

The price of South Africa's 'March and March' anti-immigrant movement

By Emile Schepers



On June 30, thousands of demonstrators in major South African cities, especially Durban and Johannesburg, took to the streets to demand that supposedly undocumented migrants from other African countries be expelled from South Africa to make their jobs and business opportunities available to South African citizens.

Although the demonstrations were billed as being peaceful, there was violent disorder in a number of places. Demonstrators broke into small businesses, called "spaza shops" in South Africa, harassed and even assaulted the shopkeepers, and engaged in looting and vandalism.

Persons believed to be from other African countries were accosted in the streets or in their homes by rioters demanding that they prove their legal right to be in South Africa. There were a few deaths in these incidents, which the police had a hard time controlling.

How successful was this "March and March" action? The government reported that it had deported about 53,000 undocumented foreigners, mostly from the extremely poor nation of Malawi, and several thousand more people, fearing for their personal safety, crossed the borders to get out of South Africa. People who left, no doubt, included non-citizens legally in the country as well as undocumented people.

But what was the impact within South Africa? Will the expulsion of this modest number of people from other African countries help to alleviate poverty and unemployment within South Africa?

Consider:
South Africa is the most developed of the sub-Saharan African countries, with a population of 63 million. The total labor force in South Africa is 25 million. In 2026, however, South Africa's unemployment rate is 32.7%.

This means that there are about 9.4 million unemployed people in South Africa, in spite of the nation's wealth and relatively high level of development. Many of the unemployed are young people.

Before March and March, there were about two to three million foreign workers in South Africa. The importation of thousands of workers by South African mines and other industries has continued on an enormous scale for a very long time, ever since diamonds and gold were discovered more than a century ago.

The expulsion of 53,000 people by the government and several thousand more who were driven out by fear of violence is, obviously, not going to solve problems of unemployment and poverty in South Africa.

The organizers of March and March are, in most cases, well-educated people. They surely are aware of these statistics and their implications. So, what's their agenda?

On Nov. 4 of this year, South Africa will hold elections for the National Assembly and also provincial and local legislatures. At the last elections, in 2024, the African National Congress (ANC) lost its parliamentary majority and was forced into an unwieldy coalition arrangement with a number of other parties, including ones well to the right of it.

The historic Tripartite Alliance of the ANC, the South African Communist Party (SACP), and the Coalition of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) is no longer running the country.

This state of affairs results from multiple corruption scandals during the present administration, as well as administrative problems.

To give just one example, last year there was a huge problem with electrical generation, which led to a large number of "load shedding" incidents, that is, the deliberate shutting down of electrical service to avoid more serious unplanned blackouts.

One of the reactions to this state of affairs is that the SACP has announced that, for the first time since liberation from apartheid in 1994, it will be running local legislative candidates under its own name and not jointly with the ANC on Nov. 4.

Also, the Communist Party and other left groups held a "Conference of the Left" in Boksburg, Gauteng Province, at the end of May, with 100 political, labor, and other groups participating. The ANC leadership declined to attend and denounced this activity. Also, the Communists and labor groups sharply denounced the March and March activities as divisive and a distraction from the real problems of the working class.

At the diplomatic level, South Africa's relationships with other African countries have taken a hit. Ghana and Nigeria have protested attacks on their citizens during the March and March disturbances, which appear to have caused several deaths. There is talk of demanding that the South African government pay indemnities for losses incurred by citizens of other countries.

None of these are good things to be happening while people like Donald Trump and Elon Musk have Africa on their menus.

Black New Yorkers find deeds to their homes being stolen

By Michael O'Dea

NEW YORK—The prospect of having a family home and building generational wealth for decades only to discover that the name on the deed was conspicuously changed is a nightmare scenario most could never fathom. However, this problem, known as deed theft, has become a reality for many New Yorkers, including Carmella Charrington, a longtime Bedford-Stuyvesant resident in Brooklyn, New York.

For many years activists in the movement for housing have seen massive construction of low income public housing as a major long-term part of the solution to the housing crisis. In the Bedford Stuyvesant neighborhood of Broolyn, however, people are now fighting not just for low income public housing but against deed theft which is contributing to a sharp and immediate worsening of the city's housing crisis.

Deed theft is a particularly pernicious and predatory housing problem. It occurs when "a thief takes the title to a home without the homeowner's knowledge or approval." It typically takes place in the form of forgery or fraud.

Charrington's father, who at the time lived in Georgia, appeared on the deed. Though he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2021, his conservator allowed him to sign away the rights to the home in 2024.



In April of 2026, community members and organizations gathered to protest the eviction order, among them the self-identified democratic socialist city council member, Chi Ossé. Not long after the police arrived and Ossé was slammed to the ground and arrested.

While in jail his office stated, "Black displacement is happening right now in Bed-Stuy, and Carmella is one of many Black homeowners battling deed theft in Brooklyn. For months, our office has pushed for an eviction moratorium for homeowners facing deed theft.

"These protections are the bare minimum, and families cannot wait any longer. Not another Black homeowner should have their home stolen. Until deed theft ends, we will fight every single day."

Between 2013 and 2023, New York City received 3,500 deed theft complaints. These complaints have increased more rapidly with 517 complaints in 2025.

New York homes collectively worth at least $400 million each year are at risk of deed theft. The most targeted areas have been in central Brooklyn and Southeast Queens.

Scammers often target vulnerable homeowners such as seniors, immigrants, and those in historically Black neighborhoods. Deed theft has a cumulative, negative impact on social mobility and generational wealth which exacerbates economic and racial inequality.

While some cases have been challenged in court successfully, deed theft was not made a felony until 2024. In April of 2026, Mayor Zohran Mamdani created the Office of Deed Theft Prevention through executive order.

This office aims to educate homeowners to help prevent deed theft by conducting public outreach, promoting tools that alert owners to changes in property records and supporting investigations and enforcement efforts among other things.

However, some activists and community organizations believe these are just stepping stones in tackling the issue of deed theft. Evangeline Byars, a leading organizer with the People's Coalition to Stop Deed Theft, spoke with People's World to discuss her experiences organizing against deed theft to elucidate the problem and offer some solutions that the Bed-Stuy community deserves.

People's World: When did you notice deed theft becoming a problem? And was there a particular experience that got you involved in organizing?
Evangeline Byars: I've always known it was a problem, but I didn't know exactly what the problem was and the factors that enabled deed theft to occur. I am a labor organizer at NYC Transit. I am in Transit Workers Union, Local 100. My organizing committee is the Stronger Together caucus and we opened our organizing meetings to the community because we saw that people didn't have anyone in elected office representing them and during our first meeting deed theft victims showed up at How to Beat the Machine organizing meeting, and we grew from there.

How did the People's Coalition to Stop Deed Theft come together? And how are you seeking to build it out?
Evangeline Byars: It came together through several different groups. The coalition split from the Black Homeowners Preservation Coalition. It continued on with a variety of groups, forming a multiracial coalition, although deed theft primarily impacts people of color. Since then, the organization has continued building under that umbrella, establishing chapters in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens, where deed theft is heavily concentrated.

It is also expanding across New York State after receiving calls from outside New York City and even outside the state. The coalition now has chapters in New Jersey, Georgia and sees itself as not just a local effort, but part of a growing national movement, although its most impactful work is currently being done in New York City.

Is deed theft part of gentrification which also drives Black and working class homelessness? Why is deed theft particularly targeted at Bed Stuy residents?
Evangeline Byars: Gentrification came as political betrayal. 'Gentrification' is too broad of a term and means different things to different people. The beautification of the community comes with predatory practices, banks, and elected officials who worked along with them to create the problems and conditions that we are experiencing today. So we do not allow the narrative to place the blame on gentrification because many of the so-called 'gentrifiers' are out on the front line with us. This crisis stems from Black political betrayal in Bedford Stuyvesant, as that is who the leadership is composed of, and gentrification is the by-product of this. Black homes are being taken en masse.

We just started about a year ago. People have been raising the issue for a very long time, however, this is a major part of the housing crisis and Black and Brown displacement. There was, to say the least, insufficient on-the-ground work from Black elected officials. Through court watches, for example, people had to take up the work that elected officials neglected, especially in the 56th Assembly District that encompasses Bed Stuy and parts of Crown Heights. This practice continues through political betrayal. Elected officials are supposed to be the gatekeepers of the community's well-being, and many were and are missing.

How has the Mamdani administration responded and what else would you like them to do?
They implemented the Office of Deed Theft Prevention, but what we really need is enforcement. Deed theft continues to be treated as a civil matter, when it's actually a crime. Even the Attorney General who we are critical of, has said it's a crime while reports to her office have risen 240%. Right now, if someone steals your home, you can't call 911 and get a police report saying your home has been stolen. Deed Theft is the only crime where police do not take a report. Let that sink in.

We have consistently requested from the Attorney General's Office and Mayor's Office that we want a meeting with Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch because her officers have never been trained on deed theft, mortgage fraud, or these kinds of property crimes. Law enforcement doesn't know what deed theft is, and they don't know enough about it. As a result, they're helping fraudsters unlawfully evict people because they don't recognize the crime and what's happening. We believe there is other criminal activity going on. The NYPD is not supposed to execute these evictions, but it's happening all across the city. The NYPD are standing guard as deed thieves are drilling people's doors off. The NYPD often arrests the lawful owner of record, and this has led to the criminalization of homeowners.

We're asking for a $10 million commitment from Mayor Mamdani to address deed theft because we've identified that the biggest need for victims is funding for legal representation and to adhere to the recommendations from the Commission on Racial Equity.

The people most affected are between the ages of 62 and 100. They're being evicted, abused, and often have nowhere else to go. They need criminal investigations, supportive housing, and emergency housing, but they're still being completely overlooked. We're looking for that $10 million commitment in the next city budget.

On the legislative side, Sen.Jabari Brisport is working on a statute of limitations bill. Right now it goes back 20 years, but we believe it should go back even farther. However, bureaucracy is everywhere. We want a time frame that is more than twenty years included so people can reopen old cases and finally have them heard. Twenty years isn't enough. It doesn't do us justice.

Senator Brisport has a package of four bills that addresses both the civil side of deed theft and the criminal side, including how fraud is investigated. We want FAPA fully enforced and support a private right of action bill and the ACRIS Bill to pass so that any changes to a property owner's deed will be alerted immediately and not 30 days after the change or transfer has occurred.

We want to repeal the bona fide purchaser law that is found in The Home Equity Theft Prevention Act ("HETPA"). As of right now, if someone buys a home that was obtained through deed theft, the victim doesn't automatically get their property back due to the bona fide purchaser provision in HETPA. These crimes continue to exist because many elected officials are complicit. They keep doubling down on these unjust laws to protect fraudsters and the banks because those are their donors.

Throughout our discussion, Byars argued that deed theft is an issue because of what she described as political betrayal, not just young people moving into new neighborhoods. She argued that politicians are complicit with developers, and the real estate industry more broadly.

The People's Coalition to Stop Deed Theft's organizing around this important housing issue raises serious questions about the totality of this housing crisis in New York City: What political forces are benefiting from the status quo?

For additional analysis of deed theft in New York City, we spoke with Brooklyn Crawford, a Bed-Stuy resident and supporter of the movement tackling the issue and a member of the Brooklyn club of the CPUSA.

People's World: As a Bed-Stuy resident, how do you understand and explain how deed theft worsens the unaffordability and unavailability of housing?
Brooklyn Crawford: I understand deed theft as it relates to the way that housing generally, under capitalism, is treated as a commodity instead of being treated like a human right. In ourcurrent system, housing is something to sell and profit from, rather than something that is guaranteed to everyone. When housing is profitable, it only makes sense for rents to be raised, and for scammers and thieves to try to steal valuable assets for their own financial benefit. If housing were guaranteed as a human right, the incentive to profit from displacement, inflated housing prices, and deed theft would be dramatically reduced.

What do Communists think about home ownership for personal use?
Brooklyn Crawford: Communists distinguish personal and private property. We believe that personal property, those things that you use and need, are yours to keep-, your clothes, your home. Contrary to popular belief, Communists don't believe in taking those things away from people.

Private property, in the Communist sense, refers to property that's owned primarily to generate profit. Think of a landlord who 'owns' 30 buildings in which he does not live. Or shareholders who 'own' a factory they have never taken a step in. We believe that private property should be abolished, and that the buildings, lands, and factories that the people use, that the people work, and live in – should be owned by the public.

We don't believe in taking away people's individual homes. We just think that the 'means of production' (the factories, machines, land) and large-scale housing should be democratically owned by the people. We're the ones who use them!

How would Communists tackle the issue of deed theft in the short term and long term?
Brooklyn Crawford: In the short term, we'd support immediate protections for homeowners and tenants. That means stronger enforcement against deed theft, free legal assistance for victims, stopping evictions, expanding the right to counsel, and ensuring people aren't displaced. You have landlords kicking out families from homes they've lived in for generations, just so they can sell the building or rent it out. It's greed, plain and simple.

In the long term, the goal is to guarantee housing as a human right, of course! That means expanding high-quality public housing and removing housing from speculation and corporate profiteering. The less housing functions as a pathway for people to get rich, the less incentive exists for predatory practices like deed theft.

As I understand it, Communists like certain aspects of Zohran Mamdani's platform but have criticized his ideas around social housing? What is the importance of this distinction between social housing and public housing?
Brooklyn Crawford: It's important to distinguish the two because while they may sound similar, they most definitely are not. Communists support public housing. Public housing is publicly owned, permanently affordable, and is democratically accountable to the residents who live there. This is important.

Social housing, on the other hand, is often done alongside non-profit developers and corporations who have a financial stake in their investment. This only can result in real estate markets deciding our rents. On profits deciding our futures. Often when we hear about social housing it's marketed as "building more affordable housing," but we have to ask- affordable for whom?

Public housing should be fully funded, expanded, and preserved. As Communists, the fight to save public housing is a major struggle that we insist is essential for a better future.

Conclusion
While deed theft may represent one of the most egregious forms of housing fraud, it is a particular piece of a larger whole. It exposes a key contradiction in the housing struggle. Allowing housing to function as a speculative commodity is directly at odds with prioritizing homeownership for individual families.

Black homeownership has been an arduous fight for centuries in the United States. A multitude of racist practices, such as redlining, racial steering, predatory lending, exclusionary zoning, and algorithmic bias, have created persistent barriers to Black homeownership.

It's clear that homeownership is one of the major ways that working-class Americans have been able to build generational wealth. However, much of this was lost during the 2008 housing crisis. The great recession saw half of Black Americans lose about 25% of their wealth with a third losing up to 50% of their wealth.

As class lines sharpen along the issue of housing, the question is not just about deed theft but broader housing politics. We must analyze why our for-profit housing system allows such practices to flourish.

Due to the vacuum left by institutional betrayal, we are already seeing formations on the left take up the cause. Grassroots organizations like the People's Coalition to Stop Deed Theft are stepping in to advance the fight for housing justice. Alternative political parties, such as the Communist Party USA, are organizing directly with affected communities to save public housing and ultimately end for-profit housing.

The fight against deed theft is one crucial aspect of the larger housing struggle: Will housing be a commodity that is to be bought and sold for profit? Or should it serve the needs of the human community?

NAACP panel says redistricting losses make state elections even more decisive

By Mark Gruenberg

CHICAGO—The looming losses this November due to Republican-engineered congressional redistricting nationwide emphasize the importance of voting for progressive and pro-worker candidates for down-ballot offices, especially state legislators, a panel of political pros says.

And since the U.S. Supreme Court has gutted the federal Voting Rights Act as well as the majority-minority districts it once encouraged, states that "flip" could step in with their own versions of the historic 1965 legislation, the group added. Some already have.

The panel during the NAACP convention in Chicago last week addressed the redistricting issue, which arose thanks to GOP-engineered gerrymandering, especially in states like Florida and Texas, but also in North Carolina, Missouri, Alabama, Tennessee, and Louisiana.

All those states—already heavily GOP-gerrymandered on the state level—produced new congressional maps that will cost a net reduction of at least three members of the Congressional Black Caucus, the group of lawmakers who have been the strongest supporters of pro-worker legislation on Capitol Hill.

And the carnage could have been worse for people of color and for workers, if not for counter-action in other states. Californians, pushed by organized labor and communities of color, redrew their congressional map to offset the loss of five pro-worker lawmakers in Texas.

The congressional losses originated more than a decade ago, the panel's moderator, podcaster Bakari Sellers, pointed out. In the 2010 midterm elections, during Democratic President Barack Obama's first term, civil rights organizations concentrated on senatorial and gubernatorial races. So did the AFL-CIO. That was an incomplete strategy, she argued.



"We lost 1,000 state legislators and 12 governors" nationwide, Sellers noted. And after the 2010 census, it was the winners—the racists and the Republicans—who drew new state legislative and congressional district lines. Those gerrymandered majorities have been cemented in since.

The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act would restore the federal Voting Rights Act's clout, which the right-wing GOP-named U.S. Supreme Court majority has eliminated. And congressional Democrats also pushed the For the People Act, a comprehensive pro-voting rights plan, which included a ban on gerrymandering. It went nowhere.

The current ruling Republicans are countering with their so-called "Save America Act, "designed to impose the most-onerous voting restrictions since the heyday of Jim Crow. The House passed it, but the Senate hasn't. So Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., is trying to sneak pieces of it into other legislation, including pending budget, military, and money bills.

With all that in mind, the panel of Sellers, Virginia's first-ever Black State Assembly Speaker, Don Scott, D-Portsmouth, and NAACP counsel Kristin Clarke delved into what Scott called "a conspiracy." But, he said, "we recognize what they are up to."

So did Virginia voters. In their own referendum, they redrew the Old Dominion's map to give progressives and Democrats eight U.S. House seats, leave a ninth as leaning Democratic, and the GOP two. The Virginia U.S. House delegation is now 6-5 Democratic. But the state Supreme Court, on a 4-3 party-line vote, sided with complaining Republicans and tossed the results out.

"In Virginia, because of Texas, we made a decision to do mid-decade redistricting," Scott elaborated. That was possible only because in the prior state legislative elections, progressives and Democrats went from narrow to overwhelming majorities.

"This was Han Solo winning but then The Empire struck back," Scott said, using a Star Wars analogy.

Fighting state by state and lower office by lower office becomes even more important, Clarke pointed out, because in its last redistricting ruling, where Republicans successfully challenged Louisiana's second majority-Black district, the court also closed off most private challenges to gerrymandered maps. Only challenges to maps crafted with racist intent survive, and those districts are unconstitutional.

That leaves challenges in the hands of a Trump Justice Department hostile to minorities, and by implication, to workers —or in the hands of voters, whose massive turnout could evict hostile state lawmakers from their seats.

Another key weapon, Clarke added, is publicity, by "convening emergency town halls" to expose the racist intent of such gerrymandered maps.

That can put enough pressure on lawmakers even in some deep-red states to halt the remaps. It did, Clarke noted, in South Carolina and Georgia. It also worked in deep-red Indiana, where GOP state senators revolted against Trump's pressure. It didn't work in Tennessee, the panelists admitted.

There, the state's sole majority-minority district—and its sole Democratic-held seat, out of nine—was split into thirds, drowning Memphis's Black majority in a sea of rural Republican white votes. The NAACP is challenging that gerrymander in court as unconstitutionally racist, Clarke said.

Nonpartisan analysts call the Tennessee legislature, with GOP supermajorities, the most-gerrymandered in the U.S. A solution Clarke pushed: "Turning out this fall and voting like hell."

Advocates for honest redistricting, rather than gerrymandering, should also campaign for U.S. Supreme Court reform, she said. Clarke suggested term limits for justices. That would force the oldest justice, far-right Clarence Thomas—who succeeded civil rights icon Thurgood Marshall—off the court.

Clarke also warned against racist fear-mongering from the right "with false myths to keep us at home" and not vote. "Are we going to see ICE at the polls?" she asked, of reports that Trump's violent and vicious Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents would "monitor" the elections.

"We should resist that," Clarke added. "The only thing louder and more powerful than them is us."

Stop 'de-documentation': TPS for Haitian workers!

By People's World



TPS for Haitian Workers!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators to demand they immediately pass S.4814 to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to designate Haiti for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). The companion bill, H.R. 1689, just passed the House with bi-partisan support.

Stop the humanitarian and economic crisis for families and communities across this country caused by Trump's termination of TPS to 330,000 Haitians!

End the sweeping "de-documentation" campaign against Haitian workers, which is hurting all workers and their communities!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

LABOR NEWS

Sudan: Communist Party denounces war economy and calls for accountability

By CPUSA International Department

The Sudanese Communist Party has continued to focus on the devastating impact of the ongoing conflict in Sudan. In recent statements, the party sharply criticized the 2026 emergency budget, describing it as opaque, militarized, and harmful to the population amid worsening economic conditions.

Throughout March, the party has highlighted rising prices, collapsing wages, and the broader social crisis, while also demanding accountability for atrocities committed during the war. Editorials in the party's press and statements on its official channels have underscored the role of reactionary forces in deepening the crisis and called for a political solution that prioritizes the interests of the Sudanese people over military and sectarian agendas.

Cuba: El Partido Comunista avanza en las reformas económicas en medio del cerco imperialista

Por CPUSA International Department

El Partido Comunista de Cuba celebró en junio una reunión crucial de su Comité Central, presidida por el Primer Secretario Miguel Díaz-Canel, para debatir y perfeccionar un conjunto integral de transformaciones económicas y sociales.

La reunión, que tuvo lugar en medio de graves amenazas y dificultades derivadas del bloqueo estadounidense, reafirmó no obstante el compromiso del partido con lo que denominó «reformas necesarias, manteniendo al mismo tiempo el sistema socialista».

El primer ministro Manuel Marrero Cruz presentó 176 propuestas, elaboradas mediante un proceso de consulta en el que se examinaron 390 sugerencias; de ellas, se aceptó el 66,7 %. Las reformas se centran en «modernizar la economía» —preservando la propiedad estatal en sectores estratégicos— y, simultáneamente, en ampliar la «flexibilidad económica».

Las propuestas clave incluyen:

• Ampliar la autonomía de las empresas estatales, incluyendo la libertad para realizar cualquier actividad legal y una mayor descentralización en la fijación de precios.

Las reformas eliminarían las escalas salariales estandarizadas en el sector estatal, sustituyéndolas por un salario mínimo ajustado a la inflación y negociado entre empleadores, trabajadores y sindicatos.

• Aprobar las solicitudes pendientes para empresas no estatales, eliminar el límite de 100 empleados, permitir que los particulares sean propietarios de varias empresas privadas y ampliar las estructuras empresariales legales. Se autorizaría la creación de micro, pequeñas y medianas empresas (mipymes) en el sector agrícola por primera vez.

• Crear un centro tecnológico nacional que integre hardware, software e inteligencia artificial, con sistemas salariales competitivos para profesionales del sector tecnológico y una apertura selectiva de la infraestructura digital a la inversión extranjera.

Las reformas se presentaron como compatibles con la preservación del socialismo, guiadas por el principio de «hacer lo necesario para preservar lo esencial». Raúl Castro subrayó que las mejores ideas surgen del debate e incluso del desacuerdo, y abogó por una amplia participación para perfeccionar las medidas y lograr el consenso necesario para su implementación efectiva.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

August 22, 2026

WFTU calls for day of action against imperialist war and militarism

By C. J. Atkins

Corporate Democrats have found their enemy, and it isn't Trump. It's the socialists in their own party.

Third Way, the corporate-funded think tank that has spent three decades policing the Democratic Party's left flank, announced this month that it's dedicating $15 million between now and 2028 to opposition research, polling, and messaging aimed squarely at the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA).

The trigger was Michigan, where DSA-backed physician Abdul El-Sayed upset establishment favorite Rep. Haley Stevens in the state's U.S. Senate primary, and where Donavan McKinney unseated incumbent Rep. Shri Thanedar in the 13th District.

Third Way President Jonathan Cowan did not mince words. DSA, he told *The Nation*, poses "a mortal danger" to the Democratic Party, and he dismissed El-Sayed's coalition politics as the "DSA dodge."

Co-founder Matt Bennett was blunter still with Fox News: "We believe the DSA poses a serious threat to Democrats. Their ideas are dangerous, and their politics are toxic. If we are to beat MAGA Republicans, we cannot allow our party to be defined by radicals."

DSA National Co-chair Megan Romer wasn't impressed. "$15 million to tell working-class people that a better world isn't possible?" she responded. "We believe in people power, and our vision for a better future is winning. We will keep building our movement, and they will waste their money."

The Democrats' long civil war

The Third Way vs. DSA feud is the latest skirmish in a Democratic civil war stretching back to 1985, when a cadre of consultants founded the Democratic Leadership Council in the wake of Walter Mondale's landslide loss to Ronald Reagan.

The DLC's founders explicitly built their project against "movement-based" coalition politics, including Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition, which they saw as a liability that had to be defeated.



Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton chaired the DLC before riding its "opportunity, responsibility, community" formula into the White House, and the "third way" brand went global from there, exported to Tony Blair's New Labour in Britain.

The DLC and its international allies said they were going "beyond left and right," but the third way was often less of a governing philosophy and more of a branding operation. It was a strategy for shutting down the left and social democracy by rebranding neoliberalism as "progressive."

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Third Way vs. DSA: Corporate Democrats declare war on socialism

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
The DLC folded in 2011, but Third Way, founded in 2005, picked up the standard—fighting Bernie Sanders in 2016. Today, Third Way is fighting Mamdani, El-Sayed, and the wider left.

The pressure is already working at the top of the party. On Aug. 16, House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries used a Meet the Press appearance to distance himself from both Medicare for All and DSA, declaring, "I don't support the DSA agenda as has been articulated by the DSA itself," and confirming he no longer even co-sponsors the Medicare for All bill he backed for years in Congress.

Class or race?

In some ways, though, it's a consistent line for Jeffries, who told *The Atlantic* magazine back in 2021, "I'm a Black progressive Democrat concerned with addressing racial and social and economic injustice with the fierce urgency of now.... There will never be a moment where I bend the knee to hard-left democratic socialism."

He argued that "Black progressives...tend to tackle issues first and foremost with an understanding that systemic racism has been in the soil of America for over 400 years," whereas, "hard-left progressives tend to view the defining problem in America as one that is anchored in class."

When the party's top elected Democrat and its best-funded think tank are reading from the same script, it's clear that the DLC's old project hasn't gone away but rather continues under a new name.

What's notable, though, is how much right-wing Democrats have adjusted their racial framing. Back in the 1980s and '90s, when they were trying to undermine support for Jackson and the Rainbow and move away from minority and urban voters, they peddled coded "tough on crime" rhetoric and talked about going after "welfare queens."

These were intended as signals to suburban and Southern white voters who'd been shifting rightward to the Republicans that they could still vote Democrat.

Today, Third Way uses a different vocabulary, casting Black politics as centered on race while oversimplifying "hard-left" politics as a white preoccupation with class.

Does a choice really have to be made between race and class, though? Has American history not shown from its very beginnings that there is no separating class exploitation and white supremacy?

Activists and theorists like Claudia Jones, Henry Winston, Angela Davis, W. E. B. Du Bois, Gus Hall, Victor Perlo, and others showed repeatedly the unbreakable link between class struggle and the fight against racism in this country.

To truly understand U.S. capitalism, you can't pick just one.

Ideological distortions

Third Way and its allied consultants, however, have worked hard to cast socialist politics as a white, out-of-touch phenomenon that Black voters supposedly reject in favor of "pragmatic" centrism. The data says otherwise.

In Pew Research Center surveys conducted in 2022, Black Americans were the group with the most negative view of capitalism—54% negative to 40% positive. Simultaneously, they were the group of Americans most likely to view socialism positively, 52% to 42%. Nearly eight in ten said the economic system needs either major changes or a complete overhaul.

Third Way's own research on such ideological questions undercuts its talking points further: The group's "Voters Are Moderates" memo concedes that only 45% of Black voters identify as ideologically moderate. That means a majority do not, a detail Third Way buries rather than leads with when the demographic in question is the one most skeptical of capitalism in the country.

Electoral results back up the polling. DSAer Zohran Mamdani won more than 60% of the Black vote in his New York City mayoral race, notching up to over 80% among Black youth. Michigan State Rep. and DSA member McKinney beat an incumbent in a majority-Black district, and Janeese Lewis George won a D.C. mayoral primary over a centrist favorite.

These outcomes continue a long tradition of Black left politics, from Harold Washington's insurgent Chicago mayoralty to the congressional careers of Ron Dellums, John Conyers, and Barbara Lee, who built power by fusing Black leadership with progressive left politics.

The other consistent thread is red-baiting, and Third Way is hardly alone in deploying it. President Donald Trump—caught up in the fever of midterm madness—has spent this summer branding DSA members "hardcore, godless communists" and calling communism a bigger threat than Pearl Harbor.

Communist Party USA Co-chair Rossana Cambron zeroed in on the reason for all the anti-communist and anti-socialist hype: "MAGA is going to lose the midterms, and Trump's getting desperate."

Co-chair Joe Sims made the same point about the conflation driving both MAGA and Third Way attacks, telling *The Daily Show*: "Any effort to put forward an idea of a more equitable distribution of wealth is labeled socialist or communist.... It's called red-baiting."

Trump operatives and Third Way strategists use nearly identical language.

Trump calls socialists a mortal threat to the country, Cowan labels DSA a "mortal danger" to the Democratic Party. Both MAGA and corporate Democrats have concluded that a working-class movement demanding redistribution is their real enemy.

And in case anyone thinks the "corporate Democrats" label is slander, we need only to check out Third Way's donor base (details available here and here, plus an admission from Third Way itself here). On the list are Bill Gates's Breakthrough Energy, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Wall Street executives, and corporate consultancies like Arabella Advisors.

Third Way and the centrist Dems it supports present themselves as a grassroots faction defending "electability" against the extremist left. The truth, however, is that this is capital defending its hold on the Democratic Party, using the same tactics and vocabulary as the party's opponents on the right.

Socialism will of course survive Third Way's $15 million onslaught; left politics have faced down far more formidable opponents in the past. The open question is how long corporate Democrats can keep pretending "pragmatism" and capitulation to the right are the same thing as winning—especially when voters and mass movements keep proving the opposite to be true.

Who really "messed up" Haiti?

By Emile Schepers



The Trump administration is in the process of ending Temporary Protected Status of some 350,000 Haitian refugees in the United States, and thousands of Syrians are soon to be given the same rough treatment.

The Haitians are already losing their jobs, and those in Springfield, Ohio, are being fitted with ankle monitors to prevent them from evading deportation. Springfield, of course, is the city where the Haitian community not so long ago was cruelly slandered by President Donald Trump for supposedly kidnapping people's pet dogs and cats and eating them.

Also, Haitians are mostly Black people, and Syrians are mostly Muslims. For Trump and gang, this makes them excellent targets for racist demagogy.

For the Haitians specifically, their situation has not inspired nearly enough solidarity from the rest of the U.S. population. But their imminent removal from the United States has caused consternation among the residents and staff in elder care homes, rehabilitation centers, and assisted living facilities.

Evidently, a large proportion of the TPS holders from Haiti, many of whom arrived here after the disastrous 2010 earthquake in that country, have been working as caregivers in such institutions. By all accounts, they are much appreciated, respected, and loved by the elderly and sick people they tend to.

Administrators in assisted living, home care, and senior citizens homes are horrified because they are about to lose thousands of skilled, experienced, and respected employees—and nobody, least of all the Trump administration, seems to have any idea of where to find people to replace them.

The government always says these mass deportations will make it possible for "genuine Americans" to take their jobs, but what is the plan? That kind of work is hard, poorly paid, and takes training and skill. And in cases wherein the immigrant care workers are dealing with very sick and incapacitated elderly people, disruptions of care can be dangerous.

So, new programs for recruiting and training such workers will have to be set up at warp speed, and there will have to be large expenditure of money for this purpose. Don't hold your breath, folks. Trump and MAGA do not care about that sort of thing.

The slander about eating people's pets has not stopped completely, either. And a further attack on the Haitian population consists of the refrain "they messed up their own country, make them go back and fix it instead of messing up ours." This is pure unadulterated racism, of course.

"They" messed up their own country? This perspective shows the abysmal ignorance of history on the part of those who invoke it.

Haiti was the second country in the Western Hemisphere (after the United States) to win its independence from a European colonial power, freeing itself from France in 1804. Vast numbers of Haitians had been brutally exploited enslaved workers in French-owned sugar plantations, and they were only able to free themselves through a hard and bloody struggle.

And even after their victory, French Emperor Napoleon I sent a fresh army to subjugate them and restore slavery. But the Haitian fighters defeated that force, too. The newly independent United States of America did not help the Haitians to achieve their liberation, mostly because many of the U.S. leaders were also masters and exploiters of slaves and feared that the Haitian example would disturb their bottom line. Only in 1862, during the U.S. Civil War, did the United States finally establish full diplomatic relations with Haiti.

CONTINUE FROM PAGE THREE

Meanwhile, in 1825, the ultra-reactionary French king Charles X sent a fleet of warships to Haiti with a demand that the Haitian government indemnify the former French owners of property in the island for all their losses, including the value of "their" slaves whom Haiti's independent government had freed.

Facing the probable bloody bombardment and invasion of his country, Haitian President Jean-Pierre Boyer acceded to the French demands. To pay the millions of Francs the French were demanding, Haiti had to get loans from French banks, with the interest adding to the "owed" amounts. It is estimated that for many years, 80% of Haiti's state revenues went to pay this extortionate debt to French banks.

Eventually, the French transferred the whole debt to National City Bank of New York, corporate ancestor of today's Citi Bank, and the plunder continued to roll in, but this time to the United States. This robbery only ended in the 1940s, during President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration.

Think about it. Eighty percent of Haiti's national revenue, for about a century, ended up in the hands of French and then U.S. finance capital. So, who messed up Haiti?

The story did not end there. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson sent the U.S. Marines to "pacify" Haiti, an incursion which lasted from 1915 to 1934.

The Marines fought against armed Haitian peasants, and covered themselves with the blood of many atrocities, including the murder of the outstanding Haitian-Dominican patriot Charlemagne Peralte. The situation was so bad that even a ranking Marine officer, Major General Smedley Butler, had a crisis of conscience and denounced the whole horror.

During the Cold War, the United States fully supported the dictatorship of a bizarre despot, President Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier, because he was seen as an ally against socialist Cuba. After Papa Doc's death and the overthrow of his son and successor, Jean-Claude Duvalier, U.S. and sometimes French interference in Haiti continued.

In 2004, the progressive, legitimately elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown with the connivance of the U.S., France, and Canada, after he had demanded that France repay what it had stolen from Haiti after 1825.

Again, who messed up Haiti and left it so bereft of resources to keep the government functioning, let alone to meet the aspirations of the Haitian people? Seen in historical context, the racist taunt that "you messed up your own country" can be dismissed with the contempt it deserves—as can similar accusations against poor countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

It is no mystery who did it. It was imperialism, plainly and simply. And we in the United States have a responsibility to show solidarity, not racist and aggressive responses, to the people of Haiti and many other lands.

WFTU calls for day of action against imperialist war and militarism

By Cameron Harrison

The World Federation of Trade Unions, representing more than 105 million workers across hundreds of affiliated unions worldwide, called for an annual International Action Day of Trade Unions for Peace on Sept. 1, coinciding with the anniversary of Nazi Germany's invasion of Poland and the outbreak of World War II.

"We firmly reiterate the demand for an end to all imperialist interventions, full and unconditional respect for the sovereignty, independence, and the right of every people to determine their own present and future," the WFTU said in its call to action.

The federation's statement comes as NATO's recent summit in Turkey confirmed the deepening military plans of the U.S., the E.U., and their allies. New weapons programs, agreements, and expanding manufacturing capacity within the military alliance, along with soaring military budgets, "further increase the risk of a generalized imperialist conflict with disastrous consequences for the peoples," they said.

In their statement, the WFTU once again condemned the "genocide against the Palestinian people by the murdering state of Israel."



They reiterated their long-held demand for an immediate end to ethnic cleansing, the cessation of occupation and settlements, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The federation also denounced the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran, the ongoing attacks on Lebanon and the wider Middle East, the "murderous intervention in Venezuela and the abduction of its president, Nicolás Maduro," and intensified imperialist aggression against Cuba—including the "criminal economic, commercial, and financial blockade."

Workers refuse to be soldiers for capital

The WFTU saluted what it described as militant initiatives by workers who "oppose any involvement of their countries in wars, refusing to work for the production, loading, and transfer of weapons and military equipment, and boycotting any collaboration or facilitation linked with the active battlefronts."

The federation is also promoting an International Day of Action of Dockworkers and Port Workers against war and militarization on Oct. 30.

"The people have no interest in aligning themselves with any imperialist power center or alliance," the federation said. "Workers all over the world know that the tremendous resources channeled into the war economy are drained away at the expense of the welfare state, education, healthcare, wages, pensions, and benefits for the popular strata.

"Military spending diverts resources from schools, hospitals, and housing. Inflation driven by war profiteering erodes workers' wages and pits them against each other in a race to the bottom. And the prospect of a wider war threatens the lives and livelihoods of millions of people.

"The peoples all over the world know there is nothing to expect from war but death, misery, refugees, poverty and deterioration of their living conditions," the WFTU said.

The International Action Day on Sept. 1 offers trade unionists everywhere an opportunity to raise their voices against war and for peace—and to build the international working-class solidarity that alone can stop the march toward world war.

What Nazi Germany can teach Americans about 'future regret'

By Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove



Our friend Robert P. Jones has been thinking about "future regret" as a moral sentiment worth paying attention to in the midst of our present authoritarian crisis. This notion is at the heart of his new book, *Backslide: Reclaiming a Faith and a Nation After the Christian Turn Against Democracy*, due out just after Labor Day. (You can pre-order a copy now and plan to join us for our live conversation with Robby in early September.) Robby's attention to the regret we may experience one day, looking back on the decisions we're making right now, is an intentional effort to learn from those who faced authoritarian crises in our not so distant past. "If one cannot use the past," James Baldwin taught us, "one cannot function in the present, and so one can never be free." Like all of us here at Our Moral Moment, Robby is trying to make good use of the past as we struggle for freedom here and now.

Robby says we are living now in a "Niemöller moment," referring to the German pastor who famously expressed his regret after the end of the Nazi regime in a poem that is inscribed on the wall of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC.

We know Niemöller's poem (and see yard signs that continue to riff on it up to this day) because Niemöller survived the Nazi regime and lived to tell about it. The list of groups that were targeted by the Nazis was long enough between 1933 and 1945 that Niemöller himself frequently exchanged them in the talks he gave after the end World War II.

The Nazis had come for the trade unionists, the Communists, the journalists, the disabled, the Africans, the Roma/Sinti, the Jews. They'd come for the Poles, the Ukrainians, the Russians and anyone else who got in the way of the territory they imagined necessary for their "Third Reich." They came for almost anyone who resisted and, in the end, even for those Germans who were sane enough to make plans for the what should happen after the Nazi's inevitable demise. "Defeatism" was a crime the Nazis considered punishable by death – a crime that Hitler apparently considered himself guilty of when he could no longer deny the reality of the Russian troops occupying Germany.

Niemöller escaped the execution that many fellow resistors faced only because the concentration camp where he was held was liberated in May of 1945. He understood that he survived, ironically, for the same reason that so many had perished – because he, a church leader, had done too little, too late. At the first post-war national meeting of the German Protestant Churches in Stuttgart, Niemöller was asked to preach on the opening night. His text was from Jeremiah 14: "Although our sins testify against us, help us for your sake, O Lord." According to the *Stuttgart Newspaper*, he declared that "doing nothing, saying nothing, not feeling responsible – that is the guilt of Christianity." This sermon led the assembly to confess in the official record of its proceedings: "With great pain we say: By us infinite wrong was brought over many peoples and countries.... we accuse ourselves for not standing to our beliefs more courageously."

Niemöller wasn't alone. Those who survived the horrors and looked around to assess what remained found themselves overwhelmed by regret. They could not say that they had not known. From the very beginning of the Nazi regime, Niemöller had been a leader of what was known as the "Confessing Church" – the group within German Christianity that did raise a public objection to the Nazis. This is the group that issued the Barmen Declaration and is often celebrated as the "good guys" in the ways we often remember the story. But the Stuttgart confession is clear evidence that the Confessing Church did not understand itself to have been a righteous minority.

Yes, they had objected to early efforts by the Nazis to dictate to the church what it could teach the faithful as a matter of doctrine. Still, Hitler understood the impotence of a church that stood up for sound doctrine but didn't get involved in politics. He granted the Confessing Church its confession so long as their practice of the faith didn't get in the way of the Nazi program.

This was the compromise Niemöller regretted. He knew that Confessing Church leaders had made a choice to "stay out of politics" when one of their members – a brilliant theologian named Elizabeth Schmitz, wrote her 1935 memo "On the situation of German non-Aryans." No less theological than the authors of the Barmen declaration, Schmitz had identified the "idolatry of blood and race" that was driving the propaganda and the policy violence of the Nazi regime. She documented the suffering of "non-Aryan" neighbors throughout Germany, focusing especially on the suffering of persecuted Jews, and insisted that it was the church's responsibility to do something about it.

In the preface to her memo, at least 200 copies of which circulated amongst the Confessing Church in 1935, Schmitz says, "We take comfort in the fact that the Lord of the Church has borne the sin of the world. But can we, who with our eyes open, allow ourselves to be forged anew every day with chains into this sin of our people without defending ourselves? The Church, too, cannot live at any moment other than from the forgiveness of sin. But how can it hope for forgiveness if it abandons its members day after day in this desperate need, if it watches the mockery of all God's commandments, if it does not even dare to confess its public sin, but remains silent?"

The first action required of any moral leader in a time of lies, Schmitz understood, is to tell the truth – not just the truth about church doctrine, but the truth about what is happening to God's children and to the body politic that impacts all of us. A cynic might ask, "What difference does it make to risk everything to tell the truth when the people in power do not care about the truth?" But the cynic must also face the reality of history. In 1941, six years after Schmitz began circulating her memo, the Catholic Bishop of Muenster, Bishop Clemens August van Galen, condemned the Nazi policy that killed the most people within Germany during the Nazi regime – the T-4 program designed to exterminate the disabled. He did it from the pulpit on a Sunday morning, and he insisted that copies of his sermon be sent to every parish. In his office as a leader of the Catholic Church, Bishop van Galen named the policy violence that the Nazis were hiding and condemned it. The result: the Nazis officially shut down the program. They did not arrest van Galen or raid the parishes. They demonstrated, albeit in a limited way, that church leaders had a moral power they had failed to use to resist most of the Nazis' policy violence.

Niemöller knew all of this and had had long days to ponder it before he delivered the sermon that inspired the Stuttgart confession. His regret was real because he could see that a different kind of moral leadership was possible – that it could have made a difference at key moments of turning toward the horrors of the Holocaust. It had not happened all at once. He and others who were charged with leading the church had choices. Looking back, he regretted the choices they made.

"Future regret," Robby Jones contends, is an exercise of the imagination that allows us to put ourselves in Niemöller's position in some future where the expressed desires of today's US authoritarian movement become a reality. Can we imagine a United States where tens of millions of immigrants are "removed"? Can we imagine a single party state where elections are a sham and the wealth of the nation is siphoned off for the sole benefit of oligarchs and political insiders? Can we imagine a Congress that implements "biblical law" based on a the extremist interpretations of Scripture that men like Doug Wilson have already spelled out in their books and podcasts?

Perhaps these scenarios still feel too far removed. Closer to the present, can we imagine a January 3, 2027, when Mike Johnson refuses to seat the 120th Congress, repeating claims of "voter fraud" and "voter machine manipulation" that are already being parroted by the White House?

Three years into the Nazi regime, Elizabeth Schmitz asked fellow moral leaders to imagine the "situation of German non-Aryans" – all those who were othered by the idolatry of race and blood. This did not require time travel, but simply a redirection of attention to communities already under assault. Can we imagine today what it is like to have a family member who was disappeared from their job site "released" to die at home so ICE doesn't have to count them as a death inside a detention center? Can we imagine the conversations inside the homes of neighbors who've lost their health insurance this year? Can we see the child who does not have enough to eat because her mother's SNAP benefits were cut?

Prophetic imagination, the biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann taught us, always precedes prophetic implementation. Whether the leap is across time or space, we must imagine something new before we can imagine a new way of being. But if we can imagine the real pain the most Americans are now experiencing and the real horrors that are possible for all of us, then we can also imagine the alternative.

It does not have to be this way. We have, in five and half months of an illegal and immoral war, wasted enough money to pay for everything the current Congress told poor and low-income people we could no longer afford just last year. Just five months from now, we can imagine a Congress that holds the executive branch accountable to law, ends an illegal war, claws back the ridiculous sums of money that have been invested in ICE extremism, and confronts the illusions that emerge from the White House. With the real work of a Third Reconstruction in America, we can imagine a country five years from now that looks very different from the one we live in now.

Elizabeth Schmitz' challenge to the Confessing Church in 1935 "on the situation of German non-Aryans" helps to clarify that the idolatry of our present crisis is about the situation of MOST Americans. If we can imagine the full scope of the crisis, then we can also imagine our collective power. Now is the moment to come together and use it. Any failure to act or narrowing of our scope to exclude "political issues" in this moment is a failure to learn from the past regret that we've inscribed on our memorials in the name of "never again."

CPUSA calls for global anti-fascist front at Cuba meeting

By Communist Party USA

Presentation to the 24th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties on August 10, 2026, in Havana, Cuba by Anita Waters, Organizational Secretary, Communist Party USA.

Dear Comrades. I bring you heartfelt greetings of solidarity from your sister party, CPUSA. It is a deep honor for me to represent us here in socialist Cuba, in this year, the centenary of Fidel Castro, hero of working people everywhere. Thank you to the Communist Party of Cuba for hosting us.

The 24th International Meeting of this body takes place in fraught times. Donald Trump won the election telling voters he was pro-peace and pro-worker, but he dropped those ruses immediately. He supplied and supported the brutal and genocidal war against the people of Gaza, where over 73,000 Palestinians have been murdered, and he allows his proxy Netanyahu to continue his ultra-nationalist and racist agenda.

War, repression, and deportations

Trump then began an illegal, deadly and destructive war in the Middle East, causing thousands of deaths and injuries. He unleashed federal troops on our major cities and ripped hundreds of thousands of law-abiding immigrants from their families and communities, and detained and deported them. He's on the brink of sending more than 300,000 Haitian nationals back to Haiti, a country so plagued by crime, kidnapping, and terrorism that no commercial flights operate to or from Port-au-Prince.

Following more than a hundred extrajudicial killings in the Caribbean Sea, Trump kidnapped President Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores from their home, seized control of Venezuela's resources, and initiated in turn an energy blockade against Cuba that is causing suffering, hardship, hunger and death.

The war on the 'danger within'

To assist the Trump administration in pursuing international adventurism of the worst kind, he has surrounded himself with a collection of fascist-minded ideologues and billionaires. Threats against Cuba are paired with a war against "the danger within," targeting progressive and left wing forces in the United States. A new report from the Department of State falsely claims that Cuba alone is responsible for all protest movements in the United States.

At home the Trump administration promotes white supremacy, toxic masculinity, and fascist ideas. His deployment of federal troops has created a police state in Washington DC and other cities.

While he, his family, and his cronies are enriching themselves and enjoying total immunity, MAGA corporate policies have given trillions in reduced taxes to the rich, while they have left millions without access to health care. In one fell swoop, the Trump regime took away the labor rights of more than a million federal workers, and pardoned the crimes of those who perpetrated violence on his behalf or have contributed to his personal wealth.



The tide is turning

The good news is: the tide is turning in the U.S., and our party, and socialism itself, are on the rise. There is a wave of intense anger and frustration against MAGA, against genocide, against war and against fascism. Our co-chair Joe Sims declared at the National Committee meeting last month that the idea of socialism is reemerging. "Socialism" is an increasingly popular concept especially among youth, and young people have been joining our party in record numbers, from all parts of the country. The popularity of socialism is reflected in the victories of progressive candidates in New York City, Colorado, Washington DC, and now Michigan.

Organized labor is resisting in completely new ways, with the AFL-CIO endorsing May Day for the first time in history and unions anchoring coalitions of faith, community, civil rights, and Communist Party forces in solidarity against the MAGA agenda. The old tactic of red-baiting to defeat their opponents isn't working for MAGA these days. Last year, seven members of the CPUSA were elected to local offices across the country, and more are preparing to run this year and beyond.

The Communist Party USA is fully engaged in the fight against the fascist threat. Comrades are demanding fair housing policies, tenants' rights, and housing the unhoused, in cities across the country. They are demanding "ICE Out" of their cities. In Minneapolis, for example, where immigration officers arrested hundreds of law-abiding residents, community members who had never been active were organizing neighborhood brigades, helping their neighbors who were afraid to leave their homes, watching and recording ICE activity, warning their neighbors with whistles to alert them to an ICE presence, and protesting the inhuman treatment in privately run prisons. Faith organizations, labor unions, and communists have been holding "No Kings" marches and rallies in hundreds of cities, including Minneapolis, mobilizing 8 million people across the country for "No Kings III." Many of them had never been to a protest before. But they are ready to fight back now.

Trump's approval rating among voters now is the lowest since Richard Nixon's in 1974, and as we approach the midterm elections of 2026, many of his former allies in the legislature are running scared.

It's predicted that MAGA will suffer a severe setback in the elections, with the Democratic Party taking control of the House of Representatives and possibly even the Senate. The U.S. ruling class, with Donald Trump as its instrument, seems ready to toss out even the trappings of bourgeois democracy rather than cede power to the people. Trump is threatening to use every ploy to overturn election results that don't go their way.

Crippling MAGA is crucial. The arenas in which workers fight the class struggle will be wider. Key areas of the MAGA agenda could be blocked. They won't be able to further pack the Supreme Court and other judicial offices with loyalists who think they are above the law.

Merely trading out one bourgeois party for the other does not, of course, mean a decisive defeat of the fascist forces, who are locked into firm control and benefitting from the advantages granted them by their government.

In many aspects of international policy, the two parties are extremely alike. They are similarly anti-communist, staunch defenders of capitalism, and happy to see the United States wield imperialist power throughout the world. Representatives from both parties have supported the bloated military budget, at the expense of ensuring that basic human needs are addressed. Last fall, the CPUSA held a peace conference to address questions of fighting for peace in the face of the fascist danger looming in the United States.

Protests over the war in the Middle East, against ICE, against voter suppression, and for workers' rights are growing in militancy.

International solidarity against imperialism
Workers across the world face the same enemies: the reactionary transnational capitalist ruling classes and the governments that they dominate, with U.S. imperialism being the most belligerent and warlike, the most destructive to our planet, and the most dangerous to all humanity. The Communist Party USA rejects and opposes terrorist methods and capitalist wars against weaker nations everywhere. We support international solidarity with peoples and movements fighting for freedom from exploitation and domination everywhere.

For this reason, we are honored to be in this body today, standing in solidarity with our sister parties, to whom we express our sincere solidarity. We pledge to continue our efforts to end the blockade against Cuba. We pledge to continue fighting to end the U.S. war on Iran. We pledge to stand against the imperialist threats against China and other countries. We pledge to fight U.S. imperialism to the end, when, we are convinced, a better, socialist world is possible.

Build the anti-fascist front
But Comrades, the fascist danger is real and is now threatening to empower the most reactionary forces in the imperialist ruling class. The time for a worldwide anti-fascist front and greater cooperation among all Communist and Workers' Parties is now.

Azerbaijan jails four for promoting communism and carrying Soviet flags

By R. L. Richards



A court in Baku sentenced four Azerbaijani citizens to prison terms of 18 months to two years on July 29 for promoting communist ideology and attempting to organize a march carrying Soviet flags. Theirs is the latest case in an escalating campaign against the political left in Azerbaijan.

Ibrahim Asadli and Abdulla Ibrahimli were each sentenced to two years in prison. Elchin Bayramli and Mehman Zeynalov each received 18-month terms. The verdict was delivered by the Nizami District Court in Baku.

All four were charged under Article 233 of Azerbaijan's Criminal Code, which covers organizing or actively participating in actions that violate public order. Prosecutors said the men rented an office space in Baku where they held periodic meetings and recorded material promoting Marxist and communist ideas, distributed that material on social media, and attempted to organize a march through Baku carrying flags of the Soviet Union and the former Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs detained the four men in a Baku park in November 2025 after videos of the planned march circulated online and a court ordered them held in pretrial detention for three months. Their trial concluded with the prison sentences.

Communist parties and communist symbols are not formally banned in Azerbaijan. The Communist Party of Azerbaijan has been a legally registered political party since 1994, entitled to hold political education events, run candidates, and participate in elections.

That the state instead pursued a public-order charge against these four men—rather than any law targeting communism directly—underscores, in the view of critics, that Azerbaijani authorities are using public-order statutes as a workaround to punish political dissent that isn't technically illegal.

Human rights organizations have long described Azerbaijan's government as a hereditary dictatorship built around the Aliyev family. Heydar Aliyev, a former chairman of the Azerbaijan SSR's KGB and First Secretary of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan under Soviet rule, became president of independent Azerbaijan in 1993. When he died in 2003, power passed to his son, Ilham Aliyev, who remains president today and chairs the ruling New Azerbaijan Party, an observer member of the Centrist Democrat International.

The Human Rights Foundation has described Aliyev as having essentially inherited his father's throne and says the family's grip on power now spans more than three decades, reinforced by a 2016 constitutional referendum that removed presidential term limits.

Elections are held in Azerbaijan, but international observers and human rights groups have repeatedly found them to fall short of free and fair standards. The country's unicameral legislature, the Milli Majlis, is dominated by Aliyev's New Azerbaijan Party, which holds 68 of 125 seats; independents, most of them aligned with the government, hold roughly 44.

This is not an isolated case. Azerbaijani authorities have arrested other activists in recent months over similar attempts to publicly display Soviet symbols, part of a wider crackdown that human rights advocates say treats communist political expression as a public-safety threat even though it remains formally legal.

RAPID RESPONSE: Stop persecuting dissent – Fund human needs!

By People's World



Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand they speak out against the McCarthyite attempt to persecute dissent underway in Minnesota.

Congress must hold hearings on the federal government infiltration and surveillance of unions and community organizations who stood in solidarity with their immigrant neighbors during the siege by ICE!

Refuse the Republican request for $350 billion to target and demonize Communists, socialists, unions, and immigrant groups that organize for workers' rights as so-called internal "threats to our nation." Instead, allocate the $350 billion for jobs, nutrition, health and other people's needs!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

International News

WFTU launches international week of solidarity with Cuba

By CPUSA International Department

As the U.S. escalates its economic war against Cuba—including a total blockade on oil supplies under the false pretext of "state-sponsored terrorism"—the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) announced an International Week of Action in solidarity with the Cuban people from April 6 to 12. The initiative comes as Cuba faces severe energy shortages and economic strangulation, yet continues to resist with dignity, as demonstrated by its recent advances in social policy, including the new Family Code.

The WFTU is calling on all affiliates to organize mobilizations outside U.S. embassies and to participate in an international campaign to collect funds, medicines, and essential materials to provide concrete relief to Cuban workers. The campaign is being coordinated with the CTC (Central de Trabajadores de Cuba) to ensure direct support to those most affected by the shortages. The WFTU Women's Commission has also issued a strong statement of solidarity, highlighting the gains Cuban women have made under the revolution despite the decades-long blockade.

Bolivia: Trabajadores y pueblo se levantan contra el gobierno de Paz

Por CPUSA International Department

Bolivia se encuentra en medio de una profunda crisis política y social. Durante más de un mes, la clase trabajadora urbana y rural llevó a cabo acciones de protesta sostenidas contra el gobierno del presidente Rodrigo Paz. Hasta 100 bloqueos de carreteras han paralizado el país, estrangulando el suministro de alimentos, combustible y medicinas.

Según el Partido Comunista de Bolivia–RC, "el gobierno de Paz —que llegó al poder tras la implosión de los gobiernos del MAS— ha demostrado estar subordinado a los monopolios extranjeros y a la burguesía agroindustrial." Sus propuestas incluyen eliminar el Impuesto a las Grandes Fortunas, permitir el regreso de la DEA, abolir los subsidios al combustible, congelar los salarios del sector público y promulgar la Ley 1720 para desmantelar las protecciones constitucionales de las pequeñas propiedades campesinas.

La Central Obrera Boliviana (COB), organizaciones campesinas e indígenas y la Federación de Juntas Vecinales (FEJUVE) de El Alto han organizado movilizaciones continuas, incluida una marcha indígena desde Pando que llegó a La Paz después de 28 días a pie y piquetes de huelga de hambre protagonizados por mujeres.

La asamblea más reciente resolvió exigir la renuncia del presidente Paz.

La respuesta del gobierno de Paz ha sido la represión. Paz declaró el estado de emergencia en todo el país, lo que permitió un mayor despliegue militar. El Senado aprobó un proyecto de Ley de Estado de Excepción que suspendía las garantías constitucionales. Las operaciones policiales y militares —acompañadas por grupos paramilitares de extrema derecha como la Resistencia Juvenil de Cochabamba y la Unión Juvenil de Santa Cruz— dejaron decenas de heridos. El 7 de junio, cinco dirigentes de la COB fueron detenidos ilegalmente y sometidos a tortura.

El Partido Comunista de Bolivia (PCB-RC) repudió la violenta represión y expresó su solidaridad con la COB, la CSUTCB, la FEJUVE El Alto y todas las organizaciones movilizadas. Advierten que el gobierno de Paz pretende "bañar en sangre al pueblo boliviano" para implementar su agenda de entregar los recursos naturales al capital extranjero y privatizar las empresas estatales.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

August 29, 2026

With Obamacare subsidies gone, millions are losing their health insurance

By Ali Swenson and Jacquelyn Martin



ST. CLOUD, Fla. (AP)—Florida chef Elijah Button was chopping onions in June when his knife slipped and sliced his middle finger to the bone.

It was his worst kitchen accident to date. But having given up his Affordable Care Act health insurance plan in January because of a $100 monthly premium hike he couldn't afford, the 21-year-old in St. Cloud didn't have the money for emergency care.

"Going to the hospital for it wasn't even an option," he said, gesturing toward his finger before preparing a pot roast for his aunt and uncle in their suburban home. "My first thought was, 'How am I going to fix this?'"

After Republicans in Congress let enhanced federal subsidies for Affordable Care Act health plans expire in January, millions of Americans including Button had to decide whether to keep insurance that often doubled or tripled in cost—or risk going without it.

Months later, with no action from lawmakers to replace the lost funds, they're facing the consequences. Some are dealing with strained budgets and exorbitant medical bills, while others avoid the doctor in fear of the cost.

Florida, whose large population of gig workers, entrepreneurs, and small business owners relies heavily on the federal health insurance marketplace, has become one of the nation's most visible epicenters of that impact.

Figures first reported by The Associated Press showed that about 440,000 Floridians dropped their Affordable Care Act plans this year—more than in any other state. Thousands more who kept coverage are struggling to get by, as prices of necessities like groceries and gasoline remain steep, and health insurers project another year of double-digit premium hikes.

While Florida had the most affected residents, its struggles are reflective of broader nationwide concerns over rising healthcare costs and a lack of meaningful policy to address them.

In the deep-red state where congressional districts were recently redrawn to strongly favor Republicans, the cost of healthcare is a major campaign issue. Republican midterm candidates have been promoting fraud crackdowns to protect federal health programs, while Democrats have been urging voters to help Congress change hands so they can restore subsidies.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
FOUNDED 1924

For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

With Obamacare subsidies gone, millions are losing their health insurance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Button, who is estranged from his parents, asked his uncle for help with his bloodied finger. With a butterfly bandage, splint, and daily cleanings and dressings, it healed. But the scar still gnaws at Button as a symbol of what else could go wrong.

"It just feels like I'm living in a house of cards," he said.

Florida's population and politics make it ground zero for ACA fallout

Last fall, debate over the expiring subsidies consumed Congress, resulting in a record 43-day government shutdown as Democrats insisted on extending the COVID-era assistance and most Republicans refused.

Fast forward almost a year and lawmakers rarely reference the topic anymore. The administration says it is addressing affordability with fraud-busting efforts and deals with drug companies, but Congress hasn't passed any significant legislation to lower health costs.

In part due to its large number of construction, hospitality, and small business workers—and also because its Republican-led legislature never expanded the Medicaid safety-net health program—Florida has the largest Affordable Care Act enrollment in the country. At just over 3.8 million enrollees, it represents about a fifth of the nation's total enrolled population.

Of the roughly 443,000 Floridians who left the marketplace, most are likely going without insurance, according to Cynthia Cox, a vice president at the healthcare research nonprofit KFF. She said that's because it is typically a "place of last resort" to get coverage.

The data doesn't tell the stories of those who kept insurance. Tracy Rand, a licensed mental health counselor in Leesburg, Florida, is one of them.

Ever since getting her ovaries removed last year due to benign but painful tumors, she has had severe menopause symptoms that require medication, including an overactive bladder and hot flashes that cause piercing headaches.

She uses clear plastic containers to organize the more than 30 medicines and supplements she takes daily, their bottles crammed into a living-room drawer and a tray on her kitchen counter.

The 51-year-old's Affordable Care Act plan was going to surge in price this year from $55 a month to $1,100 a month, so she downgraded. Her new plan, with higher deductibles and copays, costs $160 a month.

To make that work in her budget, Rand quit a doctoral program she was working toward, started buying groceries at cheaper stores, gave up once-monthly dinners out with her husband and stopped meeting friends regularly at a paint-your-own pottery studio.

It's been a difficult adjustment, but a necessary one for her health.

Rand said the prospect of insurers raising rates again fills her with dread.

"I don't know what else we can get rid of," she said, covering her face with her hands. "I don't know if we're going to have to file bankruptcy."

Clinics for the uninsured are a saving grace—but they can't take everyone

In Orlando's leafy, brick-paved neighborhood of Colonialtown South, Tarsha Watson found her lifeline. A clinic there called Grace Medical Home provides low-income, uninsured Floridians with comprehensive care for a $5 per-visit fee.

Watson, 54, has a master's degree in business administration, but she hasn't been able to find work since losing her job two years ago. That means she doesn't have health insurance. When she explored Affordable Care Act coverage, she was quoted $600 per month, far out of her reach.

At Grace, Watson learned her blood sugar is high and that she needed to lose weight. Now, she walks laps around her backyard pool and does Tai Chi YouTube tutorials to focus on fitness. She said she wishes everyone could have her experience.

"It's very hard out here," she said. "It's not enough."

At the clinic, patients cycle in and out of a wide hallway lined with appointment rooms as doctors scan supply shelves for complimentary over-the-counter medications. The expansive building has separate areas for dental, mental health, vision, and pediatric care.

CEO Stephanie Garris said it's one of 110 free or charitable clinics in Florida, but that's not enough to handle demand. To treat more people in response to the Affordable Care Act changes, it recently started hosting a mobile acute care clinic for walk-in patients.

Garris said Grace Medical Home treated about 1,350 people last year. Every year, they take about 350 new patients.

"Would I love to double that, triple that? Of course," Garris said. "I just think in the reality, with the huge number of uninsured that we have, it's just not possible."

Health costs become an issue in midterm campaigns

For U.S. Rep. Darren Soto, a Democrat defending his seat in a sprawling—and now much redder—redrawn district south of Orlando, health costs are a campaign focal point.

He said his district, which is near various theme parks, had the second-largest Affordable Care Act enrollment in the nation, in part because many small tourism businesses can't offer employees health insurance.

"I just hear it everywhere I go," he said. His Republican opponent, Navy veteran and former Trump administration official Dan Green, did not answer emailed questions about the subsidies but has emphasized affordability of groceries and property insurance as campaign priorities.

Soto voted with Democrats and some Republicans—including a few from Florida—to save the subsidies last year. The Republican majority declined and suggested other ideas, including funding Americans' health savings accounts. No law along those lines has passed yet.

Button, a Democrat in Soto's district, said he is open to different reforms for health costs but said politicians aren't acting fast enough.

"They keep trying to make excuse after excuse," he said. "I don't have six months to a year to wait for you guys to pass this through the hoops that you need to."

65 years after Agent Orange: Vietnam still seeks justice over chemical warfare

By Amiad Horowitz

HANOI—This month marks 65 years since the United States first began spraying the chemical weapon known as Agent Orange over Vietnam. More than six decades later, its devastating effects continue to be felt by millions of people across Southeast Asia, making it one of the longest-lasting legacies of the U.S. war against Vietnam.

The significance of this anniversary was highlighted at the annual commemoration organized by the Vietnamese Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin (VAVA). Each year, the event is broadcast nationally to increase awareness of the continuing struggle faced by Agent Orange victims and to raise funds for their care.

This year's ceremony recognized not only the victims but also those who have dedicated themselves to supporting them. VAVA was awarded Vietnam's Second Class Labor Medal in recognition of its decades of work caring for people affected by Agent Orange and dioxin poisoning. The event brought together Vietnamese officials, advocates, donors, and international friends of the organization.

Noticeably absent, however, for the second consecutive year, was any representative of the United States Embassy.

That absence stood in sharp contrast to the scale of the humanitarian work being carried out by VAVA. Over the past year alone, the organization began construction on nearly 3,000 homes for Agent Orange victims and their families. It also continues to operate care centers across Vietnam for those whose medical and developmental needs go far beyond what individual families can provide on their own.

While this work is essential, it addresses only the consequences of a tragedy whose responsibility remains unresolved.

VAVA works closely with organizations and activists around the world, including the Communist Party USA, the Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign, and Veterans For Peace, to raise awareness of the continuing human cost of Agent Orange and to campaign for justice for its victims in both Vietnam and the United States.



Despite decades of advocacy, the U.S. government has limited its response almost exclusively to environmental remediation projects, such as cleaning dioxin-contaminated former military bases. While these cleanup efforts are important and are rightfully celebrated in Vietnam, Washington has continued to refuse to provide meaningful assistance or compensation to the millions of human victims of its chemical warfare.

The corporations that manufactured Agent Orange have likewise escaped accountability.

For years, U.S. courts have protected companies such as Dow Chemical and Monsanto from legal responsibility, accepting the argument that because they produced Agent Orange under contract for the U.S. government during wartime, they are shielded from civil lawsuits. As a result, victims have repeatedly been denied their day in court.

Until her recent retirement, former Rep. Barbara Lee was among the strongest voices in Congress advocating for justice for Agent Orange victims. Throughout her time in office, she repeatedly introduced legislation that would have provided assistance not only to victims in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, but also to affected communities within the United States, including U.S. veterans and their families. Those efforts never became law, and with the current political balance in Washington, the legislative path toward justice has all but been shut.

But all hope is not lost.

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Since 2014, Tran To Nga—a Vietnamese survivor of Agent Orange who is now a French citizen—has pursued an alternative path to justice by bringing a lawsuit in France against the French subsidiaries of several companies that manufactured Agent Orange.

Her case seeks to bypass the protections afforded to those companies in U.S. courts. Although the lower French courts dismissed her claims, they did so on jurisdictional grounds rather than by examining the evidence surrounding the production and use of Agent Orange.

Now, the case has reached a critical turning point.

On July 8, France's Court of Cassation decided to refer Tran To Nga's appeal to the Assemblée plénière, the court's full assembly and highest judicial formation. The decision does not determine the outcome of the lawsuit, but it recognizes that the legal questions involved are of exceptional importance.

Tran's legal team argues that while the companies fulfilled contracts for the U.S. government, they remained private corporations operating for profit. As commercial entities, they should not be allowed to claim the sovereign immunity of the U.S. government to shield themselves from accountability for the consequences of their products.

Especially encouraging is that the Advocate General of the Court of Cassation has recommended that the lower courts' rulings be overturned and that the companies' claims to judicial immunity be rejected.

The appeals process is expected to take another six to twelve months. Should the court rule in Tran's favor, it would not end the struggle for justice. Instead, it would finally allow the case to proceed on its merits and open the possibility that, for the first time, the manufacturers of Agent Orange could be held legally accountable.

Should that happen, it would represent the most significant breakthrough in the decades-long campaign for justice.

The need for that justice has never disappeared. Across Vietnam, an estimated three to four million people continue to suffer the consequences of Agent Orange and dioxin exposure. In neighboring Laos, hundreds of thousands more have been affected. Children continue to be born with severe disabilities linked to wartime contamination, with fourth-generation victims now being documented in some families.

Sixty-five years after the first spraying missions, the war's chemical legacy remains a living reality. The United States government and the corporations that produced these poisons have yet to accept responsibility for the human suffering they helped create. Environmental cleanup alone is not enough. The victims deserve recognition, meaningful assistance, and justice.

As Vietnam commemorates another anniversary of the beginning of the Agent Orange campaign, the world should remember that this is not merely a story of history. It is a story that continues every day in the lives of millions of people still waiting for accountability.

Communists call to mobilize to stop AUKUS!

By Communist Party USA



This joint statement was agreed in Havana, Cuba on August 11, 2026 at the 24th IMCWP.

The Communist Party of Australia, Communist Party of Britain, and Communist Party USA held a trilateral meeting during the 24th International Meeting of Communist & Workers Parties which convened in Havana, Cuba from 7-8 August 2026.

This was the second trilateral meeting held between our parties to discuss the AUKUS pact between the governments of Australia, the UK and the USA to provide nuclear submarines and more advanced weaponry for deployment from bases in Australia.

At our previous trilateral meeting held in September 2021, following the announcement of the AUKUS pact, our Parties agreed to focus opposition within the peace, anti-nuclear and anti-war movements in our respective countries on AUKUS, which represents the largest act of nuclear proliferation this century and significantly escalates the threat of a nuclear war in the Asia-Pacific region.

Since 2021, our parties have played leading roles in campaigns to raise awareness of this dangerous nuclear escalation and have campaigned against public funding to feed the insatiable appetite of the arms industry and imperialists warmongers.

Our three parties all work in broad coalitions of peace and anti-imperialist movements.

At today's meeting in Havana, we reconfirm our condemnation of the wasteful, ruinous and dangerous AUKUS pact and we recommit to increase the greater cooperation between our parties for a coordinated approach to stop AUKUS across three continents.

The imperialist war machine has redoubled its effort to persuade workers and their unions that false promises of new jobs in arms manufacturing can compensate for the stagnation of western capitalist economies and the continuing loss of jobs and decline in wages. The projected AUKUS expenditure in Australia of between $268 and $368 billion by 2055 would be enough to totally transform health, education, R&D and wider public services and would result in creating tenfold the number of quality union jobs.

Communists call for a society in which rewarding and socially useful jobs provide workers with tangible social benefits instead of alienating, socially useless employment through building weapons of mass destruction.

Health, education, housing and infrastructure investment create meaningful jobs, which are a basis for genuine social, common and human security for workers across the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

AUKUS is a US-led offensive military pact. It is intended to protect the imperialist ambitions of the U.S., Britain, and Australia in the Asia-Pacific region. AUKUS does not serve the interests of the peoples of our nations; rather, it serves the interests of monopoly capitalism within the alliance countries, which is increasingly invested in maximizing profits through the military-industrial complex.

We reject the fantasy of military Keynesianism which is making the world a more dangerous place at a time when international efforts are needed more than ever to stop our planet burning as our climate collapses.

Our parties stand for peace between peoples, international co-operation to meet the needs of humanity and to address the existential climate crisis threatening our planet.

Only socialism provides the answers to the crisis caused by imperialism and war.

The AUKUS pact is a symptom of the imperial decline of the US and the West. Our parties resolve to jointly campaign to scrap AUKUS and demand a peace dividend to save our planet and our peoples.

We note that the International Meeting Against War held in London on 20 June 2026 brought peace activists from 27 countries together to issue a call for a global weekend of action against militarism and conscription on Saturday 21 / Sunday 22 November 2026.

We call on Communists and peace activists in our countries to make the demand to scrap AUKUS a central theme of the global weekend of action against militarism and conscription.

In advance of the global weekend of action against militarism and conscription our Parties will initiate a joint call and briefing on the campaign to scrap AUKUS and build support amongst trade unionists, anti-war activists and the organized working-class movement.

Signed on behalf of the following parties:

Communist Party of Australia

Communist Party of Britain

Communist Party USA

Connecticut Primaries reflect unity needed to defeat MAGA in November

By Joelle Fishman

NEW HAVEN—Connecticut labor and people's organizations are gearing up for the November 3 general election following an intensive Democratic primary on August 11 that included races for the governorship, the general assembly and the first Congressional district. Outstanding was the fact that candidates in all races pledged to stand up to Trump and protect people's needs, providing the foundation for unity going into November.

While there are Democratic majorities in the state House and Senate and a Democratic Governor, the number of working class champions is not large enough to override vetoes on cutting-edge bills like housing relief, school funding, aid to striking workers, and taxing the rich.

The Working Families Party (WFP) endorsed five candidates for state legislature. All five won their primaries as part of an effort to build power "for a government that finally answers to working people, not whoever writes the biggest check.



"This is what happens when working people organize: We knock the doors, we make the calls, we show up for each other, and we win seats nobody thought were winnable," said the WFP.

In a Senate district spanning Hartford, Bloomfield and Windsor, Maryam Khan (SD-2), a special education teacher, defeated a charter school-backed incumbent.

She was elected to the state House in 2022, running to fight for resources for her students in overcrowded rooms, by a system that decided they should expect less. She is the first Muslim woman elected to the State Senate.

In Glastonbury, Moise Carelus (HD-31) beat a four-term incumbent who voted against school funding, made assault weapons easier to get, and wouldn't stand up to ICE in our schools and hospitals. "Coach Moses," who ran to bring working-class values to Glastonbury, is a science teacher who built a youth soccer program from 170 kids to 470

In East Hartford, Angie Parkinson (HD-10), a teacher for 25 years, is now fighting to fund neighborhood schools. Among her priorities, she listed Education Cost Sharing funding, increasing taxes on the wealthy, a public option for healthcare, keeping immigration enforcement agents in check, and protecting reproductive rights and rights for LGBTQ+ people.

In Milford, Toni Lombardi (HD-118), a school secretary, ran for this open seat saying affordable communities and strong public schools are inseparable. Milford voters chose a candidate who believes public schools deserve real investment – not cuts, privatization and more excuses.

In a Senate district including Cheshire, Meriden, Middlefield and Middletown, Jack Fazzino (SD-13) builds on his work in the House judiciary committee, protecting immigrant communities and reducing ICE presence in schools, hospitals, and houses of worship, and helping win $40 million in special education funding.

"We've won before by building power, not waiting for permission. $15 minimum wage. Paid family and medical leave. Tonight adds the next chapter," WFP said.

In New Haven, longtime progressive state representative Pat Dillon was defeated by a young former Alder, Eli Sabin, who moved to the district at the beginning of the year. Also in the race was DSA member Justin Farmer. All three projected programs to address the crisis of the cost of living and the threat of Trump. Dillon was supported by the labor movement for her consistent support, but the wave of change prevailed.

Also in New Haven, an open seat for State Senate was won by Wildaliz Burmudez, who chairs the City's Fair Rent Commission and ran against labor-backed Leland Moore. New Haven is the largest voter turnout city in the state, and is considered key to the election of any statewide office, including Governor.

In the primary, Governor Ned Lamont faced challenger State Representative Josh Elliott, whose campaign centered on ending the extreme economic and racial inequality in the state by taxing the rich. Lamont, a millionaire from Greenwich, has refused to consider the tax the rich agenda of Connecticut for All and other coalitions. Elliott's message got solid support with 30% of the vote, which is expected to add to the pressure on Lamont.

The Connecticut AFL CIO endorsed Lamont in recognition of the support that the governor has given during organizing drives, including the highway service workers and strikes, including hotel and food service workers, even though the Governor vetoed (twice) a bill to allow striking workers to receive unemployment compensation. He has now pledged to support the bill.

Lamont featured his opposition to Trump, including bills he signed that came to his desk as a result of long and hard grassroots organizing. As a result, Connecticut has one of the strongest Trust Act language in the country to protect immigrant families.

The Four C's union representing community college teachers, and the New Haven Federation of Teachers broke with their state affiliates and endorsed Josh Elliott for Governor out of frustration that their budgets were severely underfunded despite large-scale demands. Elliott's significant vote is expected to give strength to those ongoing demands in the coming legislative session.

The voter turnout in Connecticut was 23% of registered Democrats, down from the 2018 governor primary, which had 29% turnout.

Of greatest national attention were the Democratic primary elections in Connecticut's First Congressional District, including the capital city of Hartford and 27 surrounding towns. It is a heavily Democratic district. The victor in the Democratic primary is in place to win the general election in November.

Luke Bronin, former mayor of Hartford, defeated Congressman John Larson in a highly funded campaign riding the anti-incumbent wave of "change" and "age." While Larson is more progressive, the highly funded Bronin, who has been criticized for his anti-labor actions as Mayor, kept moving to the left in his positions in order to win votes.

Bronin had narrowly secured the Democratic Party endorsement and appeared on the same ballot line as Governor Lamont. Their votes were nearly identical in each town.

Larson has been the leading voice in Congress for protecting and expanding Social Security. His Social Security 2100 bill would scrap the cap so that the highest earners would pay taxes on their full income. He is the ranking member of the House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee and would have been in a powerful position if the majority in the House flips to Democrat control.

This was one of two races in the country where a more conservative younger candidate challenged a more progressive senior incumbent in a majority Democratic district. The other race is for U.S. Senate in Massachusetts where Rep Seth Moulton is challenging Sen. Ed Markey, an outspoken voice for Medicare for All and opposing ICE and wars.

Both of these challenges are supported by VoteVets, a national PAC chaired by former Congressman Max Rose from Staten Island, NY, dedicated to electing military veterans at all levels of government. Bronin served in the Navy in Afghanistan in 2010. VoteVets spent over one million dollars for Bronin.

Rose lauded Bronin's victory, noting that "VoteVets was the first organization to get involved in this race, and the biggest outside spender... because he fit within our wider strategy...breaking this old mold of left vs middle, progressive vs moderate."

Larson's biggest contributor was the Working Families PAC. He received contributions from various PACs of elected leaders, some of whom took out negative ads. The expenditures and funders are itemized by CT Public.

In addition to Bronin, two more challengers were in the field. West Hartford State Rep. Jillian Gilchrest and Hartford Board of Education member Ruth Fortune. Both criticized the outside money coming into Bronin's race and also Larson's calling for campaign finance reform.

Larson was first elected in 1998. He comes from a working-class family, which shaped much of his politics, and in recent years has been very passionate against Project 2025 and, first and foremost, to protect and expand Social Security into the future. He had earned the support of organizations from the majority of unions, the Alliance for Retired Americans, Planned Parenthood, the Human Rights Campaign, and many more. The unexpected challenge from Bronin allowed little time for Larson to change tactics and organize a full-fledged campaign.

Larson's lack of endorsement by the AFL-CIO, which stayed neutral, meant there were no labor walks to discuss the campaign from union member to union member, while Bronin's large campaign funding allowed him to conduct a strong door-knocking effort.

On election night, Larson said, "Elections are about people. Tonight the people have spoken. Now is the time for all of us to come together. This fight goes on. Along with our Connecticut delegation, I will continue to wage that war in Washington, D.C., every day that we're there to stand up to this President."

The ongoing fight to preserve and expand Social Security for all generations just got even more urgent on its 91st anniversary. Within days of the primary, the corporate Wall Street Journal celebrated Larson's defeat, using it as an opportunity to call upon Democrats to "re-think Social Security," and oppose scrapping the cap and increasing benefits.

The national organization Social Security Works, one of Larson's strongest supporters, responded, "Today, we thank Congressman John Larson for being one of Social Security's fiercest champions. We will continue your legacy by fighting to protect and expand Americans' earned benefits. We can't let billionaires dismantle Social Security and steal from seniors who worked hard their entire lives!"

It will take an ongoing concerted and unified effort by labor and allies to demand that Bronin delivers on his campaign promises to block the fascist MAGA agenda and enact legislation on the side of working people's needs, not corporate greed and militarism.

November's general election for Congress, Governor and State Legislature cannot be taken for granted in this challenging political climate. The Republican candidate for Governor, State Sen. Ryan Fazio, is already touring the state and looking to peel off votes from New Haven and elsewhere.

Conversations with voters at their homes and at work will help build support for bold working-class demands, support for the fight against the cruel and brutal MAGA billionaire agenda, and support for the lasting movement people are looking for.

Unions sue Trump administration over student loan limit cuts

By Mark Gruenberg



WASHINGTON—Donald Trump and Linda McMahon don't believe nurses are professionals. Neither are teachers, anesthetists, nor social workers.

To put their proof into black type on white paper, the anti-worker president and his right-wing Education Secretary have cut federal graduate student loan limits in half for those professions and others—even though a federal court ordered them not to do so.

Congress overrode the court, though, with Trump's "One Big Beautiful Bill," the $4.5 trillion tax cut for the rich last year. That let the Trump-McMahon regime promulgate their student loan cut plan on April 1, though it won't really kick in until grad students head back to school in a few weeks. McMahon's department calculated the student loan changes would save taxpayers $409 billion and reduce student loan debt $224 billion by protecting students from overborrowing.

The unions which represent and defend those workers—the Teachers/AFT, AFSCME, and National Nurses United—marched into federal court in D.C. to stop the so-called "Reimaging and Improving Student Education" rule.

AFT's ranks include K-12 school nurses, AFSCME represented social workers and public health nurses. National Nurses United is the biggest union for registered nurses.

Boiled down to its essentials, the Trump-McMahon "Rise" rule sets maximum student loan limits for students studying for 11 specific professions at $50,000 per year, $200,000 total. Those limits are open only to students of medicine, law, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary studies, optometry, osteopathy, podiatry, chiropractic students, theology and clinical psychology.

Everybody else in graduate studies, such as teachers, social workers, nurses, firefighters, anesthetists and even architects aren't "professionals," Trump and McMahon declare. So, their loan limit is $20,500 per year, $100,000 total.

To put that into perspective, nursecompensation.com reports nursing student loan debt averages $23,000-$185,000, depending on degree level. The low number is for a bachelor's degree in a two-year program; the high one is for a doctorate.

If colleges and universities don't lower their tuition rates, that means workers seeking degrees in these categories will either have to come up with extra cash from their own resources, borrow from private banks at higher interest rates to cover the gap, or give up on their career altogether.

The Learning Policy Institute reports 1.3 million teachers (37.2%) are still paying off their student loans—and stressing out about it. One of every nine teachers still owe the entire amount of their loans, and almost two of every ten teachers report still repaying their loans at age 61-plus.

Unions representing the professions outside the Trump-McMahon categories are understandably outraged. What they didn't say in their suit, but the Learning Policy Institute did, is that the new and lower limit on grad student loans disproportionately slams African-American loan recipients.

Sixty-two percent of Asian-American grad students never borrowed to pay for their schooling and only 6% did and haven't repaid, the institute reports. Forty percent of white students never borrowed and 9.6% have never repaid. Some 29% of Black students never borrowed, another 12% have repaid it all, 28% still owe some student loan debt, and 32.7% still owe everything.

Other groups, including Latinos, fell in between the white and Black contrast.

Put in the new rules, the lawsuit says, and it'll be even tougher to find funds to go to school. "The administration is making the path to professional public service jobs unaffordable, thereby hurting communities that rely on these workers for critical care and services," the unions jointly said.

Teachers/AFT President Randi Weingarten, a New York City civics teacher, called the Trump-McMahon student loan limits "one of the most cynical, cruel components of the Trump tax bill.

"By 'de-professionalizing' nursing, architecture, social work, teaching, and countless other careers, the Trump administration is eviscerating education access for poor and working-class students and their families and dismantling pathways to the middle class.

"It tells students they aren't valued and crushes their dreams. And it harms communities across the country who rely on the services these students would provide."

"The same administration that cut healthcare to give billionaires more tax cuts is now trying to make it impossible for advanced practice nurses, social workers, public health professionals and others to afford the education they need to care for our communities," said AFSCME President Lee Saunders. "We are already facing staffing crises in too many public service professions, and this rule threatens to make the situation even more dire."

National Nurses United first raised the warning flag on the student loan cuts late last year and followed it up with both a formal protest in March to McMahon's department and then this lawsuit. The loan limit rule "is an attack on the nursing profession" and "an insult" to it, said NNU co-President Jamie Brown, RN. The union elaborated in its formal protest to McMahon on February 28.

"This outrageous proposed rule builds on the damage" from the Big Beautiful Bill "to make it harder for nurses who are pursuing graduate degrees to become nurse practitioners (NPs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNA), or other positions requiring an advanced degree," National Nurses United said then.

"This rule shuts out the next generation of nurses, social workers and public health professionals before they even get started," said AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler.

"The Department of Education may have decided these degrees don't count as 'professional,' but communities that rely on these essential services know this couldn't be further from the truth.

"After kicking millions of working families off their healthcare, firing federal workers and gutting federal agencies, the administration is making it harder for working people to enter these careers and forcing hospitals, clinics and state and local agencies to do even more with less. The AFL-CIO is in this fight because no worker who dedicates their life to public service should be priced out of it."

Deal or no deal? U.S.-Canada trade talks will cost jobs either way

By Dave McKee

At the end of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol, a reformed Ebenezer Scrooge leans out his window and asks a passing child, "You boy, what day is this?"

These days, working people in Canada are likely to lean out their windows each morning and ask, "You there, is there a trade deal with the U.S. or not?"

For much of the summer, public discourse was full of reports, updates, and speculation about Canada's trade talks with the U.S., which could more accurately be described as a panicky scramble by Ottawa to secure a deal ahead of Donald Trump's arbitrary deadline for another punishing round of 50% tariffs.

On Aug. 18, Trump reported that a deal had been reached and that he will pause the tariffs for three days while details are finalized.

What this means exactly is unclear—in no small part because Trump seems to mark time (and reality) in an utterly different way than the rest of us, but also because details are sparse. However things stand, though, it's pretty clear that working people are getting shafted.

Consider if the deal falls through. Trump has stated that he will impose 50% tariffs on an estimated $20-30 billion worth of Canadian exports to the U.S., about 5% of total exports. Products affected include dairy, cement, clothing, wine, furniture, and (of course) hockey sticks. Analysts say these tariffs would likely result in about 100,000 job losses in Canada. This is on top of already whopping job losses from the trade war so far, including 61,000 in manufacturing alone.

An economic report from Deloitte described the Canadian economy as being essentially "on pause" as a result of Trump's tariffs. The threatened new round would likely trigger a recession, which would be devastating for working people and their communities.

But now let's look at the scenario in which a deal is secured. Lips are tight, but tweets from U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer strongly suggest that Ottawa has bent the knee on Washington's key demands. These include dropping all retaliatory trade measures against the U.S., removing provincial bans of U.S. alcohol, ending "Buy Canadian" procurement policies, and changing Canada's supply management system to allow greater access for U.S. dairy products.



Trump also wants Ottawa to finalize its purchase of 88 F-35 fighter jets (Canada has so far formally committed to purchasing 30) and to ensure cross-border energy projects including a revived Keystone XL pipeline.

In a tweet, Greer wrote that "the deal will include comprehensive market access for all American goods, economic security commitments, digital trade alignment, and many important provisions that will continue to protect our market and American workers."

Is this picture really any better for workers in Canada? For many, including dairy farmers and agro-food workers, those in tourism-related industries, alcohol producers, and smaller manufacturers who rely on procurement policies, it will be devastating. And the massive expenditure on another 58 F-35 jets will no doubt result in new and deeper cuts to social programs.

The entire situation has Canadian working people locked in a vise, facing a terrible dilemma: Do you want to be squeezed to death by U.S. monopolies or Canadian ones? Because that's exactly whose interests are being represented at the table in these trade talks: monopoly capital. Working people are simply left in the dust.

The way out of this trap is through working-class trade and industrial policies. These are based on a full employment economy, an improving standard of living (involving decent wages, pensions, and services), environmentally sustainable production, and respect for Indigenous rights.

To win that will take a real fight—united, massive, and sustained. We can start by paraphrasing the little boy's initial answer to Scrooge's query, and tell monopoly capital to "Shove off!"

International News

The 24th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties

By CPUSA International Department

The 24th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties (IMCWP) convened in Havana, Cuba, from Aug. 7-8, 2026. Hosted by the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), the meeting brought together over 100 delegates representing 49 communist and workers' parties from around the world, including the Communist Party USA.

The meeting adopted a Plan of Action which prioritized several important items, including urging that "the fight against fascism and its manifestations as one of the priorities of the international communist movement," and to "develop joint activities against anti-communism, fascism, and the historical erasure of the contributions of the USSR." It also said that, the IMCWP must work jointly to "oppose imperialist wars, the arms race, including nuclear weapons and foreign military bases, and reject all NATO practices." The IMCWP adopted to also strengthen the struggle of women against inequality, oppression, and discrimination, increasing mobilization on March 8, International Women's Day, especially among working women.

A Joint Resolution was passed on the Cuba question, reaffirming the importance of unity and solidarity among communist and workers' parties in the face of imperialist aggression against the socialist country. The resolution recognized the relevance of Fidel Castro's anti-imperialist, internationalist, and humanitarian thought.

The gathering was held under the theme of defending the legacy of the Cuban Revolution on the centenary of Fidel Castro's birth and strengthening the international fight against imperialist aggression. The opening session was attended by Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel and other senior Cuban leaders. Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) General Secretary Kemal Okuyan, whose party hosted the previous IMCWP, delivered the opening address.

Part 2 will continue next week

Los comunistas en Cuba celebran un coloquio por el centenario del nacimiento de Fidel Castro

Por CPUSA International Department

El Partido Comunista de Cuba llevó a cabo actividades y celebraciones con motivo del centenario del nacimiento de Fidel Castro, marcando la clausura del Primer Coloquio Internacional «Fidel: Legado y Futuro», que reunió a participantes de 63 países.

A la ceremonia de clausura asistieron Raúl Castro, el presidente Díaz-Canel, altos dirigentes del Partido, la familia de Fidel y representantes de la sociedad cubana. Los delegados corearon repetidamente «Fidel está presente», reflejando el mensaje de que su legado revolucionario permanece vivo.

En su discurso central, Díaz-Canel señaló tres principios irrenunciables heredados de Fidel: la independencia nacional, la Revolución y los valores del socialismo. Sostuvo que ser fidelista implica mantener un compromiso con el antiimperialismo y la oposición a la injusticia.

Díaz-Canel también subrayó que el legado de Fidel no pertenece solo a Cuba, sino a los movimientos revolucionarios de todo el mundo, y que los historiadores del futuro verían a millones de personas inspiradas por su ejemplo.

El programa cultural destacó los principios fundamentales de Fidel: el deporte como derecho social, el desarrollo científico, la solidaridad y el internacionalismo. La asistencia médica y humanitaria de Cuba en el extranjero —a pesar del bloqueo estadounidense— se presentó como una expresión clave de estos principios. Se describió el bloqueo como el mayor obstáculo para Cuba, pero también como uno incapaz de doblegar la determinación y la unidad del pueblo cubano.

El acto concluyó con celebraciones colectivas por el cumpleaños de Fidel y consignas como «Yo soy Fidel» y «Cuba no está sola».

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
FOUNDED 1924

September 5, 2026

March on Washington links voting rights and economic justice

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—Speakers and marchers at the anniversary commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King's famous March on Washington linked voting rights and economic justice, just as he did back on Aug. 28, 1963.

Busloads of marchers came from all over the nation to the event, on a sweltering day in downtown D.C. There were 10 busloads full of marchers from Houston alone, 153 United Auto Workers members from Local 863 of Cincinnati, other UAW members from Detroit, and AFSCME marchers from D.C. and up the East Coast, among others.

Precise turnout is still being calculated, but there are concerns that the numbers may have been depressed, as activists and participating organizations are looking into situations across the country where people were left standing on scheduled buses that never showed.

Nevertheless, organizers from the Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network reported tens of thousands jammed onto the National Mall in D.C, while others took shady shelter under nearby trees.

"We have watched our history be erased, our votes threatened, our bodies politicized, our brilliance exploited, and our humanity questioned—and still, my sisters, we rise; still we vote; still we organize; and still we lead," said Jotaka Eaddy, founder of WIN with Black Women.

"But there comes a moment in time when patience becomes permission and silence becomes betrayal, and that moment is now. So today, as Black women, I stand here to declare independence from systems that profit from pain, from politics that want our votes but not our voices, from corporations that celebrate our diversity and culture but abandon our communities."

Recalling the original march, Sharpton said, "In '63 when they came to this spot, they came because there was segregation. They came because there was denial of human equality. They came because we could not vote." Afterward, he said, "We went back to the South, we went back in the Northern areas, and we organized."

The same thing must be done today, he told the crowd.



"We must turn this country upside down for those elected officials who are taking from us the right to vote. We will not let them turn back the hand of time.... If we go and organize after we go home like they did on Aug. 28, 1963, and organize, we can put a handicap on the most biased, bigoted presidency that we've seen in a long time."

Participants came not only to commemorate Dr. King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech, but to rededicate themselves to achieving the goals he set that day.

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

March on Washington links voting rights and economic justice

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Speakers said those goals are under enormous attack from President Donald Trump's administration, his MAGA supporters, his congressional accomplices in the Republican Party, his Supreme Court majority, and the billionaire titans who corrupt U.S. elections and finance repression.

There were repeated demands for voting rights, voting reform, and curbing the role of cash in politics.

Indeed, signs and speeches were about equally divided between defending, expanding, and protecting the right to vote on one hand and demanding economic justice—including a higher minimum wage, the right to organize, and universal health care among other causes—on the other.

"ICE Trump" read one handmade sign, referring to Trump's violent ICE agents who, at his command, engage in massive sweeps of people—citizens or not—nationwide. "Voter fraud: Another Trump hoax," a second read.

The march "is part of our core values to make life better for everyone, not just ourselves," Ben Brady, chairman of the Greater Cincinnati UAW political action committee, told *People's World*. "This is for every working person who puts their life on the line."

"Bottom line: Donald Trump is an authoritarian who is deliberately trying to destroy faith in American democracy, create confusion, and sow mistrust in our elections and make it harder for Americans to vote," said Sen. Bernie Sanders, Ind-Vt., one of the three keynote speakers at the end of the program in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

"We have to get out the vote and vote in such massive numbers that the results are clear and convincing and so that no one can steal [the election] from us," declared American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten.

Some individual marchers went beyond the speakers' denunciations. They raised the issue of fascism and the need now to fight an openly fascist regime in the White House.

Two people held one banner declaring: "Impeach. Indict. Convict. Imprison." Others printed on a bedsheet "End the nightmare," with "nightmare" in red and a picture of Trump alongside. Below it was "Embrace the Dream," flanked by a picture of Dr. King in 1963.

"They don't want to take us back to before 1963," just-retired AFSCME President Lee Saunders told the crowd. "They want to take us back to before 1863" and Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

Added Lenora Thomas of Service Employees Local 512 in Virginia, speaking for her union, "There is no worker power in this country when there is no voter power."

"Trump is carving up voting rights and carrying out a counter-revolution," said Joe Sims, co-chair of the Communist Party USA. More than two dozen party members, mostly from the D.C. area, but also including many northeasterners and Organization Secretary Anita Waters from Columbus, Ohio, came to march.

"Voting rights, abortion rights, labor rights are all on the chopping block" of the Trump administration, Sims added. "Affirmative action has been outlawed, reality has been outlawed. Women, African-Americans, LGBTQ people, and immigrants have been targets of federal and local law enforcement.

"But we got to do whatever we can to push back on the MAGA attack," he said. "We have to defeat them in November and then lay the basis for defeating them in 2028."

Also speaking was American Federation of Government Employees President Everett Kelley.

Trump has labeled his own government's workers in general and AFGE in particular as "the deep state" and "enemies," respectively. Kelley told the crowd that's because when Trump tried to take away the union rights for a million federal workers—and have trillionaire Elon Musk fire 300,000 of them—AFGE stepped up to sue him repeatedly "and because we said 'no' to Elon and his chainsaw."

The fate of federal workers is particularly important for African-Americans. Federal, state, and local government jobs have long been favored routes for African-Americans to achieve better incomes, due to less racism than in the private sector and better job security. Under Trump, both are vanishing.

Kelley also said Trump, his MAGA legions, and the 1% that back them are scared that the mass of the U.S. people will realize what the ruling class is doing to them—and vote accordingly. He urged the crowd to make that prophecy come true.

"If your vote didn't matter, they wouldn't be working so hard to take it away from you," he said. And "when they can't win elections, they change the rules and rig the system," he declared. "They think the voters will stay in line, but they're wrong."

Other speakers included Yusuf Jackson, a son of the late Rev. Jesse Jackson, Marc Morial of the Urban League, and several of Dr. King's children. The Drum Major Institute, a non-profit his family runs, co-sponsored the march.

Besides Sen. Sanders, Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Yvette Clarke, and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, all D-N.Y., spoke, as did Gov. Abigail Spanberger, D-Va. The crowd repeatedly interrupted Sanders with applause and did the same for AOC, who had to cut her speech short. There were also many speakers from African-American fraternities, sororities, and civic groups.

Freedom Summer an important part of the life of Communist leader

By John Wojcik



Freedom Summer 2026 is a coalition of organizations that have come together to preserve the right to vote and democracy itself in the U.S. It includes almost every group that's engaged right now in the fight—labor unions and their allies, faith groups, community organizations, political parties, lawmakers, and so many others. The movement launched on Juneteenth and will continue through Election Day, Nov. 3.

The next major event on the Freedom Summer calendar is the Aug. 28, 2026, March on Washington, held on the anniversary of the historic march led by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1963.

Coalitions like Freedom Summer 2026, however, are more than just lists of organizations issuing press releases and statements of support. They are made up of individuals, each of them bringing something unique to the collective movement for freedom, for preserving the vote, and for saving democracy.

One of those people is Joelle Fishman, chair of the Connecticut Communist Party USA. She also leads the party's political action commission, and her party will have a contingent at the Aug. 28 march.

Fishman says, "The movement I saw firsthand at the Aug. 28, 1963, March on Washington, when I was just 16 years old, shaped my life. I was sent to that historic event as a representative of my family, and the effect on me was so profound."

She might not have known it at the time, but her participation in that march, along with the many thousands who were there with her, was a critical start to a lifetime of dedication to the working class in the United States.

"Having come from a family where political education was part of a loving early childhood, the march strengthened my learning that there can be no progress on any issue important to working people as long as we have institutional racism in place," Fishman told *People's World* in an interview earlier this week.

"I came to further understand how, unless there are civil rights and unless we overcome racism, we will not be able to make real progress in this country."

She talked about how many of the people there extended a warm and friendly greeting, welcoming a teenager in their midst. "They helped me out every step of the way," she said.

Fishman followed her participation in the March on Washington with decades of support for actions by workers. Whether it was teachers, graduate students, college students, machinists, laborers, tenants, women's rights activists, LGBTQ activists, or so many others, she was there, often out on the picket lines with them.

"How did joining and becoming first a member and then a leader in the Communist Party advance that cause?" Fishman was asked.

"The Communist Party was always in the forefront of the battle for civil rights and workers' rights, seeing them as parts of the same struggle," she said.

She pointed out how the party is one of the many organizations participating in this year's Freedom Summer and how it was involved in building the original march led by Dr. King and in many civil rights and labor organizing struggles going back generations before that.

"The party has no policies, no actions that are not completely supportive of civil and workers' rights," she said. "It is a good home for people who believe in those things."

Fishman talked about how the fight for civil rights today is centered specifically around preserving the right to vote.

"The right to vote is under threat by the fascist occupying the White House and the political forces that support his agenda," she said. "The Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act, including the section that called for federal oversight of states making changes to their voting policies. The movement has to step in and fight hard to ensure that we preserve the right to vote in this country."

Fishman said this was one of the reasons the CPUSA stresses the importance of elections and voting. She said Rev. William Barber, the longtime leader of the Poor People's Campaign, was correct in his emphasis on voting, particularly where he has noted that if 10 or 12 percent of the poor people who did not vote in the last general election head to the ballot box this time, things would be quite different.

"Rev. Barber sees the need for a systemic change, not just supporting this or that candidate. His call for a Third Reconstruction is particularly impressive," she said.

Fishman was asked what could be done to overcome the tremendous financial and other strengths of the right wing and MAGA. How do we stop their attacks on voting rights?

"The way to overcome the attacks on civil and worker rights is to have the most massive turnout ever in the midterm elections," Fishman said.

CONTINUE FROM PAGE THREE

"The vote has to be so huge that the opponents of voting rights will not be able to cancel election results they dislike after the polls close."

She stressed that such a massive turnout, more than backing one or another political candidate, will actually constitute building a movement, "a movement to bring about long-term political change."

Fishman seems to be living proof that the fight during Freedom Summer 2026 is a continuation of a fight that goes way back, even to the 1860s in Galveston, Texas, when formerly enslaved people rose up to grab the freedom that had been granted them on paper two years earlier but never realized until they rose up and grabbed it.

It is the same today, Fishman says, when labor and its allies in the civil rights and all movements must prevent their rights from becoming nothing more than something written on paper. The unprecedented turnout in the elections, she said, will help achieve that.

Fishman says there is more reason than ever to continue today with the fight embodied in Freedom Summer. "The fight today continues because we have a fascist in the White House," she said.

With lifelong activists like Fishman helping lead the fight of a broad coalition to save the vote and to build a massive demonstration in Washington on Aug. 28, the prospects for success would seem to be good.

China-Nepal flood is a warning from a warming planet

By Li Yang

The speed at which a glacier can become a disaster was revealed high in the Himalayas last week, at an elevation of roughly 5,200 meters (17,000 feet), when a glacier near the China-Nepal border fractured, unleashing a cascade of rock and ice. But what began as an ice avalanche soon became a high-speed debris flow and then turned into a catastrophic mudslide.

By the time it reached Gyirong Port in China's Xizang autonomous region, it was hurtling at roughly 180 kilometers (112 miles) per hour. The entire sequence from the initial collapse to the devastating arrival of the mudslide at Gyirong Port took only about seven minutes, leaving no time for prewarning and causing heavy casualties on both sides of the border.

Scientists have long warned that glaciers around the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and the broader Himalayan region—the so-called "Third Pole" and the largest body of ice outside the Arctic and Antarctic—are becoming increasingly unstable as the planet warms.

Glaciers are extraordinarily sensitive to temperature changes, and human-induced warming has been the primary driver of widespread glacial retreat since the 1990s. This continued melting does not merely make glaciers smaller but also destabilizes them, markedly increasing the likelihood of ice, rock, and water moving together. As the climate warms, such glacial chain disasters are becoming more frequent, more widespread, and more destructive.

The glacier was, in this case, more a messenger than a culprit. The years from 2015 through 2025 were the 11 hottest on record. Global greenhouse-gas emissions reached a record high, while glaciers worldwide lost an estimated 408 billion metric tons of mass in 2025 alone—equivalent to filling five Olympic-sized swimming pools every second of the year. The Himalayas are among the regions that suffered the greatest losses.

Yet, when such disasters occur, responsibility is often discussed as though emissions were neatly confined within national borders. They are not.



A smartphone assembled in Asia does not become environmentally benign because its eventual buyer lives in California. National emissions inventories by country generally count pollution where production occurs, even if production serves consumption elsewhere. The result is a peculiar accounting system in which wealthy societies consume carbon-intensive goods while much of the associated pollution appears on somebody else's ledger.

For instance, while the U.S.' territorial energy-related carbon dioxide emissions reached roughly 4.9 billion metric tons in 2025, its consumption footprint is significantly higher, revealing the carbon cost of outsourcing production to other countries.

This matters because the climate crisis is fundamentally a question of cumulative emissions. The U.S. alone is responsible for roughly one-fifth of all cumulative carbon dioxide emissions since 1850, with the European Union accounting for about 12%. Taken together, developed nations have emitted 60 to 65% of all greenhouse gases while representing less than 15% of the world's population.

The developed economies have benefited enormously from over two centuries of carbon-intensive industrialization. They therefore cannot plausibly present themselves as innocent bystanders when the consequences of their prosperity manifest in poorer and more vulnerable parts of the world.

Nor is climate finance charity. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities recognizes a basic fact: Countries share a common interest in stabilizing the climate, but they do not share identical histories or capacities.

The Paris Agreement explicitly requires developed countries to provide funds and technological support to developing nations. The pledge made in 2009 to mobilize $100 billion annually by 2020 was met two years late. Even now, the new target of $300 billion per year by 2035 remains a fraction of the $2.4 trillion that United Nations experts estimate developing countries actually need every year.

This makes the upcoming COP31 meeting in Antalya, Turkiye, more than just another diplomatic gathering. It should be a test of whether climate promises can evolve into practical solidarity.

The conference is expected to address climate finance, the transition away from fossil fuels, and measures for building climate-resilient societies.

Will wealthy countries provide developing countries the finance and technology needed not merely to reduce emissions but also to survive the consequences of warming that are already unfolding? The old answer—that everyone is responsible, therefore everyone is equally responsible—is morally convenient but scientifically inadequate. A glacier does not know where a factory is registered. Carbon dioxide does not carry a passport.

The mudslide along the China-Nepal border should therefore be seen as a warning from our warming planet. The question at COP31 is whether the world's wealthiest economies will heed this warning and acknowledge that helping vulnerable countries confront the consequences is not generosity but part of the bill for a crisis from which they have benefited for generations.

Iran, Israel, and McCarthyism 2.0: An interview with Joe Sims

By Nameh-Ye Mardom



Joe Sims, Co-Chair of the Communist Party USA, interviewed by Nameh-ye Mardom, publication of the Tudeh Party of Iran.

Nameh-ye Mardom: First, we would like you to briefly explain the viewpoint of the Communist Party USA on the current international situation and the role and position of U.S. imperialism in these conditions. If you could list three outstanding features to describe the current world situation, what do you think these three most important features of the present era are?

Joe Sims: The current international situation? It's a broad and challenging question — there's so much taking place, and we are required to make a concrete analysis of a concrete situation. That said, the international situation is, in a word, extremely dangerous. From our standpoint — and here I have to be cautious because there's a tendency in our country to act as if the U.S. is the center of the world — the main challenge is the growing fascist danger both domestically and internationally.

After the U.S. attack on Iran, in recent weeks there has been an elevated threat of a wider war in the Middle East. Then there's the Ukraine war, along with Cold War 2.0 policies aimed at China and the real danger of attempts at regime change in Cuba; these are among the chief challenges.

The danger of another world war is very much present. Let's remember that the Doomsday Clock is currently set at 85 seconds to midnight. This is the closest humanity has ever been to a symbolic global catastrophe since the clock's creation in 1947. And then there's the environmental crisis.

In the U.S., the absence of a sustained peace movement after the Gaza genocide is an ongoing challenge. While a substantial majority in our country opposes Trump's attack on Iran, this majority sentiment has not resulted in concrete actions aimed at ending the war — with the important exception of recent elections, where anti-war and anti-genocide sentiment has influenced the victory of progressive candidates in many places around the country.

Nameh-ye Mardom: On July 3, in the framework of the start of the 250th Independence Day weekend, Donald Trump addressed the spread of left-wing and socialist ideologies in the United States, framing communism as an ideological threat to the country. He declared that "Communism is a mortal threat to American liberty" and "the greatest threat to our country." He further stated: "We don't want communists in our country. Never worked, and it never will work." Is the CPUSA taking this seriously? Is he declaring a return to the McCarthyism of the 1950s? What are the implications for communist, left, and progressive forces in the U.S. today?

Joe Sims: Red scare politics have long been a staple of the Republican Party; it's a regular talking point for them. In the past, the GOP has even alleged that both President Obama and President Biden were socialists. Trump and MAGA, however, have taken things to a new level. We see this latest redbaiting offensive as an attempt to rile up their political base to increase voter turnout in preparation for the Congressional elections in November.

Does it represent a new McCarthyism? The GOP is now organizing a Congressional investigation of some left groups' alleged ties with China.

So yes, we take it very seriously. At the same time, we don't think these tactics will go over well with the broad U.S. public. Anti-communism, while not a spent force, has much less traction than in the past. In many respects, it's a new day in the U.S., and the American people aren't stupid.

Nameh-ye Mardom: How do you evaluate the relationship between the United States and Israel? Has public opinion in the United States changed regarding the fascist government of Israel compared to the past?

Joe Sims: Israel remains U.S. imperialism's proxy — and not vice versa. It's important to understand who's the dominant partner in the relationship. Some have alleged that Netanyahu forced Trump into attacking Iran, but in our view, that's likely a fable.

And yes, it's clear that the Gaza genocide has precipitated a huge shift in U.S. public opinion. In 2016, Israel was favored over Palestine by a margin of 62% to 15%.

By 2025, support for Israel fell below the 50% mark for the first time in Gallup's modern tracking (46% vs. 33%). In early 2026, Gallup recorded a statistical crossover, with 41% of Americans sympathizing more with the Palestinians and 36% with the Israelis — driven heavily by an accelerating shift among political independents and younger generations.

Nameh-ye Mardom: What do you think were the main goals of the two joint military attacks by the United States and Israel on Iran during the nuclear negotiations, and then the third military attack by the United States on Iran since July 7 after the signing of the memorandum of understanding between Iran and the United States? What goals are the U.S. and Israel seeking to achieve in Western Asia by militarily attacking Iran?

Joe Sims: The main goals of the two military attacks? It's a good question. If the goal was to eliminate Iran's nuclear capacity, the U.S. attack is likely to have the opposite effect. After all, why, after such duplicitous negotiating tactics, would anyone ever enter into an agreement with such an adversary? Indeed, in such circumstances, why would any country relinquish its ability to have a nuclear deterrent? To us, it makes no sense.

Nameh-ye Mardom: Did the U.S. and Israel achieve their goals by militarily attacking Iran?

If not, how do you assess the future of developments? President Trump had threatened to launch a nuclear attack on Iran. How serious do you assess this threat?

Joe Sims: Does the White House have a clear goal? Many are asking the same question, and the answer seems to change depending on which side of the bed Mr. Trump has woken up on. If the goal was eliminating Iran's ability to have a nuclear weapon, I doubt it but only the future will tell. Personally, I think it's difficult to put the nuclear genie back in the bottle. At the end of the day, the question requires a political solution — it's not possible to solve it militarily.

As for Trump's threats: we take them very seriously. Look, Trump and those around him are of a neo-fascist mindset. This is not hyperbole. It's important to understand that we're not dealing with bourgeois politics in the normal sense. These forces are a different breed.

Nameh-ye Mardom: The midterm elections will be held in the U.S. in November. What is your prediction about the results of these elections? Will the outcome of the elections lead to a limitation of the powers of President Trump, especially his powers regarding war with Iran?

Joe Sims: The generic ballot suggests that if the election were held today, the MAGA forces would lose the House of Representatives, where polling says the Democratic Party holds a 5% advantage. The Senate is a steeper climb, but it's possible that it can be won as well. However, no one knows if the White House will respect the election results. It's an open question. We are in a very, very dangerous situation, and all eventualities have to be prepared for.

The important thing here is that the anti-MAGA movement is growing in strength. And the labor movement is playing an increasingly active role — that's decisive to defeat the MAGA right.

Thanks for the opportunity to share our views with your audience. And please extend our deepest respect and solidarity to the members of Tudeh and to the Iranian people. Together, and with the working class and people of the world, we will overcome the present challenges.

Albania's Flamingo Revolution takes flight against Trump family land grab

By C.J. Atkins

Sazan Island sat off-limits to ordinary Albanians for most of the 20th century. Enver Hoxha's government turned it into a naval fortress, part of the Cold War policy that kept the country isolated from both the capitalist and socialist worlds. When that era ended in the early 1990s and the base was decommissioned, the island was left to the cormorants, the Mediterranean monk seals, and the flamingos that wade through the shallows of the Karaburun-Sazan Marine Park.

For over three decades, it was one of the few pieces of the Albanian coast that belonged to no one in particular—which is to say, it belonged to everyone. Now, the island is up for sale. And the buyer, as it turns out, is the family of the president of the United States.

In 2021, Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump, as the story goes, spotted Sazan from the deck of a yacht while cruising the Adriatic. Kushner's investment vehicle, Affinity Partners, has since teamed up with Qatari billionaire Moutaz Khayyat to turn the island and the wetlands nearby into a $1.4 billion resort complex, with another $4.7 billion earmarked for further tourism development along the Narta Lagoon in Zvërnec —the flamingos' actual nesting ground.

The lease papers for Sazan are reportedly still unsigned and the terms under review, but the bulldozers have already been moving.

Dodgy paperwork
Prime Minister Edi Rama approved the project shortly after Donald Trump's return to the White House. His party still carries the Socialist name it inherited from Hoxha's old Party of Labour, but three decades of privatization deals and courtship of foreign capital by both it and the country's other major party, the Democrats, have left little else of that inheritance behind.

Apart from the bad optics of selling off a piece of public land—which locals have now taken to calling *Ishulli i Trumpëve*, or Trump Island—Albanians are raising questions about how the government even managed to legitimize letting Sazan go on the market.

When you follow the money, the story gets very strange. Land records connected to the deal trace back to a forged Ottoman-era title. Artur Shehu, the man listed as Sazan's owner, has been on the radar of Albanian and Italian police for years over suspected drug and migrant smuggling by boat to Italy. In 1999, he vanished from Albania after a shootout with a rival gang at a bar. His lawyer claimed "communist thugs" were after him, and on that basis U.S. immigration authorities granted him political asylum in 2001.

He eventually became a U.S. citizen and bought a home on, fittingly, Flamingo Drive in Miami Beach. Italian prosecutors tried and failed to have him extradited in 2012 over an ice cream business he ran with a mob boss.

None of that stopped a Kushner-linked company from paying him roughly $125 million in April 2026 for the Zvërnec land his lawyer had conjured out of a doctored deed—money Albanian prosecutors have since frozen. Two months later, they charged Shehu and 19 others with running a cocaine-trafficking ring that moved product from South America hidden in shipments of charcoal and fruit, accusing him of laundering the proceeds through exactly this kind of Albanian real estate.

Flamingo Revolution
Villagers in Zvërnec, for their part, say the land was never Shehu's to sell. They were the first to hit the streets against the lease deal and ended up sparking what has become the largest civic uprising Albania has seen since the pyramid-scheme collapse of 1997, when the country's headlong rush into unregulated capitalism wiped out the savings of two-thirds of families and nearly pushed the country into civil war.

It started in May, when residents of Zvërnec pushed back against security crews fencing off a public beach. Riot guards pepper-sprayed demonstrators and a reporter covering the confrontation, and the anger spread to the capital city, Tirana, within days. By June 20, more than a quarter million people—in a country of roughly 2.5 million—were on the march in what has become known as the "Flamingo Revolution."

They're still going strong over two months later. Protesters have carried inflatable pink flamingos and waved a version of the Albanian flag with the black eagle replaced by the wetland bird. Water cannon and tear gas have been the government's response on multiple occasions, along with criminal charges against protest organizers.

The pressure hasn't come only from the street, though. Trump Island's developers have been leaning on Rama's government to remove any regulations that might slow down construction, demanding changes to Albania's Law on Protected Areas as well as designation of the resort as a "Strategic Investment" project. Those moves have prompted the European Union to intervene. In June, the European Commission warned that the project could jeopardize Albania's bid to join the EU because Kushner's construction work may violate European environmental standards.

Albanian Environment Minister Sofjan Jaupaj has tried to keep the EU satisfied, though with some reluctance.



He's promised construction is paused pending an environmental review with "civil society input." Jaupaj stopped answering reporters' questions, however, and the prime minister has continued to defend the deal publicly.

Rama also dismissed the ongoing uprising as a foreign-orchestrated "hybrid war," a framing that lets him avoid acknowledging that there's a homegrown revolt against his government. He calls the Kushner project a "vote of confidence" from international capital, but demonstrators see it simply as a government-backed sell-off of a national park to Trump family.

What makes the Flamingo Revolution remarkable is who is in it. Environmentalists and leftists built the early organizing muscle, but the crowds have pulled in LGBTQ activists, feminist collectives, clergy, and plenty of people who would never call themselves progressive. Gen Z, raised watching a third of the country's population pack up for Germany, Italy, Britain, and beyond, has supplied the movement's energy and its symbols.

Faith in neither party
Crucially, the crowds have refused to let the opposition Democratic Party, led by the equally scandal-scarred Sali Berisha, present itself as the answer. "Rama in prison, Berisha in prison" is now a standard chant. Berisha, who's previously been both president and prime minister, is blamed for overseeing the country's post-socialist impoverishment.

Albanians, it seems, are increasingly done choosing between the two mainline parties. They're no longer confident in the current ruling circle surrounding Rama, which traded much of its socialist program for privatization deals and foreign investment contracts.

And they want nothing to do with the Democrats, who've never pretended to have a program for working people. Both parties, the public has concluded, answer to the same investor class.

There is a lesson here that reaches well beyond the Balkans. Trump's family has spent his second term converting the machinery of the presidency into a global real estate brokerage, using access and leverage to extract concessions that would draw scrutiny anywhere with a functioning press or an independent judiciary.

Albania, still negotiating its way toward EU membership and still governed by laws that let "strategic investors" bypass ordinary environmental review, was an easy target—or so the Trumps and Kushners thought.

The Albanian people have decided otherwise. The working class and peoples of other countries would do well to study their response.

Unions blast Supreme Court's OK of Trump mail-in ballots ban

By Mark Gruenberg



WASHINGTON—Union leaders and constitutional scholars, including the three dissenting U.S. Supreme Court justices, blasted the High Court majority's go-ahead for Donald Trump's crusade to ban mail-in balloting this fall.

Though the six-justice GOP-named majority said the Trump administration admits it probably cannot implement the ban in time for the Nov. 3 elections, dissenting Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, and Ketanji Brown Jackson vigorously disagreed.

Sotomayor and Kagan said just the prospect of criminal prosecution for violating Trump's executive order ban on mail-in voting would cause some states which rely on it, and voters, to bow to Trump's dictate.

Jackson said upholding Trump's "unconstitutional" order would sow "chaos and confusion" because while the majority said the states challenging Trump acted too early, the majority didn't say when the right time is to act—including after the damage is done. She called the whole situation a "Kafkaesque nightmare."

"The government's actual objective: To secure our imprimatur [ratification] for its effort to foment chaos ahead of the November elections," Jackson wrote.

The vehement union disagreement came from Postal Workers President Jonathan Smith, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, and American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) President Everett Kelley.

All spoke at the Postal Workers (APWU) convention the week before the High Court ruling.

Trump has crusaded against mail-in balloting for more than a decade, claiming it is rife with fraud and particularly screaming that mailed-in ballots, which state and local election boards often count last, cost him the key states of Wisconsin, Michigan, Arizona, Nevada, Georgia, and Pennsylvania in his 2020 presidential election loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

Trump's executive order, and U.S. Postal Service regulations issued on Aug. 21 to implement it, would go even further: Trump's Department of Homeland Security would compile a master list of voters, turn it over to the USPS and the states, and the USPS would not deliver election mail to people whose names were not on the master list.

And if the 23 states plus D.C. that challenged Trump's order don't cooperate with DHS and provide it their voter lists for the matching process, none of their voters would get election-oriented mail, including ballots.

Even so, Trump's order is not yet in effect. The Supreme Court's Aug. 24 ruling stayed only one of the two injunctions blocking it—the one won by the 23 states and D.C. A second injunction, issued Aug. 11 by U.S. District Judge Indira Talwani in a separate suit brought by the League of Women Voters and other voting rights groups, still blocks the Postal Service's new rule nationwide. Voting rights advocates said they would go back to court immediately to challenge the final rule USPS issued Aug. 21, days before the justices ruled.

Now that he's back in the Oval Office, Trump and Republicans in Congress and state legislatures are doing everything they possibly can to disenfranchise workers, women, people of color, students, and people with disabilities—all groups which strongly oppose the extremist and corporate-backed MAGA agenda.

The ban on voting by mail is just part of that wide-ranging effort. It also includes the so-called SAVE Act, which critics label "Jim Crow 2.0" and which would apply nationwide, forcing states to scrub their voter rolls.

It's those rules that the Supreme Court majority greenlighted, even though the lower courts haven't finished with the challenges yet. It's also those rules the union leaders denounced.

Other Trump voter repression moves go up to and possibly including sending Trump's troops, a.k.a. ICE agents, to "monitor" the polls in heavily Democratic cities such as D.C., Atlanta, Detroit, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York. That intimidates voters, too.

AFGE President Kelley challenged the Postal Workers to go out and volunteer in the massive registration and get-out-the-vote drives that are planned or already underway.

"AFGE has repeatedly challenged the administration in court and held rallies in affected communities," he said. "Respond to attacks on service with organizing and turnout. Register voters, mobilize families and friends, and make concrete voting plans ahead of the November elections."

"Nobody knows better than you what they're trying to do with our elections," said Shuler. "They're attacking mail-in ballots" she said before listing other GOP attacks. "Vote by mail is going to be absolutely essential to making sure our voices are heard and you are absolutely essential to making sure that happens."

RAPID RESPONSE: Scrap the cap – Protect and expand Social Security

By People's World



Scrap the cap – Protect and expand Social Security

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand they protect and expand Social Security, an earned benefit with broad public support, that 71 million seniors and those with disabilities depend upon.

Stop the Wall St. power grab to privatize Social Security. Vote NO on any "fiscal commissions" proposed to cut benefits behind closed doors. Pass the Social Security 2100 Act (H.R. 9519 / S. 5042) to scrap the cap on Social Security taxes for top earners and increase benefits for all into the future.

Act on behalf of your constituents and make the wealthiest few pay on their full income and investments into the Social Security system. Vote NO on the PROMISE Act (S. 4979), the Fiscal Commission Act (H.R. 3289/S. 4012), and the Bipartisan Social Security Commission Act (H.R. 9187) and deny the privatization efforts!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

International News

The 24th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties

By CPUSA International Department

In his remarks, Díaz-Canel emphasized that the world is in one of its most dangerous periods amid a "perfect storm" triggered by capitalism's contradictions. "Marxism-Leninism remains fully valid," he declared, "insofar as it demonstrates that these crises are not accidental events, but the result of the laws of development of monopolistic and imperialist capitalism."

Drawing a direct connection between global imperialist aggression and the assault on Cuba, he said that "the genocide in Gaza and its shameful public display are not enough for them; they are trying to do the same in Cuba." He stressed that socialism remains the only realistic way out of "capitalist barbarism."

That resolution expressed solidarity with the PCC and the Cuban people, condemned the genocidal U.S. blockade, and denounced the arbitrary prosecution of General Raúl Castro Ruz by a Florida court. It demanded Cuba's removal from the false list of state sponsors of terrorism maintained by the United States. The resolution called for continued support for Cuba, intensified actions against the blockade, and strengthened cooperation in the struggle for peace and socialism. It also affirmed solidarity with the Palestinian people and other peoples resisting imperialist aggression.

The meeting concluded with delegates singing "The Internationale" together.

Los votantes de las elecciones primarias eligen a los candidatos basándose en los temas

Por John Wojcik

Los intentos de los medios de comunicación por dividir al electorado de múltiples formas volvieron a fracasar esta semana, ya que los votantes de Massachusetts desafiaron los supuestos deseos de un relevo generacional al optar por mantener en el Senado a Ed Markey, de 80 años, quien ocupa el cargo desde hace cinco décadas. Markey derrotó contundentemente a Seth Moulton, de 47 años.

Los votantes, incluidos los jóvenes, respaldaron a Markey debido a su firme postura progresista a lo largo de los años, que incluye su actual y decidida oposición a la guerra con Irán. Consideraron que la «oposición» de Moulton a dicho conflicto era más bien una crítica táctica a la forma en que Trump lo está llevando a cabo, y no una oposición a la idea misma de una guerra contra Irán.

Las personas de la comunidad LGBTQ también expresaron su descontento ante su oposición a la participación de niñas transgénero en deportes. Aunque él rectificó esa postura, al parecer dicha medida no bastó para cambiar la opinión de muchos votantes preocupados por los derechos de las personas transgénero y LGBTQ.

En otras contiendas electorales de Massachusetts, los candidatos de perfil más centrista —aunque muy conocidos— se impusieron a aquellos que se presentaban como más progresistas. En cualquier caso, todos los ganadores de las primarias del Partido Demócrata en Massachusetts llegarán al Congreso con el compromiso de oponerse a gran parte de la agenda de Trump. Ningún republicano ha sido elegido para el Congreso en representación de Massachusetts desde 1994.

Otro aspecto destacado de las elecciones del Partido Demócrata de esta semana fue la participación electoral.

Esta superó el número de republicanos que acudieron a votar en sus propias elecciones primarias.

Preocupado por la falta de entusiasmo entre los republicanos, el vicepresidente Vance recurrió esta semana a la retórica religiosa. Calificó al candidato demócrata al Senado de EE. UU. por Michigan, el Dr. Abdul El-Sayed, como «un hombre sumamente malvado». Con ello, apelaba al odio hacia los musulmanes y al nacionalismo cristiano de derecha. Dichos argumentos, junto con el anticomunismo y el antisocialismo, son prácticamente los únicos recursos que le quedan al Partido Republicano, dado que no quieren o no pueden abordar las preocupaciones reales de los votantes sobre la asequibilidad.

El Dr. El-Sayed ganó recientemente las elecciones en Michigan porque abordó esas inquietudes con propuestas concretas, como «Medicare para todos».

Otro recurso en el arsenal del Partido Republicano es el llamado «dinero oscuro» que fluye hacia las arcas de campaña de sus candidatos. Se define como dinero oscuro a los fondos provenientes de comités de acción política que operan en secreto, sin revelar los nombres de los donantes que los aportan.

Al analizar las finanzas de las campañas, se estima que la cantidad de dinero oscuro canalizado actualmente hacia las campañas republicanas ronda, como mínimo, los mil millones de dólares. La postura adoptada por la Corte Suprema ha permitido el uso ilimitado de dinero oscuro en las campañas políticas. Solo poner fin al control total del Partido Republicano sobre los tres poderes del Estado cambiará esta situación. Esta es una razón de peso más para lograr una participación masiva en las elecciones de mitad de mandato.

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State of the Unions

Shuler says workers ‘sick and tired’ of the GOP—and corporate Democrats, too

By Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler says workers are “sick and tired of both parties”—but she meant something specific: Republicans who enable Trump’s agenda, and Democrats who talk pro-worker but cozy up to the same corporate donors. Either way, she said, workers trust unions, and the federation is turning that trust into votes for pro-worker, pro-union candidates—provided they stand strong against corporate cash.

Shuler focused on politics in her annual State of the Unions address on Sept. 1. She said the federation aims to turn out 16 million votes from union members and their families, up from 14 million in 2024, and said the AFL-CIO would deploy 50,000 members in key states to protect the vote and the count.



That threat is real. Trump has mused about stationing ICE agents at the polls—seen as intimidation of the voters he targets: women, students, people of color—while allies pursue other ways to suppress turnout: blocking mailed ballots, banning vote by mail, stacking election boards with loyalists.

Meanwhile, the 50 biggest donors to congressional campaigns, led by Elon Musk, have poured $1.6 billion into races this cycle, trying to buy the election, Shuler said.

“We can’t outspend them. We can’t compete with the billionaire TV ads. But we don’t have to. Our answer is people talking to people,” she said, adding that beating back the oligarchs will be a long fight beyond 2026.

Shuler also pointed to the gap between the rich and everyone else. CEO pay rose 21% last year and is now 312 times the median worker’s pay, though Musk’s $158 billion pay puts him at 5,387 times the median.

Labor wants to organize two million more workers in five years—not far-fetched, since membership grew by half a million last year despite Trump’s gutting of contracts covering a million federal workers.

On the economy, Shuler cited a new poll: 94% of workers say costs are too high, and four in five say paychecks aren’t keeping up with groceries, rent, child care, and gas.

She criticized Trump’s Iran war and his voter repression, but she didn’t spare Democrats, either, echoing progressives and unions who say party leaders Sen. Chuck Schumer and Rep. Hakeem Jeffries haven’t stood up to Trump strongly enough, because too many Democrats depend on the same corporate donors as the GOP.

“Republicans…have rubber-stamped Trump’s needless wars, chaotic tariffs, and attacks on our communities,” she said. “At the same time, we have too many Democrats who pay lip service to working people…and then take office and cozy up to the same corporations we’re fighting on the picket lines. This year, it’s time to put the full weight of the labor movement behind candidates who will actually deliver.”

Mass mobilization, Shuler said, is the answer to corporate cash. “Billionaires can buy their yachts…but they cannot buy our democracy, and we’re not going to let them try,” she said. The three closest 2024 Senate races—Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin—were decided by a combined 63,000 votes out of nearly 16 million cast, she noted.

“One midterm election is not going to fix every problem,” Shuler said. “But winning in November…puts us directly on the path. So, from now until Nov. 3, every day is an all-out sprint.”

PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

LABOR DAY 2026:

Working people under siege and gearing up to fight back



This Labor Day, working people across the country are marking the holiday not just with parades and picnics, but with a hard reckoning: The ground beneath them is shifting fast, and the 2026 midterms may be the clearest chance yet to push back.

Start with the paycheck. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported the economy shed 23,000 jobs in July, with unemployment at 4.1%. It's part of a longer slide — job creation collapsed in 2025 to just 181,000 for the entire year, a fraction of what's needed to keep pace with a growing workforce.

Meanwhile the cost of groceries, rent, and everyday goods keeps climbing, with tariffs pushing prices higher still.

Federal workers have been hit hardest of all. The Trump administration has terminated well over 100,000 federal employees since taking office, gutting agencies and canceling union contracts along the way.

Black workers, who make up an outsized share of the federal workforce and for generations relied on government jobs as a pathway to better incomes, are bearing the brunt: Black unemployment overall climbed to 6.9% in 2025, and for Black women it jumped to 6.7%.

Add in the human cost of ICE raids tearing through workplaces from meatpacking plants to warehouses, uprooting immigrant workers and their coworkers alike.

Labor Day 2026: Working people under siege (cont'd)

"Just because you're not seeing violent conflict does not mean there is not a significant impact on the members and the communities," said UFCW Local 1189 President Adam Evenstad, whose members have organized to protect coworkers targeted by raids.

Fellow UFCW Local 663 President Rena Wong put it simply: "This is what it means to be a union, this solidarity. It should be the core of who we are — that none of us are alone."

Meanwhile, National Guard troops remain deployed in Washington, D.C. — a "temporary" occupation now extended through 2029 — as well as in Memphis and New Orleans, both majority-Black cities, at a cost of roughly $3 million a day — money critics say could instead house every unhoused person in the capital.

And this year's war against Iran, with billions of dollars already spent and Trump still asking for more money for weapons, shows where Washington's priorities lie when the bill comes due.

Republican legislatures are also moving just as aggressively when it comes to voting rights. They're redrawing congressional maps in states around the country to erase Black representation ahead of November.



They're aided by a Supreme Court that weakened protections against racial gerrymandering and a GOP Congress that continues to push the so-called "SAVE Act," another effort to strip people of the right to vote.

Labor isn't standing still. "We want to make sure our elected officials are answering to workers in this midterm election and beyond," AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said recently. "We have to build the coalitions to fight Big Tech and the billionaires."

This Labor Day, unity is the assignment, and November is the test.

— People's World Editorial Board



Skip Target for back-to-school shopping, teachers tell parents

By Brooklyn Crawford

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT), in collaboration with the AFL-CIO, has launched a nationwide campaign calling on teachers, parents, and communities to boycott Target for back-to-school shopping.

The union cited Target's refusal to condemn ICE for its illegal assaults on communities across the country over the past year, particularly in Minneapolis, where January's "Operation Metro Surge" led to the murders of two people, Renee Good and Alex Pretti, by federal agents.

"We gave Target ample time to stand with the communities in which they operate and help their neighbors," said AFT President Randi Weingarten, "but its silence about federal immigration abuses has been deafening."

Instead of spending at Target, teachers are urging shoppers to take their dollars elsewhere and support local businesses and retailers when possible. To help consumers find alternatives, they've launched a website at shopsmart.aft.org, which lists more than 5,000 unionized stores.

According to the AFT, its 1.88 million members individually spend an average of $895 of their own money on school supplies each year. Together, they also hold billions in Target stock via their pension accounts, giving the boycott significant leverage.

The "Shop Smart, Support Working Families" campaign comes a year after the AFT passed a resolution to boycott in support of African-American faith and community leaders who were responding to Target's rollback of its DEI commitments in the wake of President Donald Trump's return to office.

Target has half-heartedly attempted to restore trust with the Black community by partnering with HBCUs, and fulfilling its previously unfinished community investment commitment.

But the company remains on shaky ground with consumers. It came under scrutiny yet again from the Black community after it marketed a Halloween costume that resembled minstrelsy. Perhaps if Target had remained committed to equal opportunity for African-Americans at every level of its staffing, critics say, racist blunders like this wouldn't have happened.

The Washington Post recently reported on the growing labor coalition building around the boycott, hinting that the labor unions' interests lie in the fact that Target is not organized. The Post, under the influence of notorious union-buster Jeff Bezos, warns the ruling class that, "AFL-CIO's involvement might be intended as a subtle reminder that a nationwide drive to unionize stores could make the situation for management much worse."

Organizing efforts have been undertaken by Target workers in the past, but the retailer's union-busting tactics prevailed. After an organizing attempt at their Valley Stream, N.Y., location in 2011, Target was found to have violated labor law by the National Labor Relations Board, which noted that Target's employee handbook had "unlawful rules."

Target has a history of unfair play, facing scrutiny for its leaked anti-union employee training video and directing its management to prevent union development with training documents that state: "We don't believe that a union or any other third-party representative would improve anything—not for our team members, our guests, or the company...."

It's clear that as community and labor coalitions come together to direct people away from Target, the ruling class will do everything it can to block the boycott's growing power and protect their profits. The boycott has made a significant impact, which has been downplayed and brushed off by the business press. Since the start of the nationwide campaign in early 2025, Target had to replace its CEO, and its public image has increasingly become stained with corruption and cowardice.

While in the past Target may have been generally viewed as a progressive "woke" corporation with Pride merchandise and aisles for Black hair care products, its failure to support the will of local communities and its capitulation to the Trump administration have resulted in its public image becoming more associated with the policies and perspectives of the far right.

Just when Target thought it could convince the public the boycott was over, the labor movement stepped in as a powerful force to let everyone know that back to school means back to the boycott.

PEOPLE'S WORLD

People's World is a voice for progressive change and socialism in the United States. It provides news and analysis of, by, and for the labor and democratic movements to our readers across the country and around the world.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
FOUNDED 1924

September 12, 2026

Opposition is not enough: Authoritarian crisis requires a movement that votes

By Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove



3.5% is a data point that has become popular among people who want to build a movement to defeat authoritarianism and reconstruct democracy in the United States. It comes from great research by Erica Chenowith at Harvard University on nonviolent movements for social change – work we cited in our 2024 book, *White Poverty*.

After studying people's movements across the globe in different cultural contexts and at different moments in history, Chenoweth has concluded that a social movement that wins the active support of around 3.5% of a society's population wins its demands. The prospect of organizing a hundred million voters into a moral fusion movement in the United States is daunting, but it turns out that the movement itself doesn't need to be anywhere near that size. Because movements move people far beyond their immediate reach. By accelerating the active engagement of a relatively small portion of the population, a moral fusion movement can change the political possibilities for everyone.

It's true. We always have more power than we realize.

But it's also true that we all like to use numbers to reinforce what we already believe. Every number tells a story, but it never tells the whole story.

Take, for example, the authoritarian Nazi regime that controlled Germany from 1933-1945, a story we've spent considerable time reflecting on here this summer. The numbers are sobering. From the very beginning of Hitler's regime, the Nazis set up concentration camps in Germany. While the first official one was at Dachau, empty basements and warehouses were re-purposed as concentration camps from early in 1933.

These were not death camps for Jews. Those emerged later, and primarily on the Eastern Front after Germany invaded Poland. Concentration camps were the "re-education" centers the Nazis used to punish their opposition and instill fear in the German people. They were populated by trade unionists and Communists, Social Democrats who had held political office and clergy who objected to Nazi extremism. Most Germans interned in concentration camps were not killed, but the Nazis held hundreds of thousands of Germans in these camps.

Eric Boem, a German-Jewish man who fled Germany and served in the US Army, added up the numbers after World War II to try to understand the resistance. "Over a period of 12 years, almost 3,000,000 Germans were in and out of concentration camps and penitentiaries for political reasons," he noted. In 1930's Germany, that was almost 5% of the population – and that's just the people who were arrested and detained. While those who opposed the regime were not nearly as active or vocal as many Germans wanted to claim after war, we know from the research of the German Resistance Memorial Center that many underground networks and individual acts of resistance were never detected by the Gestapo.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
PEOPLE'S WORLD
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Opposition is not enough: Authoritarian crisis requires a movement that votes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

If there were three times as many Germans who actively opposed the regime as were arrested for doing so, that would mean more Germans resisted the Nazi Party than ever joined it. (At its peak, the party had 8.5 million members.)

Still, the Nazis held power and terrorized the world, murdering more than 11 million people and waging a war that killed tens of millions more.

Whenever we pay attention to the numbers it's clear that opposition to evil alone is not enough to stop it. By definition, authoritarian regimes do not have popular support. They instill fear, flood the public with propaganda, and try to subvert elections because they know most people do not want the policies that almost exclusively benefit authoritarians and their wealthy allies.

Good historians of the American South have long noted that most people – Black and white – did not benefit from the authoritarianism of plantation capitalism. White supremacy did not reign for centuries because most people wanted it. It stayed in power because the oligarchs who benefited from the system were successful in preventing their opposition from organizing a movement that could reclaim the tools of government.

We are the heirs of giants who figured out how to nonviolently build power that could move people from opposition to transformation.

They were school teachers and beauticians, share croppers and preachers, college students and military veterans. Many of them were geniuses in their own right, but they were, as as group, neither generously financed nor especially well trained in any particular technique of social change. They were everyday people who exhibited incredible courage and used simple tools to do one thing incredibly well: they built a movement that would vote.

From the time of the first sit-ins 1960 until the major legislative changes that transformed America in the late 1960s and early 1970s, millions of new voters registered and participated in elections across the South. In Mississippi alone, Black voter participation went from 7% to 70% in a decade. It did not happen because of any one voice or one campaign. It took millions of people who opposed a regime embracing a vision that inspired them to take sustained action to build a movement that would vote.

Poll numbers suggest that the vast majority of Americans oppose the extremism that surrounds us. But opposition is not enough. We have been inviting people to organize marches to the polls in their communities ahead of the midterm elections because we know a movement that votes for a better vision of our common life is the only thing that has the power to stop authoritarianism. Wherever you are, we hope you'll take time today to learn how you can help organize a march to the polls that will mobilize infrequent voters in your area to take back the tools of our government.

Dead canaries everywhere: The impending collapse under Trump

By Rob Warzyniak

In the late 19th century, coal miners began bringing canaries into the mines. These canaries, more sensitive to the ambient air and therefore more susceptible to toxic gases, were used as an early warning signal. The idea was that if the canary became ill or, in a more extreme environment, died, the miners had a little time to escape before they, too, were overwhelmed by toxic gases. A sick bird meant the danger was real. A dead bird meant the danger was imminent.

There is a reason the right-wing elements of political society are prominently anti-communist, or even anti-socialist: they know, because history has shown us, that socialism and communism lead to a more egalitarian society where people's needs are prioritized over profit. With the profit motive removed and the playing field leveled, there is no longer anyone left to feel superior, and the power of the ruling class is in jeopardy. Right-wing ideologies justify inequalities as the "natural order," while the class system with its "haves" and "have-nots" is "human nature." This is wrong, of course, but because it is endemic to this nation's history, it is treated as immutable.

The ideological framework that infuses the U.S. political and economic system successfully paints opposition as dangerous and dissenters as radical agitators.



It works because people don't have time to read books and ask questions when they have to work three jobs, and their kid is sick from a preventable disease because the Secretary of Health doesn't think vaccines work. Because of this, people are unable to recognize patterns for what they are, and since change happens incrementally, you end up with a pile of dead canaries before you smell the toxic gases.

The Trump administration, like so many far-right political administrations, is adept at taking legitimate societal grievances and directing them towards convenient scapegoats.

The immigrant population is currently being used to justify the horrors wrought by the Trump administration as a way to Make America Great Again, and the plan is customized to fit a wide audience. Housing costs too high? Too many immigrants. Not enough jobs to go around? Too many immigrants. A rise in contagious diseases? Must be the immigrants. Healthcare costs rising? Those damn immigrants again. By not actually addressing legitimate concerns or even agreeing that problems exist related to the unhoused, the unemployed, and those without healthcare, no solutions need to be created. This is a dead canary.

Because the free market gave us lettuce loaded with parasites that give us explosive diarrhea, people have to go to the hospital. And if you need an IV, hope you don't get hooked up to a saline bag that was recently flagged for containing fiberglass. Because the free market gave us private insurance that doesn't cover anything, people are saddled with bills they can't pay, followed by debt and eventual bankruptcy. Recent polling shows that between 36% and 42% of adults skipped needed healthcare in the past year because of cost, with 1 in 5 of those reporting their health worsened as a result. Forbes estimates over half a million people file for bankruptcy due to medical bills every year, a uniquely American issue. This is not the hallmark of a thriving nation, and another dead canary was added to the pile.

As the U.S. gallops toward certain doom because oil company CEOs bought politicians who told people climate change isn't real, the rest of us are stuck with the consequences. While climate change denialists forget that water is a solid at 0°C and a liquid at 1 °C , glaciers in Nepal are collapsing. Scientists have known for decades that our thirst for fossil fuels would be our undoing, but the car was sold to the public as a symbol of freedom. That glorious open highway held endless possibilities, along with expensive fuel and repairs, highway maintenance, and government subsidies to automobile companies.

While China builds high-speed rails, our bridges collapse as our cars idle in traffic for hours, pouring greenhouse gases into the air. And instead of building apartments up, the U.S. built homes out, convincing the public that everyone needs a house with sprawling acres of lawn and a grocery store 20 miles away. That's another dead canary.

The surveillance state continues unabated, save for a few heroes who take a hacksaw to Flock camera poles. Massive data centers are built at the behest of the owning class and to the detriment of the public, siphoning valuable resources away from communities that never wanted them in the first place. Our taxes go to bombing innocent brown people thousands of miles away, while the secret police disappear innocent brown people from our own streets. The pile of dead canaries is getting deeper.

With the recent overturning of a law banning firearms from Post Office property, the public can now arm themselves while they get their stamps, as the founding fathers intended. The midterm elections are two months away, the Republican Party is desperate to hold onto power, and MAGA believes everything Donald Trump tells them. Since Trump believes mail-in ballots are ripe for fraud (even though he uses them), and MAGA has a history of storming federal buildings at the behest of their dear leader, his supporters harassing postal workers will have no consequences whatsoever. We're stepping on dead canaries over here.

The United States and its experiment with capitalism are going as intended: the rich get richer as they eat up the environment and the poor along with it. The democratic process is being stripped away. The State is still kidnapping innocent people and giving ICE money to buy "shock gloves." Dead canaries are everywhere, and for a group of people who use the word "woke" as a pejorative, they are committed to sleeping through the signs of impending collapse. Are we great again yet?

Dolly Parton: Working class hero

By C.J. Atkins



The tributes to Dolly Parton pouring out this week will dwell on her song catalog—"Jolene," "Coat of Many Colors," "I Will Always Love You"—and on the causes now attached to her name: her free book program for children and her trailblazing for women in a business men built to keep them out.

Those things alone are enough to merit praise, but they aren't the whole picture. Dolly Parton was a woman who spent six decades in the spotlight but never stopped being what she started out as: working class and loyal to everyone else who was.

Dolly Rebecca Parton was born Jan. 19, 1946, the fourth of 12 children, in a one-room cabin in Sevier County, Tennessee. Her parents sharecropped somebody else's land before they scraped together enough, years later, to buy a small farm of their own. "We had a lot of stuff that money can't buy anyhow," she said of those years, "things like love and kindness and understanding. And we had music."

Dolly left for Nashville the day after her 1964 high school graduation. She was determined to break into a business where it was hard enough for a woman to get taken seriously as a singer, let alone as a songwriter, but she insisted on being both.

For her entire career, her music was also union-made.

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She was a member of the American Federation of Musicians Local 257 in Nashville until the very end, filing union contracts on her sessions and tours so her band got the wages that come with a union card. “Before she was an icon, Dolly was a working musician,” AFM President Tino Gagliardi said after her death. Local 257 President Dave Pomeroy put it plainer: “Throughout her 58 years as a proud member in good standing of Local 257, she set the gold standard for supporting her band and fellow musicians.”

That working-class instinct is also the real backstory behind “9 to 5.” The song, and the Jane Fonda film it scored, are remembered now as 1980s workplace comedy, but they grew out of a real class struggle. Fonda, who had the idea for the film, based its story on a Boston clerical workers’ organization called 9to5 that was founded in 1972 by Ellen Cassedy and Karen Nussbaum. It rallied secretaries around pay, harassment, and the daily humiliation of being invisible in their own offices.

9to5’s research exposed banks and insurance companies illegally colluding to fix wages and keep women’s pay low. The group won a 10% raise before growing into SEIU District 925. “Your boss is organized,” Nussbaum liked to say. “You better be organized too.”

Fonda expressed the class consciousness that the film sought to inspire: “What I found was that secretaries know the work they do is important, is skilled, but they also know they’re not treated with respect. They call themselves ‘office wives.’ They have to put gas in the boss’s car, get his coffee, buy the presents for his wife and mistress. So, when we came to do the film, we said...what you have to do is write a screenplay which shows you can run an office without a boss, but you can’t run an office without the secretaries!”

Parton wrote the anthem for the politics and organizing that not only defined the fight for women workers but also captured a truth that all workers know in their heart: “It’s a rich man’s game no matter what they call it, and you spend your life puttin’ money in his wallet.”

On that same LP as “9 to 5,” Parton also covered Woody Guthrie’s “Deportee (Plane Wreck at Los Gatos),” the elegy for 28 Mexican farmworkers killed in a 1948 crash while being flown back across the border, whom media at the time hadn’t even bothered to name, unlike the American crew. “Who are these dear friends all scattered like dry leaves,” she sang, “The radio said they were just deportees.” She staked out a position of support for immigrant workers at a time when politicians were calling for mass deportations, a time much like our own.

She was clear, too, long before it was safe in country music to be so, about where she stood on gay and transgender people. Her 1991 song “Family” put it in a single verse: “Some are preachers, some are gay, some are addicts, drunks and strays, but not a one is turned away when it’s family.”

The support went beyond words, though. Her film production company, Sandollar, put up the money behind “Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt,” the 1989 AIDS Memorial Quilt documentary that won the Academy Award while Ronald Reagan’s White House stayed silent on the epidemic.

In 2004, the Ku Klux Klan announced plans to picket Dollywood’s Gay Day; the park’s spokesman said flatly that the demonstrators “will not be allowed on Dollywood property,” and the event went on undisturbed. Parton made her own position explicit a few years later, after a lesbian visitor was asked to turn a marriage equality T-shirt inside out at one of her parks: “Everyone knows of my personal support of the gay and lesbian community,” she said. “Dollywood is a family park and all families are welcome.”

She was secure enough in that support to once enter a Dolly Parton look-alike drag contest at a gay bar in West Hollywood, incognito — and lose. “They just thought I was some little, short gay guy,” she said afterward.

When the fight for marriage equality was raging in the 2000s, she lent her backing in the most Dolly of ways, saying, “Why can’t they be as miserable as us heterosexuals in their marriages?” That was years before the U.S. Supreme Court eventually ruled the religious right’s gay marriage bans unconstitutional.

Her instinct to defend people other folks looked down on showed up on screen, too. When she signed on to play a brothel madam in the 1982 film “The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas,” Parton said she hoped the self-appointed “Moral Majority” would watch it, provocative title and all. “It points a finger at a lot of people, and some of ’em ain’t whores,” she said. “Like people who get fake religion.”

She refused to let the film’s women be treated as a punchline, either: “Prostitutes...are some of the sweetest, most caring people I’ve known because they’ve been through everything,” she said, tracing their circumstances back to broken dreams and abuse rather than to any failure of character. It was the same argument, dressed up as a comedy, that she’d make in earnest for the rest of her life: judge the hypocrites, not the people they judge.

Years later, after a relative and a friend of hers came out as transgender, she wrote the song “Travelin’ Thru” for “Transamerica,” the 2005 film about a trans woman. “I have a friend and a relative who are transgender,” she explained. “I said, ‘I’ll be happy to make a stab at that.’” The song earned her an Oscar nomination.

The same reflex showed up when other people were targeted by those in power. In 2005, with Cat Stevens—by then Yusuf Islam—still barred from the United States after being wrongly flagged on a post-9/11 security watch list, Parton put him on her album “Those Were the Days,” singing “Where Do the Children Play?” as a duet. “He’s a precious man,” she said.

"He's got a lot of bad press lately, but I think he's out to try to save the world, not destroy it."

In August 2020, as racist police murder sparked a national uprising that brought millions into the streets, Dolly was asked point-blank about Black Lives Matter and her thoughts on the protests. She didn't hedge: "Of course Black lives matter. Do we think our little white asses are the only ones that matter? No!" Her support for African American communities stretched back even further.

When she earned $10 million in royalties from Whitney Houston's 1992 cover of "I Will Always Love You," Dolly used the money to buy an office complex and strip mall in a Black neighborhood in Nashville and made it into her headquarters, bringing development and jobs to an area overlooked by other investors.

"It was mostly just Black families and people that lived around there," she said. "And I thought, 'This is the perfect place for me to be, considering it was Whitney.'"

She built all of that—the music empire, the theme park, the 3,000-song catalog—out of a one-room cabin with no electricity, and she never forgot it. What she did with the fame and fortune it bought her was spend it on people who needed the cover more than she did: the musicians in her band, the secretaries who inspired her biggest hit, the gay and trans kids looking for acceptance in a hostile world, the Muslim man barred at the airport, the Black marchers in the summer of 2020. That is a working-class hero's résumé, and the rest is the soundtrack of her life.

Organizing success: DreamWorks remote workers ratify first union agreement

By Chauncey K. Robinson

BURBANK, Calif.—DreamWorks remote workers ended 2025 with a vote to unionize, and months later, on Aug. 21, they have overwhelmingly ratified their first collective bargaining agreement. The organizing victory saw 97% of participants voting in favor of the contract. Of the 108 eligible voters, 90 cast ballots, representing an impressive 83.3% voter turnout.

The Animation Guild (TAG), IATSE Local 839, which represents the workers, announced in a press release that the victory underscores "that all animation workers (regardless of zip code) should be given the same rights and protections."

Before the contract, remote workers organized around what they explained as longstanding inequities between remote and on-campus employees. This included unequal wages, benefits, and job protections. The union asserts that the newly signed contract delivers parity with on-campus workers, including pension and healthcare coverage.

"This contract is a huge victory for DreamWorks remote artists but also for the animation industry as a whole," said Anthony Holden, DreamWorks Story Artist and member of the Negotiation Committee. "Our coworkers who work in-person at studios in L.A. [Los Angeles] enjoy mobility between employers with guaranteed benefits, such as healthcare coverage and a pension plan. Many of us remote DreamWorkers have served for years (and in some cases decades) in the same industry without the same protections."

Key agreement gains include retirement and healthcare benefits —the same healthcare and pension plans as on-campus workers —and wage increases that establish the same minimum wage standards that apply under TAG's Master Agreement.

The lowest-paid remote artist covered by the agreement will see compensation increase from $40.82 per hour to $62.22 per hour, representing a 52.4% wage increase.

"Now we can work under the same terms as our union brothers and sisters.



This contract represents an important shift towards broader industry change that values and respects not only artists' skills but also our right to choose to live in locations around the country that are best for our families and personal circumstances," Holden noted.

The organizing effort comes at a time when Hollywood—and the entertainment industry as a whole—has continued to face challenges, including a decrease in production both globally and in Los Angeles, company mega-mergers, and the looming threat of AI to creatives' jobs. This tumultuous climate has galvanized many workers to seek unionization, recognizing the stronger collective power it gives them.

On the heels of the DreamWorks ratification, Production Management Workers at Sony Pictures Animation voted on Aug. 27 to join TAG as well. This was after the workers sought voluntary recognition from the company. Sony declined the request and instead required workers to proceed through an NLRB election.

TAG noted that the voting results "demonstrated strong support for union representation," with 95% voter participation and 84% voting in favor of unionizing.

"Despite Sony's deliberate attempts to challenge our movement, when the rubber hits the road, we're all in favor of dignity and respect in the workplace," said Grayson Arndt, Sr. Administrative Assistant. "Now it's time to take our seat at the table."

Production Coordinator Maddie Rodriguez added: "It's exciting to follow in the footsteps of so many animation production workers before us, and it's continually heartening to know that we were never alone. So many of us have wanted this for so long. Together, we are Prod Strong!"

State of the Unions: Workers tired of the GOP—and corporate Democrats, too

By Mark Gruenberg



WASHINGTON—AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler says workers are "sick and tired of both parties"—but she meant something specific: Republicans who enable Trump's agenda, and Democrats who talk pro-worker but cozy up to the same corporate donors. Either way, she said, workers trust unions, and the federation is turning that trust into votes for pro-worker, pro-union candidates—provided they stand strong against corporate cash.

Shuler dwelled on politics in her annual State of the Unions address on Sept. 1. She repeated the federation's goal of turning out 16 million votes from union members and their families, up from 14 million in 2024, and said the AFL-CIO would deploy 50,000 members in key states to protect the vote and the count.

That threat is real. Trump has mused about stationing ICE agents at the polls—seen as intimidation of the voters he targets: women, students, people of color—while allies pursue other ways to suppress turnout: blocking mailed ballots, banning vote by mail, stacking election boards with loyalists.

Meanwhile, the 50 biggest donors to congressional campaigns, led by Elon Musk, have poured $1.6 billion into races this cycle, trying to buy the election, Shuler said.

"We can't outspend them. We can't compete with the billionaire TV ads. But we don't have to.... Our answer is people talking to people," she said, adding that beating back the oligarchs will be a long fight beyond 2026.

Shuler also pointed to the gap between the rich and everyone else:

CEO pay rose 21% last year and is now 312 times the median worker's pay, though Musk's $158 billion compensation package stands as an outlier. He is paid 5,387 times the media worker's salary.

She repeated labor's goal of organizing two million more workers in five years—not far-fetched, since membership grew by half a million last year despite Trump's gutting of contracts covering a million federal workers.

On the economy, Shuler said the federation's members think "shit's too expensive," citing a new poll: 94% of workers say costs are too high, and four in five say paychecks aren't keeping up with groceries, rent, child care, and gas.

She criticized Trump's war on Iran and his voter repression—but didn't spare Democrats, either, echoing progressives and unions who say party leaders Sen. Chuck Schumer and Rep. Hakeem Jeffries haven't stood up to Trump strongly enough, because too many Democrats depend on the same corporate donors as the GOP.

"Republicans...have rubber-stamped Trump's needless wars, chaotic tariffs, and attacks on our communities," she said. "At the same time, we have too many Democrats who pay lip service to working people...and then take office and cozy up to the same corporations we're fighting on the picket lines. This year, it's time to put the full weight of the labor movement behind candidates who will actually deliver."

That frustration has fueled a wave of insurgent wins, from New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani to Michigan Senate nominee Dr. Abdul El-Sayed and Florida's Angie Nixon.

Mass mobilization, Shuler said, is the answer to corporate cash. "Billionaires can buy their yachts...but they cannot buy our democracy, and we're not going to let them try," she said. The three closest 2024 Senate races—Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin—were decided by a combined 63,000 votes out of nearly 16 million cast, she noted.

"One midterm election is not going to fix every problem," Shuler said. "But winning in November...puts us directly on the path. So, from now until Nov. 3, every day is an all-out sprint."

Republican gerrymandering scheme takes a loss in Missouri courts

By Bryesen Cooper

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.—A day after hundreds of people rallied outside the Missouri Supreme Court, justices dealt President Donald Trump, Secretary of State Denny Hoskins, and the Republican Party a major defeat. The court ruled on Thursday that Missouri's newly redrawn, Trump-backed congressional map cannot be used in the November 2026 election—or in any election after that—unless voters approve it themselves at the ballot box.

The rally was the latest turn in a fight that goes back nearly a year. Last September, a coalition of churches, community organizations, and labor unions packed the Capitol building in Jefferson City by the thousands, demanding fair electoral maps. In the year since, Missourians have collected and submitted over 300,000 signatures to overturn the racist, sloppily drawn, and unconstitutional redistricting passed by the state legislature.

This map, demanded by Trump, seeks to steal more seats for the Republican Party and provide a further cushion of yes-man politicians for the policies that are destroying the economy at home in the U.S. and putting the future of the world at risk for the billionaire agenda.

The new map targeted the seat of Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. The GOP scheme carves more than 70,000 minority residents out of the 5th District and replaces them with whiter, more rural, more Republican territory. It engineers an 8.5% jump in the district's white population, the largest demographic shift of any district in the new map—diluting the voting strength of the Kansas City community that has sent Cleaver to Congress for more than two decades.

As it currently stands, six of Missouri's eight seats are held by Republicans and two by the Democrats—a surprise to some, given that nearly 40% of Missouri voters cast ballots for the Democratic Party in the most recent election. As many activists argue, the new gerrymandered map would be gerrymandering the gerrymander, since the state's congressional delegation is already considered so slanted.

Hoskins had refused to certify thousands of the petition's signatures and worked to draw out the certification process past the deadline—an obstruction effort the Missouri Supreme Court put to rest.

Judge Ginger K. Gooch wrote in her ruling Thursday that Hoskins and the Republican Party "are restrained and enjoined from implementing, using, or mandating the use of the congressional redistricting in HB 1 for the November 2026 general election or at any other time thereafter unless and until HB 1 is approved by the voters at the November 2026 general election and takes effect 30 days thereafter."



Following the ruling, People Not Politicians Executive Director Richard Von Glahn stated,
"This victory reaches beyond Missouri. In a year when map-drawing has become a national weapon, courts across the country are watching what happens here. A Missouri win for the referendum is a signal that the people still hold the power."

The ruling doesn't erase the massive red-baiting campaign Republicans waged nationally against the People Not Politicians coalition, though. Leading MAGA figures, including Donald Trump Jr. and the Missouri GOP, circulated allegations that coalition partners were tied to the Communist Party USA, an effort to divide the coalition and endanger grassroots organizers.

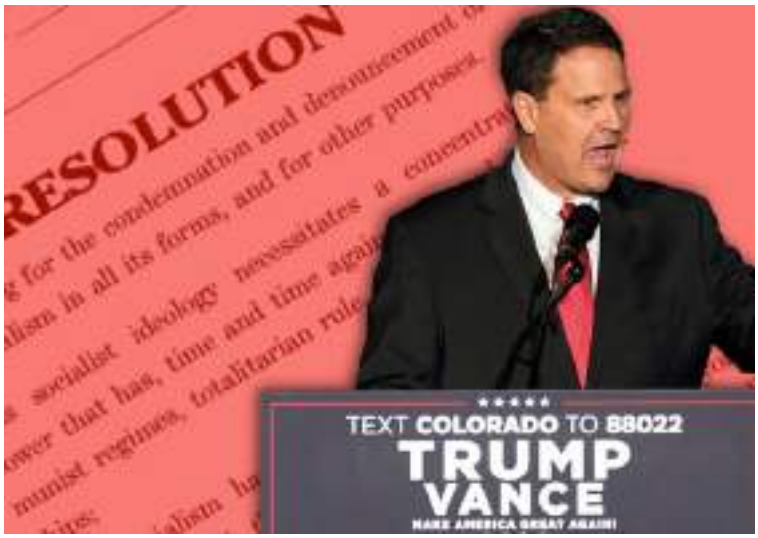
In a December X post, Trump, Jr., wrote that Von Glahn was "trying to STEAL a GOP house seat in Missouri through an unlawful referendum," and linked to a volunteer sign-up form that read: "We're leading a statewide initiative in Missouri to stop the Communist Party's very own Richard Von Glahn, who is using George Soros's dark money to fund an unlawful referendum that would STEAL a Missouri GOP House Seat."

Missouri Secretary of State Denny Hoskins joined in, citing the CPUSA's own coverage of the gerrymandering fight in a Facebook post and declaring, "If the Missouri Communists are 'big mad' at me, I must be doing something right.... I will never bow down to the communist party!"

Now the final decision is in the hands of the voters, where all of Missouri will decide whether Republicans will be allowed to impose their map and strengthen their hold on power. The time to hit the streets and talk to our neighbors is now, and the working-class coalition in Missouri is going to keep this marathon running.

House approves anti-socialist red-baiting resolution

By Mark Gruenberg



WASHINGTON—It is normal in the leadup to elections for lawmakers to put up for vote a variety of so-called "messaging bills," allowing them to stake out positions on issues in the public eye. As the midterm elections rapidly approach, the GOP finds itself in trouble on the messaging front because it has done nothing to address the major concerns of voters.

Facing that situation, they have resorted to the time-tested tactic of red-baiting. On Sept. 1, after returning from their August recess, Republicans put forward a resolution condemning socialism to deflect attention from the fact that they are absent when it comes to dealing with the affordability crisis crushing Americans right now.

But the resolution was not just a message—it was a trap, and its lead advocate, Rep. Jeff Crank, R-Colo., did not hide it.

"I keep hearing people like [Minority Leader] Hakeem Jeffries and others in the Congress saying that they oppose the DSA [Democratic Socialists of America]," Crank told reporters ahead of the vote. "Let's see if they're willing to vote for a resolution that would oppose them."

Republicans sharpened the snare by folding their long-sought SAVE Act voter ID legislation into the same resolution, so that any Democrat who voted for the socialism condemnation would also be on record backing the GOP's voter-suppression bill—and any who voted no could be branded soft on socialism, whatever their actual reason for opposing it.

The non-binding resolution attacked the DSA by name, New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani without naming him, and linked the Democrats in general to socialism and communism while pitching the GOP's voter repression bill as a remedy.

Crank described the resolution as "providing for the condemnation and denouncement of socialism in all its forms, and for other purposes."

The House approved it on a 220-192 vote, with eight Democrats joining all 211 voting Republicans and a GOP-leaning independent for it.

All the "no" votes were Democrats, though two also voted "present."

The Democrats who supported the resolution included Reps. Kathy Castor of Florida, Henry Cuellar of Texas, Don Davis of North Carolina, Jared Golden of Maine, Vicente Gonzalez of Texas, Marie Gluesenkamp Perez of Washington, Darren Soto of Florida, and Gabe Vasquez of New Mexico. Those who voted present were Reps. Chrissy Houlahan of Pennsylvania and Maggie Goodlander of New Hampshire.

"The DSA is a threat to the American values that make our nation great. This evening's vote shows who stands for freedom, and others who stand with socialism," Crank declared during debate on Sept. 1.

"Socialism is one of the most destructive ideologies in world history, and the DSA have permeated elections across the country and have co-opted much of the Democratic Party," Crank later when explaining the supposed need for his red-baiting resolution.

"Freedom-loving citizens across the country know socialism is the first step to communism, and every communist regime has brought only oppression, murder, and starvation,"

He accused "the highest levels of Democrat leadership" of refusing to denounce DSA "for fear of political retribution among their ranks." He justified attaching the SAVE Act to the resolution because DSA wants, he charged to "allow noncitizens and incarcerated criminals to vote in American elections."

Most Democrats refused to play along with the trap. Instead, they pointed out the GOP was spending its floor time on a non-binding messaging exercise rather than tackling the affordability crisis and blasted the resolution's built-in endorsement of the GOP's voter-suppression SAVE Act, which the House had approved on a party-line vote earlier this year.

A handful of centrist Democrats tried a different tack, attempting to find a way to still join in on attacking socialism while not signing up for the assault on voting rights. The day before the floor vote, Reps. Josh Gottheimer of New Jersey, Hillary Scholten of Michigan, Jared Moskowitz of Florida, and Tom Suozzi of New York introduced their own resolution condemning the DSA, stripped of Crank's SAVE Act language, which Gottheimer called a "poison pill."

"If you actually want to take on socialism instead of playing political games, you don't slip in the SAVE Act as a poison pill that you know no Democrat will vote for," Gottheimer said. Scholten said the point was to "expose this fraudulent, insincere attempt by Republicans" to use socialism as cover for the voting bill.

The Republican-controlled House Rules Committee blocked the Democrats' amendment from getting a vote, sending Crank's original combined resolution to the floor intact.

Other Democrats chose to challenge the resolution head-on. Rep. Brad Schneider, D-Ill., dismissed the GOP's framing outright: "They can put lipstick on a pig, it's still their voter suppression bill." Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Wis., a member of the Painters union, labeled the resolution "stupid." Rep. Tlaib declared, "I say as a member of DSA: Tax the rich."

Rep. Delia Ramirez, D-Ill., had some of the most-pointed criticism.

"As long as they and their bosses profit from the policies of racism, colonialism, capitalism, imperialism, white supremacy, and patriarchy, they don't care if you are sick, starving, deported, detained, or even dead," she said of the Republican Party and MAGA.

"I bet they take issue with those of us who are standing in their way. Bottom line, my colleagues are afraid of the American people seeing through their cowardice, greed, and lust for power."

Observers outside of Congress also saw the resolution for what it was. "This is red meat for the GOP base," said Joe Sims, co-chair of the Communist Party USA. "They're trying to motivate their base to turn out in November. But try as they might, the U.S. people aren't buying their red-baiting—that's been proven in primary after primary, East, West, North and most recently in the deep South." Sims also had a warning for the Republicans behind the maneuver. "Watch out MAGA, we'll remember in November. Your time is coming."

Crank's resolution almost didn't make it to the floor but was saved by two of the anti-socialist Democrats. Before the House can consider any measure, it must adopt a "rule" to govern debate. Votes on rules are considered mandatory to follow party lines and defections can bring intraparty retribution, especially in the GOP.

But this rule vote was 210-208, with Democratic Reps. Gluesenkamp Perez and Golden joining the Republicans. Had the duo voted with their party, the rule would have failed and the anti-socialist statement wouldn't have come up at all.

RAPID RESPONSE: Housing is a human right!

By People's World



HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representatives and demand they co-sponsor and support S. 5284, the Green New Deal for Public Housing Act, introduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and Rep. Delia Ramirez, along with 40 House and six Senate co-sponsors.

Our nation is facing a climate emergency and an affordable housing crisis. This bill would provide a generational rebuild of our nation's public housing stock that decarbonizes neighborhoods and delivers thousands of union-wage jobs.

On this Labor Day, join with the Building Trades and other trade unions and organizations supporting this bill to fulfill housing as a human right and provide sustainability and resiliency for communities across our country!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

International News

Communist Party of Britain delivers medical aid to Cuba

By CPUSA International Department

A delegation from the Communist Party of Britain (CPB) was received at Cuba's Ministry of Public Health by Dr. Henry López Jimenez, deputy director of public health and a veteran of Cuba's Medical Brigades in Mozambique. The delegation, led by CPB General Secretary Alex Gordon and Party Chair Lorraine Douglas, presented the Cuban health service with over £2,000 of medicines, an advance donation from the Aid for Cuba appeal recently launched by the CPB, which raised £32,000.

Dr. López Jimenez outlined the extreme privations created in Cuba's world-renowned health system as a result of the U.S. blockade and sanctions regimes. Cuba's infant mortality rate has increased as a direct consequence of the deliberate attack on the Cuban people's health care system. Cuban surgeons and nurses have been forced to complete medical operations using light from their own mobile phones during power outages.

CPB General Secretary Alex Gordon told Cuban health officials: "The world looks in wonder and admiration at the immense health care achievements of the Cuban people's revolution. Now the Trump regime's medical blockade is causing what President Miguel Díaz-Canel recently called 'collective punishment' which already has the character of genocide." He declared that the people of Britain stand by Cuba and that Britain's communists stand by Cuba's socialist and sovereign revolution.

La tasa oficial de desempleo se mantiene en el 4,1 % en agosto

Por Mark Gruenberg

WASHINGTON—La tasa de desempleo del país se mantuvo en el 4,1% en agosto, mientras que el número de personas desempleadas aumentó en 115.000, situándose en 7,031 millones, según informó la Oficina de Estadísticas Laborales.

Una encuesta independiente indicó que el sector privado generó 127.000 nuevos empleos, mientras que las administraciones públicas añadieron 35.000. Sin embargo, la cifra del sector privado no está ajustada, es incompleta y, en ocasiones anteriores, ha sido revisada a la baja. El crecimiento ajustado del empleo en el sector privado durante el mes de agosto fue de 86.000 puestos de trabajo.

Eso era solo una parte de la historia. Para seguir el ritmo del crecimiento demográfico, el sector privado —según algunos economistas del Economic Policy Institute y de otras instituciones— debe generar entre 200.000 y 250.000 nuevos empleos cada mes; sin embargo, no lo logró en agosto, independientemente de la cifra que se utilice. Además, si se excluyen los dos sectores privados con los salarios más bajos —hoteles, bares y restaurantes, y atención sanitaria—, resulta que el sector privado también perdió empleos.

Por otra parte, la Oficina de Estadísticas Laborales (BLS) informó que en agosto había 162,75 millones de personas empleadas, frente a los 163,37 millones registrados en agosto del año anterior.

Trump y los republicanos insisten en destacar el empleo una y otra vez, comparando su desempeño económico con el del presidente Biden, al que califican de pésimo. Las cifras cuentan una historia prácticamente opuesta, sobre todo tras el éxito de las medidas de estímulo económico implementadas durante la administración Biden para combatir el desplome provocado por el coronavirus, las cuales impulsaron la inflación de manera temporal.

Se crearon millones de empleos para reemplazar aquellos que se perdieron cuando la mitad de la economía paralizó sus actividades para combatir la plaga de los tiempos modernos. Ahora, la inflación ha vuelto a situarse entre el 3 % y el 4 % anual.

El aumento de 35.000 empleos en el sector público corresponde íntegramente a las administraciones locales, que sumaron 50.000 puestos de trabajo en agosto (más del 80 % de ellos en escuelas locales). Por el contrario, los gobiernos estatales eliminaron 10.000 empleos en agosto, lo que situó las cifras de este mes 5.000 puestos por debajo de las registradas en agosto del año pasado.

El gobierno federal perdió otros 3.300 trabajadores, reduciendo su plantilla a 2,073 millones. En agosto del año pasado —antes de que surtieran efecto los despidos ordenados por Trump y los recortes masivos impulsados por el multimillonario Elon Musk—, la cifra de empleados federales era de 2,324 millones.

Como es habitual, el crecimiento del empleo en el sector privado se concentró en los sectores de menor remuneración. El sector que peor paga de todos —restaurantes, bares y moteles— generó 59.000 empleos en agosto, mientras que el resto del sector privado creó 27.000 puestos netos. Si se excluyen los bares, restaurantes y hoteles, así como el aumento en el sector de la salud (+28.400) —que también ofrece salarios bajos—, el resultado global para las empresas privadas fue una pérdida de empleos.

Los fabricantes industriales reportaron la creación de 16.000 empleos en agosto, elevando el total del sector a 12,638 millones. Prácticamente la totalidad de ese incremento (+11.800 en conjunto) se produjo en fábricas de productos metálicos —como las plantas siderúrgicas— y en la industria de maquinaria. Por su parte, los contratistas de la construcción declararon haber creado 22.000 nuevos empleos, la mitad de los cuales correspondieron a contratistas especializados.

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September 19, 2026

OnlyFans: Is it time for a content creators union?

By C. J. Atkins

OnlyFans, if you're not already familiar with it, is a subscription platform where creators charge fans for videos, photos, direct messages, pay-per-view content, and tips. Launched in 2016, it features musicians, chefs, actors, fitness trainers, and more. Superstars like Blac Chyna, Bella Thorne, Cardi B, and Iggy Azalea connect with their fans on the platform and rake in millions of dollars monthly from the interactions.



But as anyone from the Gen Z or Millennial cohorts knows, those aren't the content creators who really define OnlyFans' reputation. The large majority of its five million creators (around 80%) produce and post homemade sexually explicit material—often drawn in by social media buzz and testimonials about the easy money to be made.

Most aren't celebrities of any kind when they sign up, nor are they porn stars with a previous career in the sexual entertainment industry. They're ordinary people who might not otherwise have considered posting their spicy pics and vids but hope to pick up some extra money at a time when steady, well-paying jobs are hard to come by.

The OnlyFans creator workforce mirrors the demographics that have long defined the sex industry, skewing heavily female (84%) and young, with 86% aged 18 to 24. Subscribers, as might be expected, are mostly male (87%), with the majority between 18 and 34 years old.

In 2026, those subscribers spent $7.8 billion on OnlyFans—up 7.6% from the year before—according to a new report from OnlyFinder, "OnlyFans Wrapped 2026." Creators collectively shared about $6.2 billion of that. OnlyFans kept the rest, $1.6 billion, for operating the app that connects the two sides of the transaction.

"Bring your own audience"

OnlyFinder, founded in 2020, is a third-party search engine that bills itself as the world's first and largest discovery platform for OnlyFans. In an interview with People's World, OnlyFinder CEO Max Anderson explained why a discovery platform separate from OnlyFans itself even needs to exist.

Despite OnlyFans having more than 400 million users and five million creators, the platform offers no built-in way for fans to search for or browse new creators.

That's not an oversight, according to Anderson, but the product of "a longstanding implicit agreement between OnlyFans and its creators wherein the platform provides discretion and creators are expected to 'bring your own audience.'"

Creators have to market themselves and do all the heavy lifting of building a subscriber base. The result, he said, is that OnlyFans users lean heavily on outside sites to find creators—a market OnlyFinder dominates, running its flagship search engine alongside a network of several hundred other discovery sites worldwide that together draw more than 100 million unique users a year.

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

OnlyFans: Is it time for a content creators union?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
Anderson also said the growth in OnlyFans spending tracks a pattern that has nothing to do with the platform itself. OnlyFinder's data shows a consistent inverse relationship between OnlyFans usage and the broader economy, he said: Spending rises when the stock market falls, a recession sets in, or inflation climbs, and cools off when conditions improve.

"The same is true of many 'vice' or 'sin' products such as alcohol, tobacco, gambling, gentlemen's clubs, etc.," Anderson said. "'Sin' categories in the economy tend to actually do better during recessions than they do during bull markets. When times are hard, people seem to turn towards their vices for relief."

The same is true for the people producing "sin" material for consumption; when money is tight, more people start filming and uploading.

The report's numbers on who's subscribing and paying are worth a look of their own.

The United States accounts for $4.82 billion of global OnlyFans spending, 62% of the total and more than the other 212 countries tracked combined. Europe spends another 22% of the total, with the rest of the world tallying 16%.

New York City alone spent nearly $170 million in 2025, more than 208 countries. Nationally, the U.S. spends $180,514 per 10,000 adults. Portland, Oregon, drags up that average, though, and leads the world at $455,291 per 10,000 adults.

The global economic imbalance that shows up in OnlyFans' nation-by-nation statistics is only one side of an arrangement that is defined by inequality in nearly every aspect of its operation.

The OnlyFans profit model
On the content creation side of the transaction, OnlyFans doesn't produce anything. Unlike the porn companies of the past, it runs no studios, employs no performers, and buys no video or audio equipment. Its only product is the digital infrastructure—the app, the payment processing, and the recommendation system that decides who gets seen.

For providing those services, it takes a fixed 20% cut of every subscription, tip, and pay-per-view purchase, regardless of how much a given creator makes in a given month. Those at the bottom pay the same fees as those at the top.

That cut is, in fact, more generous to creators than the one charged by the older XXX cam-site industry OnlyFans displaced. Anderson said the more favorable split was part of what drove creators and fans toward OnlyFans in the first place: "The business model also gives creators 80% of the money spent by fans, compared with older cam sites that could take 70-75%, which helped drive creators and fans toward OnlyFans."

It's also inspired a range of similar platforms, including Fansly, LoyalFans, and the mostly gay-oriented JustForFans.

The people putting themselves in front of the camera and producing the content cover all the costs of production, including cameras, microphones, specialized lighting, props, computers for editing, travel costs for collabs with other content creators, location rentals, health care, and more.

They also absorb the risks of a slow month, changing consumer tastes, or reputational harm—which is not insignificant at a time when respectability politics is still being weaponized to attack people. The platform collects its percentage no matter what happens along the way.

How much money do people really make?
And just what kind of money are OnlyFans creators earning for all their effort and risk?

According to industry data from Desirely.co, a firm that markets AI chatbot services to help creators automate communications with their subscribers, publishing content on sites like OnlyFans can be very lucrative—for a small few.

The average monthly earnings for an OnlyFans creator is $131. It's a paltry sum, but it doesn't tell the full story of the massive inequality that defines the payout system.

The highest earners, who make millions of dollars from the platform, typically aren't creating adult content; they're already stars in the music or modelling world. For the "average" person posting their material on the site, the checks aren't nearly as big.

A handful do pretty well. The top 1% of creators receive on average $4,300 per month, or over $50,000 annually. The top 10% pull in an average of $950 a month—not enough to live on but still considerable supplemental income.

For the other 90% of those uploading videos—over 4.17 million peole—the monthly payout from OnlyFans averages a pitiful $39.

So, despite the social media memes hyping the income potential of platforms like OnlyFans, the reality for most people is that it's a lot of work for not a lot of money.

Commodifying desire
It's worth placing that reality inside a longer pattern rather than treating it as a story specific to this one platform.

Capitalism has spent centuries pulling activities that used to sit outside the market—domestic labor, childcare, companionship, physical intimacy—into it, wherever there was a way to price and scale them. Sex work long predates any app; what the platform era changes is the mechanism.

A creator on OnlyFans isn't selling an hour of labor in a fixed location the way a retail or service worker does. They're selling an ongoing, mediated relationship with an audience that can be anywhere on Earth, priced by the message, the photo, or the month. Digital infrastructure is what makes a market like that possible at global scale—the same infrastructure that lets a gig platform price out a ride or a delivery and sell it across a whole metro area.

Applied to intimacy, it means the rent collector sits between people and their own image, attention, and time, rather than between a rider and a driver.

None of that is a comment on the choice to do this kind of work. People take jobs, including producing and posting sexual content online, for the same reasons people take any job: It pays, and the available alternatives pay less or offer less control over their own time.

What's worth scrutinizing isn't the individuals finding income where they can get it. It's a system that keeps finding new and more intimate territory to turn into a revenue stream and a platform sitting in the middle of this particular one, collecting a fixed cut of the proceeds without producing any of it.

In a lot of ways, that structure also puts OnlyFans in the same basic category as YouTube, Twitch, Uber, DoorDash, and other apps: Companies whose core product is a marketplace connecting a dispersed, independently contracted workforce to customers, funded by a cut of transactions it never has to pay to produce.

Anderson, who studies OnlyFans' economics for a living, draws the same comparison.

"OnlyFans is a marketplace connecting independent creators with paying customers, much like Uber and DoorDash connect independent providers with consumers," he said. "Successful creators have to think like small businesses, acquiring customers, managing retention, differentiating themselves, and reinvesting in marketing."

The difference, he added, is that OnlyFans creators sell their own content and services directly and can earn through tips and pay-per-view messages on top of subscriptions—giving them, in his telling, a more direct relationship with their customers than a rideshare driver has with a passenger.

But it also means that OnlyFans creators have an extra marketing burden to carry; no Uber driver has to individually advertise themselves directly to customers and convince a rider to choose them over someone else.

An OnlyFans union?

The comparison to other app workers raises an obvious, if unlikely, question: If Uber drivers and DoorDash couriers, for instance, are starting to win the right to organize into labor unions, should OnlyFans creators be thinking about the same thing?

The analogy isn't as far-fetched as it sounds. Drivers have made real headway on exactly this front over the past few years. California passed a pair of bills—Assembly Bill 1340, backed by SEIU California, and Senate Bill 371, backed by Uber and Lyft themselves—creating a legal path for app-based drivers to organize and bargain collectively, something independent-contractor status has historically made impossible.

Massachusetts moved faster.

After voters there approved a 2024 ballot measure, the state's Department of Labor Relations certified the App Drivers Union, backed by SEIU 34BJ and the Machinists union, as the official bargaining representative for drivers at Uber, Lyft, and several smaller rideshare companies. In August this year, Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed a bill extending similar rights to an estimated 100,000 Uber and Lyft drivers in that state.

None of these arrangements reclassify drivers as employees—they remain independent contractors—but each one opens a legal channel for collective bargaining over pay and conditions that didn't exist before.

Not everyone considers that a clean win. Jacobin published a piece this summer arguing the California deal undermines the very drivers it's supposed to empower, pointing out that regulators sweetened it for Uber and Lyft by agreeing to back separate legislation easing the insurance requirements the companies had lobbied against.

Whatever the verdict on any single deal, the fact that legislatures have started treating "independent contractor" as a status that can be renegotiated by law rather than a fixed condition of platform work is still progress.

Applying that model to OnlyFans runs into some real differences, of course. Drivers share a common, immediate grievance—a fare cut, a deactivation policy, an insurance requirement—and they occupy identifiable local labor markets: a city, an airport, a metro area, which is exactly the unit these new state laws have organized around.

OnlyFans creators are dispersed around the globe, often using pseudonyms or alter egos for their work. They're also competing directly with each other for the same subscribers' attention and money rather than sharing a territory.

Any organizing drive would also have to contend with the stigma still attached to adult content work, which cuts against public organizing in a way that driving a car doesn't. And no state legislature has proposed anything resembling a bargaining-rights extension for content-platform creators the way several now have for rideshare and delivery drivers.

Sexploitation

None of that changes the underlying arrangement, though. A platform that takes a fixed fifth of the income generated by five million people, sets the terms for their access to an audience, and owes them nothing if their subscriber base dries up is functioning as an employer in every sense but the legal one.

Drivers spent years hearing that this was simply the nature of gig work until enough of them organized, lobbied, and voted to change the law that defined it that way.

Whether OnlyFans creators ever go down a similar road is an open question. There's no organizing drive underway, and the obstacles described above are real. But a $7.8-billion-a-year platform built entirely on other people's labor, arriving at a moment when driver unions have just demonstrated that "independent contractor" doesn't have to be a permanent condition, is at least worth measuring against the same standard.

Rabb: General strike not new, enslaved people led one during Civil War

By Mark Gruenberg



CHICAGO —Ever since his election as United Auto Workers president, Shawn Fain has been urging the labor movement to align all expiring union contracts for the same day: May Day 2028.

Then, he says, the prospect of a general strike by workers upset by their declining share of national wealth and watching the profits from their productivity flow into corporate and capitalist pockets could engage in a powerful general strike.

It sounds like a good idea to Pennsylvania State Rep. Chris Rabb, a Democrat who won a contested primary for the open U.S. House seat in the majority African-American 3rd District centered in Philadelphia. He's unopposed in the November election.

So good, he says, because it's been done before. It happened in the Civil War, and occurred to a lot more people than the population of one House district. Try all the enslaved people of the South.

"There was a general strike in the 1860s," Rabb, who now has the nickname of "Rep Rabb," said during a July 20 discussion at the NAACP convention here of how to create wealth in the African-American community.

"Our ancestors stopped work," he said of the millions of enslaved people then. "We wouldn't have won the Civil War without that."

"That's always how it's been then," Rabb elaborated. "That's how it's gotta be now. Organized people beat organized dollars every time." Rabb's, whose ground troops—including members of progressive unions—embraced his progressive stands, gave him the primary victory over better-financed foes.

During the Civil War, Rabb explained, the enslaved first refused to work on the plantations, factories, homes and fields of the Southern white "slavocracy," whom Rabb called "the organized dollars of that time." Today's equivalent are the millionaires and billionaires who now rule U.S. politics.

Then, hundreds of thousands of African-Americans put down their tools, gathered their belongings and fled—towards the Union army. Tens of thousands of formerly enslaved men of draft age enlisted, too, and their regiments helped turn the tide of the war.

That reversal also produced unusual scenes. One came when African-American soldiers guarded captured white Southern prisoners, including officers hailing from the planter class, the 1% of that era.

The archives of interviews with formerly enslaved people—youngsters and teens in 1861-65, in their 80s and older when the New Deal's Federal Writers Project participants interviewed them—teemed with stories of what enslavement was really like. And the war, too.

One formerly enslaved man found himself guarding his former master, according to those archives, Ken Burns reported in his PBS Civil War documentary.

"Hullo, massa. Bottom rail top this time!" the soldier guard said.

Rabb compared President Donald Trump and his MAGA legions to other "isms" rife within the capitalist class. "My goal is to make that 'ism' so marginalized that they won't control us," he said. "But take nothing for granted."

The panel Rabb and colleagues addressed focused on how to raise incomes and create wealth among African-Americans. Both panelists and questioners said government is a key and that to gain the levers of power and make government work for you, you need to educate and organize.

Which is where organized labor, whom the NAACP intends to work more closely with in the run-up to the November election and beyond, comes into the picture.

"Educate, educate, educate," exclaimed Zenya Gantt, a junior political science major at an historically Black college, South Carolina State University. That's what she did in organizing a protest that forced school management to withdraw a commencement speech invitation they issued to the state's Trumpite Lieutenant Governor.

"It takes a conversation, and it needs a conversation," and that's what union organizers do, worker by worker, Gantt said. "You have to do the work before you get to the polls, and then once you see a big turnout" at the start of Election Day—long lines—"it starts to bootleg" and explode, and that's how you win office and power.

But you also must be honest with the voters to win their trust, explained another panelist, Savannah, Ga., Mayor Van Johnson. That means not just taking stands on issues and defending them, but also explaining to voters what you can and can't do in a particular elected office.

That includes what you can do for economic empowerment, such as lobbying for new industries with well-paying jobs, including union jobs, and what you can't, such as single-handedly raising the federal minimum wage. At $7.25 hourly, it hasn't risen since 2009. Talk at the convention was of $25 an hour plus indexing for inflation, or $30 an hour, as organized labor has achieved in Los Angeles.

It also means, being honest and telling voters that if they want a particularly expensive project, they might have to raise taxes for it, Johnson said. And that elected officials have to work across the aisle without sacrificing their principles, Rabb said.

All this, taken together, explained Gantt, who already has political campaign experience, "is how you bridge the gap between the working class and officials."

When plastic companies write the lesson plans

By Joseph Winters

This fall, 54 million K-12 students are headed back to the classroom for another year of lessons in all the classic subjects: math, English, history, biology. But there's another subject that's been sneaking into school curricula: plastics.

A new report from the nonprofit Plastic Pollution Coalition documents the many ways the plastics industry has been inserting its agenda into classrooms across the U.S. — including through lesson plans and worksheets, hands-on science experiments, and a program called "PlastiVan" that travels from city to city teaching students about "the contribution plastics make to modern life."



Industry interests offer these resources to teachers for free or for cheap, according to the report. The materials tend to highlight the necessity of plastics while downplaying their significant downsides to human health and the environment.

"When that information is provided to kids, it obfuscates the true impacts of plastic pollution," said Madison Dennis, senior policy and advocacy manager for Plastic Pollution Coalition and a contributor to the report. Besides harming marine life, plastics can expose people to hazardous chemicals, clog storm drains and contribute to flooding, and release planet-warming greenhouse gases. The Plastic Pollution Coalition is calling for stricter school policies against the use of industry-sponsored learning materials.

The report lays out four case studies of plastics industry "propaganda" for schoolkids. One involves the Society of Plastics Engineers, or SPE, a trade group that recently became a division of the Plastics Industry Association. SPE's lesson plans include activities like a "plastic scavenger hunt," which aims for students to "understand that plastics are ubiquitous and their importance to society and their personal life." A video titled "Your Bottle Means Jobs" explains how plastics recycling supports local employment.

Another case study highlights the American Association of Chemistry Teachers, an initiative of the Dow Chemical Company. One of the association's lesson plans teaches elementary and middle school students how to compare the strength of various types of plastic bags that can be found in a grocery store. After a brief experiment, the lesson invites them to "pretend [they] are an employee for Dow Chemical Company" and are designing a plastic bag for a customer.

While many of the materials claim to support STEM learning objectives, they do so while promoting familiar industry talking points, emphasizing the affordability and safety of plastics.

Some acknowledge plastic pollution as a serious problem, but they blame irresponsible consumer behaviors and, instead of recommending less plastic be produced, propose more recycling as the primary way to address it.

In reality, only 9 percent of all plastics are recycled worldwide, and scientists have repeatedly warned that recycling will be unable to keep up with projected growth in plastic production. Investigative reporting has shown that industry groups knew this decades ago, but promoted recycling anyway in order to defuse growing concern over plastic pollution.

Wendy Johnson, a science education specialist at the National Center for Science Education, said the industry's lesson plans and worksheets don't reflect good pedagogy. Materials claiming to be aligned with state-level STEM standards don't say which standards they support, or how they're aligned. Lesson plans instruct students to read teachers' notes, or list industry-specific vocab terms like "stretch blow molding" or "thermosetting."

"By using all of these technical terms, it's tricking people into thinking ... that they're doing science," Johnson told Grist. What the materials really teach, she said, is "ideological perspectives about the economy," like the desirability of cheap consumer goods.

"It's so clear that the purpose isn't to make really clear, easy-to-use materials," Johnson added. "The idea isn't to teach," but to get industry talking points into classrooms. The report documents plastics propaganda finding its way into schools since at least the 2000s. Between 2009 and 2011, for example, a plastics trade group lobbied the California Department of Education to add a section on "The Advantages of Shopping Bags" to the state's high school textbooks. The PlastiVan initiative has been ongoing since 2011, and SPE claims it's reached over 132,000 students in total.

Plastic Pollution Coalition suggests that the problem is particularly significant in schools located near petrochemical facilities. In Beaver County, Pennsylvania, for example, Shell operates a 386-acre plastics production complex and has invested millions of dollars in the development of plastics-related curricula and recycling programs, both for grade schoolers and for community college students. It has also donated hundreds of backpacks filled with school supplies, and bought one school a basketball court — seemingly in exchange for incorporating plastics recycling into the curriculum.

Shell didn't respond to Grist's request for comment. Neither did SPE, the American Association of Chemistry Teachers, nor the school district in Beaver County.

The report hints at a broader problem with STEM education in U.S. public schools. Teachers often lack the time and money needed to design their own curricula, or to buy high-quality materials and lesson plans needed for in-class labs or science projects. When vested interests come along offering support — whether it's the tobacco industry, the junk food industry, the pesticide industry, or the fossil fuel industry — it can be hard to say no.

"As a teacher, I'm always looking for free stuff," said Suzie Hicks, a K-8 environmental educator in California who consulted on the Plastic Pollution Coalition report. Hicks said their education and background make them comfortable vetting materials for greenwashing — but that's likely not the case with most teachers.

Dennis recommended that school boards adopt policies banning educational materials sponsored by the chemical, fossil fuel, and plastics industries. She also emphasized the need for better school funding more generally, so that teachers and districts aren't so desperate for ready-made learning materials.

One way to achieve this would be to eliminate tax breaks for petrochemical processing and plastics production facilities, which deprive communities of much-needed cash.

Katie Allen, executive director of Algalita, a California-based environmental nonprofit that develops educational materials on plastic pollution, pushed back against the idea that schools should ban all industry-sponsored content.

"Once you start banning one thing, where does it end? What I want to do is give educators the benefit of the doubt and allow them to make their own decisions," she told Grist. She argued that teachers should be trusted to properly contextualize industry materials — and that they could even use them to teach critical-thinking skills.

That said, there are plenty of educational materials on plastics that are developed by non-industry sources. Algalita, for instance, offers free lesson plans on topics like plastic garbage patches in the oceans and biomagnification — the phenomenon where plastics build up inside sea creatures as you move up the food chain. The Story of Stuff, another nonprofit, offers a broader high school curriculum focused on the costs and consequences of producing consumer goods — including those made from plastics.

Those learning materials still come from organizations with an agenda. But Hicks argued they're more trustworthy, since nonprofits usually aren't trying to sell something.

Another option is for teachers to simply design their own curricula. That's what Jacqueline Omania, a recently retired elementary school teacher in Berkeley, California, did in 2015. She turned her classroom into a zero-waste laboratory, and each year for 11 years, Omania and her students developed a set of zero-waste classroom agreements, vowing to minimize their plastics use — by swapping individual glue sticks for a communal tub of glue, for example — while also advocating for more systemic change, like by campaigning for a policy requiring Berkeley restaurants to stop giving out single-use plastic foodware.

"There are so many challenges in the world, but plastic is something tangible," Omania said. "It's right there in front of them, and they can see the difference that they're actually making through their actions."

Capitalist sources of the housing crisis

By Dennis Moore



A specter is haunting the United States — the specter of the Housing Crisis!

Over the past few decades, and especially after the 2008 Great Recession and the Covid-19 Pandemic, the skyrocketing cost of housing has become a central political concern. Both Republican and Democratic administrations have acknowledged the growing crisis and both have put forward purported solutions to resolve it. Yet such solutions have, at best, only managed to slow the developing crisis rather than dissolve it; a study from the U.S. Treasury shows that 90% of families live in counties where median rent and home prices grew faster than median income between 2000 and 2020. (1) It seems an established truth that housing is too expensive today, but rarely is it asked why that is the case.

The failure of liberal and conservative solutions to the crisis is underpinned by the incorrect view that the housing crisis is a contingency within the capitalist mode of production. That is, the crisis is viewed as a result of a temporary mismatch between supply and demand that can be remedied without any deep changes to the functioning of capitalism. Thus, the mainstream discussion moves to contingent causes of that mismatch, be it government underinvestment, too stringent zoning regulations, or — more fascistic — immigration. It is no wonder that such solutions have missed their mark; they are grounded in a fundamental misunderstanding of the housing crisis.

This paper hopes to present a more accurate account of the housing crisis by appealing to the laws of capitalist production and exchange. As such, the analysis begins with an examination of the housing commodity through use- and exchange-value. We will find that ground rent explains how the price of housing is inextricably linked to the exploitation of workers. Then, it turns to crisis formation under capitalism where we will see how the housing crisis forms and in what ways mainstream solutions (whether through loosening zoning laws or producing more housing) fail to address the roots of the crisis. In the final determination, the housing crisis is intrinsic to how private property and capitalism function.

Under capitalism, the housing crisis is impossible to resolve. As such, we must recognize the housing struggle as an important theater of the broader working-class struggle. The only way to end the housing crisis is to end capitalism and move into socialism.

I. The value of housing

Capitalism is a mode of production dominated by the production and exchange of commodities. As commodities, objects can be viewed from the perspective of use-values and exchange-values. The use-value of a commodity is its utility, its ability to satisfy some need or want, while the exchange-value of a commodity is its worth, its value in relation to other commodities. (2) What, then, are the use-values and exchange-values of housing? (3)

Use-Value and Exchange-Value

We'll begin with the former. There are innumerable uses for housing, many of which are outside of the scope of this investigation, but deserve attention nonetheless.

(4) The class of use-values of housing that we are interested in are those such as a place to rest and relax, raise a family, escape from the private sphere, etc.; broadly, the production and reproduction of labor power. Put strongly, housing is necessary for the full production and reproduction of labor power.

And recall that under capitalism the working class is composed of people who must rely on selling their labor power in exchange for money or other goods. As a "means of production" of labor power, housing plays a crucial role in perpetuating the capitalist system through the threat of homelessness and unemployment: a failure to obtain housing leads to a failure to reproduce one's labor power, which prevents one from selling one's labor power for money, and thereby prevents one from buying housing. The vital role of housing in the production of labor power thereby becomes a point of exploitation for capitalism — which only worsens under crisis.

Cost components of housing's price

Now we move to examine the exchange-value of housing or, roughly put, its price. (5) Marx states that the exchange-value of a commodity is determined by the amount of social (or average) human labor power expressed in the commodity. (6) That is, the more average labor used to create a commodity, the higher will be its exchange-value. How, then, is social human labor power expressed in the housing commodity?

The first and most obvious place we can look for social human labor power is in the material and labor costs of a house. Annual surveys by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) estimate that construction costs (labor and materials) and finished lot costs (utility and street preparations for the new construction) contribute about 78% of housing's sales price. (7) Labor — the physical construction — directly imparts value into the house. And the materials for that labor are themselves commodities already filled with value from past production processes. The transformation of standing trees into planks on the job site is replete with social labor power.

Aside from the costs of physical construction, there are several smaller expenses that contribute to a house's price such as financial and marketing costs, among others. Marx considered these costs as faux frais — costs for the circulation of capital as commodities and money which do not add to the exchange-value of a commodity. (8) Although they do not contribute to the value of housing, the developer must still recoup the cost of these faux frais expenses in the final price. According to the NAHB survey, faux frais expenses amounts to around 10% of a house's sales price.

The last segment of a house's exchange-value and price is the profit margin of the builder. This contributes the remaining 9-12% of a house's sales price, according to the NAHB Survey. (9) Profit, according to Marx, is the form in which surplus value — the value over and above the value put into the commodity — appears to the capitalist. (10) Marx spends a great deal of time, especially in the first volume of Capital, showing how surplus value can be derived from a capitalist's exploitation of their workers: the worker produces a greater value than they are paid.

Yet it would be too hasty to conclude that the profit in housing commodification is entirely derived from the exploitation of construction workers (although this too undoubtedly happens). Rather, we should look at ground rent as the deeper source of housing's profit.

Ground rent: Marx's theory

Marx spends a great deal of the latter chapters in Capital Vol. 3 explaining his theory of ground rent to reconcile a seeming contradiction in his economic system: if social human labor power is the source of value, how and in what sense can land be said to have value? Much of Marx's discussion is couched in the context of agriculture, which was the dominant use of land in his time, and Marx spends considerable time discussing land fertility and how it factors into capital circulation. We can recontextualize much of Marx's discussion of agricultural land fertility in terms of housing; after all, whereas farmland's use-value is in growing crops, housing's use-value is in growing people and their labor power. (11)

In analyzing ground rent, Marx categorizes four types of rent that work opaquely and in tandem: absolute, differential I, differential II, and monopoly. First, absolute rents arise from the fact that ultimately capital must have the permission of a landowner to use land. Landowners are not under the same pressures to use their land as capitalists are to expand and produce. Therefore, landowners can demand a rent for the use of land, even the worst land, so long as that rental cut does not prevent the capitalist from obtaining the average profits in their industry. Differential rent arises from comparing some land to the worst usable land. Land that is more productive (for example because it is more fertile) will require less capital to produce surplus value than the worst usable land. As such, the landowner can demand a rent from the profit of using better land.

Lastly, differential rent II occurs as differing capital investments are made on similarly productive pieces of land. Even if the two pieces of land are originally identical in terms of productivity, one tract of land may attract more capital investment and thus become more productive than the other tract of land over time. Therefore, landowners can also extract rent based on the productiveness of capital already invested in the land compared to others. Lastly, monopoly rent arises in unique locations that can easily be monopolized (e.g. vineyards that produce one-of-a-kind wines, homes in New York City which are unique in their proximity to the heart of global capitalism, L.A's proximity to Hollywood, etc.). (12)

Here is the crux of the matter underlying ground rent: the value of land is not tied to some innate property in the ground; rather, the value of land is instead tied to the potential profit that can be extracted by using the land as a means of production. (13)

We can now translate the discussion of ground rents from talk of land to talk of housing and thereby understand the price of housing. Housing's price is determined in part by its ability to be used in the production of labor power. How, then, is that price determined?

Applying ground rent to housing

First, we must determine what kind of value can be extracted from the worst kind of housing (absolute rent).

Housing is a paramount example of an 'inelastic good' — a commodity whose demand remains stable despite fluctuating or rising price — because it is so essential to the reproduction of human life. (14) In fact, even housing legally deemed 'unfit for human habitation' can still fetch a high price because the alternative — homelessness — is so much worse than living in substandard housing. Recognizing this, landlords may use the threat of eviction as means of silencing tenants from reporting the disastrous conditions in the home. (15) With the need so great and the threat so real, landlords can demand relatively exorbitant rents. This exploitation for the worst housing forms the groundwork on top of which the other forms of ground rent may add to. Crucially, this means that the price of housing for all classes cannot be determined without the exploitation of the lowest class.

On top of absolute rent, housing's price is affected by differential rent (both I and II) in that housing that is better than the worst housing available will presumably allow a greater and more efficient production of labor power, which thereby allows for a greater degree of exploitation through rent collection. We can interpret this dynamic as follows: the greater the location and capital invested in housing (i.e. amenities), the more sought after that housing will be; and by the laws of competition, those who can spend the most money will obtain the most sought-after housing. This expectation is canonized within the capitalist framework of housing valuation. The Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice state that in forming a determination of a piece of real estate's value, the appraiser must "develop an opinion of the highest and best use of the real estate." (16) Thus, housing simultaneously attracts and must attract the greatest use of the production of labor power. (17) Any less than the best use is a loss in profits. (18)

In this valuation, location is used as a relational concept; the best use is determined by what is around the property. Two homes of identical make can have drastic price differentials based on the wealth of the neighborhood. In the same way that housing increases and decreases in value based on the amenities around it, housing can also impart value to neighboring real estate based on its own valuation. This relational pricing becomes a key battleground of local politics. On average, 72.5% of a city/town's local budget is acquired through property taxes. (19) Thus, local political decisions must always be made with an eye toward the future values of property in the city. Likewise, Homeowners Associations enforce strict uniform rules in an attempt to preserve the value of the neighborhood's homes. (20)

And lastly, in some cases of housing, monopoly rent also enters the picture. As already mentioned, some locations can fetch higher prices due to the uniqueness and irreproducibility of their location.

We now have a relatively full picture as to how the price of housing comes about. (21) Housing's price is determined by a) material and labor costs within the building, b) faux frais costs of advertising, loan interest, etc. and c) profit in the form of expected ground rent. (22) Two brief comments are deserved. First, we ought to hesitate in generalizing the ratios of a), b), and c) to be 80:10:10 according to the NAHB survey. The data for these ratios only measure single-family homes. We ought to expect the ratio to skew more toward profits and rents in multi-family and apartment-style homes.

Furthermore, more locationally valuable homes may have higher ground rent and therefore higher profit margins. What I find uncontroversial, however, is that the three above-mentioned categories are the three determinants of housing prices.

Second, I leave as an open question the effect of ground rent on faux frais and material/labor costs. Advertising and interest rates are no doubt reticent to housing's overall cost and expected ground rents. We would therefore expect a decrease in faux frais costs should housing's price drop. Whether material costs have some expectation of downstream ground rent remains to be seen.

II. Crisis Formation

From the analysis of the housing commodity, we can already see a tension between use-value and exchange-value, between housing's utility and its price. Yet this tension is present in all commodities to varying degrees owing to the internalization of the contradictions of capitalism. Contradiction alone does not bring us to crisis. In what sense, then, are we experiencing a housing crisis?

Marx's theory of crisis

For Marx, a capitalist crisis occurs when there is a breakdown in the cycle of capital flow as it moves from money to commodities and back to money (with profit). A break can occur at each stage of the movement: capitalists can fail to purchase the raw commodities they need, fail to transform the raw materials into a finished commodity while preserving value, or fail to find buyers for their finished commodities.

(23) For housing, all three stages create conditions for a crisis.

Three points of breakdown in housing production

First, developers lack the raw materials and manpower necessary to produce housing profitably. Recent reports suggest that the construction sector is lacking 400,000+ workers to fill all the open positions and building materials have increased in price by over 40% since 2020 (owing to the COVID-19 pandemic supply chain issues, followed by tariffs). (24) At risk of cutting into profits, landlords and developers pass the increased cost of housing material to the user of the housing in the form of larger rents and mortgages.

Second, even with the materials and labor required, developers may be unable to produce housing profitably. One of the most common reasons given as a cause the housing crisis is overly restrictive zoning. (25) Limiting the location of where housing can be built, what form it takes, in what ways it can be built, etc. all can make a seemingly profitable development become unprofitable. The argument goes that with relaxed zoning laws, developers would be able to, for example, create multi-family homes in places where previously only single-family homes were possible. And with more units in the same location, housing prices per unit would decrease.

Part 2 of this articles will appear next week.

RAPID RESPONSE: Pull the funds from the Iran war!

By People's World

Pull the funds from the Iran war!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative and demand they pull all funds from the Iran war. Congress can refuse to fund an illegal war that Trump started without Congress declaring it. The Constitution gives Congress—not the president—the power to decide if this country goes to war.

When Republican leadership blocks efforts to force withdrawal and reclaim Congress' authority, they are going against the over 60% majority who oppose this war.



Reallocate funds from the Iran war to benefit your constituents instead with needed increases for healthcare, jobs, housing, public education, child care, and bringing the troops home!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

International News

Canadian communists challenge war economy

By CPUSA International Department

The Communist Party of Canada (CPC) and the Communist Party of Quebec (PCQ-PCC) held a press conference to challenge the federal government's proposed $150 billion war budget. National secretary of the PCQ-PCC, Adrien Welsh, and CPC leader, Drew Garvie, elaborated on the party's campaign against the war economy. They contend that this military spending benefits weapons manufacturers and banks rather than working people. The party called for the reallocation of war economy funds to address pressing issues of affordability, healthcare, education, and housing. A campaign to send messages to Members of Parliament is ongoing.

Indian Communist parties unite to overthrow the education minister

In May, one disgusting comment from Chief Justice of India Surya Kant about the unemployed youth being "cockroaches" inflamed the entire country of India, bringing students and youth across the country to protest the corruption and disdain of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for working class and agricultural people. On social media, a satirical Cockroach Janta Party (Cockroach People's Party) sprang up. In the streets, young people from the Students Federation of India, the youth wing of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), as well as other left mass organizations for youth and students, began hunger strikes and mass protests that merged millions of disenfranchised young people to fight for basic rights to equal education and jobs.

Their protests lasted for days and then weeks, becoming places to develop organized demands and to build cultural spaces for celebration and unity. On July 25, the education minister stepped down due to their unrelenting pressure, a resounding victory for democratic forces. The atmosphere of fear stoked by the deeply anti-Muslim and communal BJP over its last 12 years in leadership has been broken. The courage and refusal of young people to bend to the BJP's threats and violence fuels their ongoing demands for democracy and basic rights.

Agresión imperialista contra Irak

Por Departamento Internacional del CPUSA

El Partido Comunista Iraquí (PCI) condenó el bombardeo aéreo conjunto de Estados Unidos y Arabia Saudita contra territorio iraquí, que causó muertos y heridos entre las Fuerzas de Movilización Popular. El partido exigió al gobierno iraquí que trabajara diligentemente para eliminar cualquier pretexto utilizado para vulnerar la soberanía del país. Asimismo, subrayó la necesidad de consolidar el monopolio del Estado sobre las decisiones de guerra y paz, así como de restringir la tenencia de armas a las instituciones estatales. El PCI afirmó que la soberanía de Irak no debe ser objeto de negociaciones políticas y que el interés nacional debe constituir la base de todas las posturas y políticas.

Cuadros del KKE y de la KNE se suman a las labores de extinción de incendios en Grecia

Mientras los incendios forestales seguían arrasando diversas regiones de Grecia, los equipos de extinción de incendios del Partido Comunista de Grecia (KKE) y de la Juventud Comunista de Grecia (KNE) se sumaron a las labores para frenar la propagación del fuego en Egialia Occidental. Allí, las llamas arrasaron tierras agrícolas y forestales, viñedos y olivares. Según el partido, no se contó con medios aéreos para la extinción mientras el fuego ardía en zonas de difícil acceso, con continuos rebrotes y fuertes vientos. Los cuadros del KKE y de la KNE participaron en la lucha para sofocar los incendios.

Comunistas portuguesas luchan contra la privatización del hospital

Los fabricantes industriales reportaron la creación de 16.000 empleos en agosto, elevando el total del sector a 12,638 millones. Prácticamente la totalidad de ese incremento (+11.800 en conjunto) se produjo en fábricas de productos metálicos —como las plantas siderúrgicas— y en la industria de maquinaria. Por su parte, los contratistas de la construcción declararon haber creado 22.000 nuevos empleos, la mitad de los cuales correspondieron a contratistas especializados.

El Partido Comunista Portugués (PCP) criticó el traspaso de hospitales del Servicio Nacional de Salud a instituciones benéficas, calificándolo como un paso más hacia la privatización. El PCP afirmó que la cesión de estos hospitales constituye, en la práctica, una privatización, ya que en algunos casos sirve de vía para su transferencia a grupos sanitarios privados. El partido señaló el ejemplo del Hospital de Serpa, cedido a una institución benéfica local, donde las consultas no funcionan, el quirófano nunca ha estado operativo y el servicio de urgencias abre de forma esporádica. El PCP condenó estas decisiones y reafirmó su compromiso de defender, fortalecer y restaurar el Servicio Nacional de Salud como instrumento fundamental para garantizar el derecho a la salud de la población.

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September 26, 2026

Tale of two elections: Fascism and socialism battle for Germany's future

By Werner Lange



"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." These opening lines to the classic novel *A Tale of Two Cities* seemingly also reflects the tale of two German elections, one in Berlin and the other in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, held on Sept.20. However, it is the Berlin story, a veritable political paradigm shift, which is the more spectacular and stunning.

Voters in the capital city delivered capitalism a severe blow. The self-described party of democratic socialism, Die Linke (The Left), registered a historic electoral triumph with 25.6% of the popular vote, over 5% higher than polls had predicted.

While the other election held in Germany's poorest province, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, witnessed another victory for the fascist Alternative for Germany (AfD), even there, democratic socialists came in third. (See previous *People's World* coverage of the recent election in Saxony-Anhalt here.)

The battle lines are drawn, and there is now renewed hope that socialism will win the electoral war for political power in Germany. This is not just wishful thinking, but a prognosis based on concrete analysis of election results, party platforms, and skillful political campaigns.

Christian Democrats collapse

First, come the election results themselves. It is not only that the Left Party received more votes by far in Berlin, but also gained 25 seats in the state parliament while the traditional political powerhouses of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) and SPD (Social Democrats of Germany) collectively lost 30 seats.

In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the outcome for the CDU was even grimmer.

This ultra-conservative juggernaut, which produced three long-serving chancellors (Konrad Adenauer, Helmut Kohl, Angela Merkel) and dominated much of political life in first West Germany and later unified Germany, did not even reach the 5% threshold.

For the first time in its history, the CDU will not be represented in a German provincial government. That may just prove to be a game changer and harbinger of things to come. The old political order is dying in Germany. Little wonder then that the current embattled CDU chancellor, Friedrich Mertz, called the election results "a disaster."

The Left: Party of the future?

Secondly, The Left is the party of the German youth. Once written off as a marginalized party supported mostly by retirees and those nostalgic for the security of life in the old East Germany, it came roaring back in this election with deep support from young voters.

This election was the first time 16- and 17-year-olds could vote, and 42% of voters aged 16-24 in Berlin threw their support behind The Left. At 48%, that progressive vote was even higher for those aged 25-34. By contrast, only 8% and 7% of these age groups, respectively, voted for the CDU.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Tale of two elections: Fascism and socialism battle for Germany's future

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
Similarly, the fascist AfD was only able to secure 12% and 9% of the vote from these two young age groups.

Thirdly, the political platform of The Left resonated with the masses. "Make Berlin Affordable" is the title of the party's hefty document detailing its progressive stances on all critical issues facing residents. Foremost among them is the severe housing crisis caused by what the party appropriately calls the "Miet Mafia" (Rent Mafia): the giant real estate firms of Vonovia, Deutsche Wohnen & Co., Heimstaden, ImmoScout & Co., and RFR Holdings.

Vonovia owns over 531,000 apartments in Europe, mostly in Germany, with a market value of $91 billion; among its principal shareholders is BlackRock, the largest money management firm in the world. It significantly enhanced its portfolio by taking over Deutsche Wohnen & Co. in 2021.

Heimstaden Germany, run by a Swedish billionaire, owns over 14,000 rental units in Berlin. RFR Holdings, based in New York City, owns 93 properties, a few in Berlin, valued over $15 billion. ImmoScout & Co. owns and manages nearly 30,000 properties in Berlin. Many of these properties are luxury apartments which are empty.

The greedy speculation, illegal rent hikes, and profit maximization of these corporate conglomerates faced the wrath of voters and the demand of The Left for expropriation (vergesellschaftung) of at least 220,000 housing units as well as the adoption of a rent cap; the reversal of housing subsidy cuts; creation of a task force against rent speculation; passage of a secure housing law; and enactment of the housing referendum endorsed by 59% of voters in 2021.

Among the most effective political leaflets was a list of "Five reasons to vote for The Left on Sunday," which laid out the party's platform in an easy-to-remember list:

1. *Affordable Life: financial alleviation in all areas of life;*
2. *Good Jobs: fair wages and good working conditions;*
3. *Anti-fascism: struggle against the right, hate, and smear campaigns;*
4. *Reduced Rents: through rent caps, rent protection, and expropriation of corporate housing;*
5. *Social Infrastructure: funds for education, health care, culture as well as strong social structures and achievements. Affordable life comes only with the Left.*

Fourthly, The Left engaged in effective grassroots organizing. For several years, thousands of Berliners confronted the housing crisis by launching numerous campaigns against the Rent Mafia. Members of the Left Party were among the most active participants in this grassroots extra-parliamentary urban political movement, which included the Alliance against Displacement and Rent Madness Berlin; Expropriate Deutsche Wohnen!; Alliance of the NO! VoNovia & Co.; and Tenants Union Initiative Berlin.

Socialists were also a prominent part of "Grandmothers Against the Right" ("Omas gegen Rechts"), which grew greatly in popularity in the closing days of the election campaign. Additionally, a small army of volunteers canvassed door-to-door in all Berlin districts, especially in the city center, where The Left replaced the Greens as the dominant party.

Fighting to keep the fascists out

Fifthly, the socialist Left, unlike the fascist AfD, offers solutions to social problems and will form governing bodies. No party has achieved a vote majority, necessitating the electoral winner to form a coalition with others.

The most likely outcome for Berlin will be a red-green-red coalition (Linke, Greens, SPD). But despite its apparent popularity with voters, no political party has agreed to be a coalition partner with the AfD, with one exception.

In last month's election in Saxony-Anhalt, the BSW (Alliance Sahra Wagenknecht) narrowly crossed the 5% threshold. Its leader and founder, Sahra Wagenknecht, a renegade politician formerly aligned with the Left Party, has announced her party's willingness to negotiate terms of a coalition with the AfD. Egoism and racism might just unite there to catapult the fascist AfD into a ruling provincial government.

Nevertheless, the AfD victories are hollow ones. Its current popularity rests on two wobbly legs: endemic racism and false class consciousness within broad sections of the German population.

Mass frustration—especially in the economically-neglected states that made up the former German Democratic Republic—has led to large-scale displaced aggression against migrants. Hence, the popularity of AfD "remigration" policy, which, if ever implemented, will shoot the German economy squarely in the foot and cause even more mass frustration.

Socialism, by contrast, offers viable solutions and a concrete way out of the current crisis. Over one-fourth of the voters in Berlin agree, and their truth is hopefully destined to spread throughout the land and overcome the lies of the fascists.

Lastly, the leader of The Left in Berlin, Elif Eralp, was head and shoulders above her competitors. The daughter of politically active Turkish parents, she received a law degree from the University of Hamburg in 2009 and has been the leader of the Left Party in Berlin's House of Representatives since 2021. She resides in Kreuzberg, a district which cast 74% of its vote for her party.

A highly persuasive public speaker, she used her political office to repeatedly denounce racism and sexual violence, passionately defend striking workers, strongly advocate for radical education reform, demand implementation of a tax on surplus profiteering, introduce grassroots governance in Berlin, and unrelentingly call for an end to the housing crisis.

"In our city, love and justice have triumphed over hate," Eralp proclaimed in her victory address following the announcement of election results, "and this message is being sent to the world." Afterwards, her many supporters broke out in passionate chants of "international solidarity" and "Free Palestine."

Shortly, she will be the governing mayor of the capital, the first ever with a migration background. Her office will be in Berlin's city hall, a magnificent edifice designated the Red House because of its appearance. Soon, that designation will apply to its politics as well.

Advocates hold Congressional hearing in defense of Cuba

By Cindy Farquhar

WASHINGTON—Events on September 2 in D.C. capped intense summer work and coordination between National Network on Cuba (NNOC), Americas without Sanctions, and Nicaragua Solidarity Coalition. The pro-Cuba groups were aware of the inhumane conditions imposed by the U.S. on multiple countries in Latin America, and that U.S. influence over elections has moved seven countries far to the right in seven recent elections. It was understood that overturning Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua's socialist governments is the goal of this country's Americas policy.

After lobby days on Capitol Hill in December 2024 and April 2026, the working group discussed with Delia Ramírez (D-IL) and several other Representatives the importance of having a larger hearing to support a realignment with Cuba. To continue that discussion, it was proposed to gather a panel that could provide expert testimony on various aspects of medicine, law, faith, and the effect on everyday families.

The resulting panel included Suzanne Adely, National Lawyers' Guild President; Dr. Robert A. Turner, Pastor of Empowerment Temple in Baltimore, MD; Felix Sharp Caballero, an Afro-Cuban American and longtime Michigan civil servant; and Dr. Tanya Zakrison, a University of Chicago trauma surgeon who has studied the heightened trauma felt by Cuba with the blockade's increase. The panelists presented their case on Capitol Hill in a shadow hearing for Congress members titled, "Breaking the Blockade: Reassessing the Moral and Legal Failures of U.S.-Cuba Policy." This was a shadow hearing because the Democratic Party is out of power in both the House and Senate and cannot call official hearings to investigate serious domestic and international issues.

Ally groups outside of Congress publicized the hearing and invited friendly legislators. Rashida Tlaib, Pramila Jayapal, Ilhan Omar, Jonathan Jackson, Chuy Garcia, Maxine Dexter and Delia Ramirez came in person, joined by staffers from Jamie Raskin's and Mary Gay Scanlon's offices.

Dr. Zakrison, a trauma surgeon on Chicago's South Side, opened the testimony, pointing out that the 60-year embargo has escalated to a full blockade in stages, notably in 2017, 2019, and 2026. Even the supposed carve-outs for medical supplies are not real because the laws are so cumbersome that companies cannot afford to trade with Cuba. People in Cuba are digging into the ground to get muddy water to drink.



It is an inescapable truth that there can be no water, food, or operating hospitals without electricity, and there can be no electricity without fuel.

Dr. Robert Turner presides over the Empowerment Temple AME church in Baltimore, and he traveled to Cuba this summer. That trip stripped away all the misinformation about our neighboring island he had received in his life from the U.S. government. He emphasized the warmth and initiative of the Cuban people, and that this collective punishment is the sole responsibility of the U.S. One nation taking away the sovereignty of another is an act of war.

Suzanne Adely, someone with UN consultative status, reminded us that there is no credibility in the U.S. attempt to ruin Cuba's economy to bring about regime change—because this administration supports the criminal acts of so many countries around the world. The last panelist, Felix Sharp Caballero, a U.S. resident since 1966, is an Afro-Cuban whose family is in Cuba. He explained that there are 7,000 container ships on the ocean that are bound for Cuba but cannot reach it with supplies. If diagnosed with cancer in Cuba, it is a death sentence, because there is no chemotherapy. Doctors are unable to keep babies alive because there are not enough working ventilators. He urged this Congress to act quickly and, once the election is over, to end the blockade. Caballero also asserted that even the expatriate community is not united against Cuba, although Rep. Maria Salazar's (R-FL) influence leads to people's lives in Miami being threatened if they dare to speak out. Conversely, he reminded the audience that even Obama's incomplete warming of relations with Cuba made the Cuban people feel humanized and was an important step.

The question-and-answer period focused sharply on what Congress, the faith, legal communities, and the public can do to stop the blockade's worst effects and expose the lies spread by the U.S. government.

The significance of the shadow hearing is that a new 'squad' seems to be forming in the Progressive Caucus, focused on forging a better relationship among the Americas' nations. To that end, there is an urgent push to get Jim McGovern's (D-MA) HB 7521 (to repeal the statutory basis for the U.S. embargo and economic restrictions on Cuba) out of committee.

Another priority bill is H.Res.1056, the New Good Neighbor Act. This resolution called for annulling the Monroe Doctrine and establishing a "New Good Neighbor" policy toward Latin America and the Caribbean. It is in direct response to President Trump's newly presented "Donroe Doctrine," a program of aggressive interventionism across the hemisphere.

Equally significant, mass organizations, including unions like UAW Region 6 (west coast states representing 120,000 people), are passing "Solidarity with Cuba" resolutions. In Maryland, George Escobar, the new Executive Director of SOMOS CASA, has announced in no uncertain terms, "We are now an anti-imperialist organization." CASA in Maryland is the migrant community's largest service provider and advocate and acts as Maryland's hotline for reporting ICE-related terror. This profound cry for justice can be answered with partnership and support from the left.

It can be argued that the hearing raises important movement questions about how to build power. A rising core of Congresspeople want to work with the left; can a greater number of people/organizations that are vocal against U.S. economic and military war on Cuba be brought together? Can more candidates who criticize the U.S. power relationship in Latin America and call for a new, genuine good-neighbor policy run campaigns?

House panel's GOP majority pushes to remove unions from politics

By Mark Gruenberg



WASHINGTON—The highly ideological far-right Republican majority on the House committee that deals with workers issues and rights again engaged on Sept. 16 in one of its favorite sports: union-bashing.

This time, aided and abetted by a star witness, Greg Mourad, from the corporate-backed National Right to Work Committee, their target was unions in politics. The result was, as usual, a partisan and sometimes bitter fight. And never mind that Mourad got a key fact absolutely wrong.

House Education and the Workforce Labor subcommittee Republicans, led by chair Rep. Rick Allen, R-Ga., and Mourad, the RTW lobby's vice president, charged international union leaders are politically out of touch with their members. Allen claimed almost half of the nation's union members voted for Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump in 2024, including a majority of Teamsters. Public polls put the GOP share under 40%.

Allen also engaged in red-baiting, declaring unions support the Democratic Socialists of America, whose candidates have won some Democratic Party congressional primaries this year.

Allen cited DSA "positions" for rent control, for defunding the police, and abolishing the U.S. Senate. There is something seriously and dangerously wrong, he implied, when the Democratic Party takes similar stances.

Mourad alleged union campaign finance committees, especially for the Teachers/AFT and AFSCME, devoted 99% of their campaign donations to Democrats.

And he charged the donations come from union members' dues, offering two examples. By law, union members' political contributions are voluntary. If workers whom unions by law must represent but who don't want part of their dues to go to lobbying —not campaign contributions—can, on written request, opt out.

Not so with corporations, including the right-to-work lobby's corporate backers, but Mourad didn't admit that. The C-suite message to managers is: Kick in cash to corporate campaign finance committees or you're toast.

Rep. Mark DeSaulnier, D-Calif., the panel's top Democrat, retorted that Republicans are the ones out of touch and that their aim is to repress workers. "The real threats to workers are not unions but a rigged economy," panel Democrats said in a statement.

"Trump's economy is not working for workers," DeSaulnier said. "Inflation has outpaced wage growth in recent months, and workers are taking home a smaller share of the economic pie than they have in decades.

"That is not an accident. That is the direct result of corporations and wealthy special interests wielding outsized influence over this administration and over Congress." In this 2025-26 election cycle alone, corporate campaign spending has been $646 million so far," he added, citing a Public Citizen study.

"Too often, Republicans in this Congress have sided with corporate interests over working families and that includes repeatedly attacking unions. Workers join unions so they can have a voice strong enough to be heard. You cannot lift up workers while tearing down the very organizations that represent them, protect them, and bargain on their behalf," DeSaulnier continued.

"Being pro-worker requires acknowledging that unions are not outside forces—they are the voice of workers themselves."

And so it went.

The session was typical of the House Education and the Workforce Committee—named Education and Labor before Republicans took control of the U.S. House in the Newt Gingrich-led electoral revolution of 1994. Until that landslide, Democrats ran the House for 40 straight years.

But the nastiness has only worsened since Donald Trump returned to the Oval Office last year and began his all-out war on organized labor, notably federal workers.

Right-to-work official Mourad said the solution for workers is to free every worker nationwide, not just those in federal, state, and local governments, from what he called "forced unionism" of paying dues for services and protections unions provide.

What he did not say, but what the RTW group's real goal is—as another far-rightist told *The Guardian* years ago—to "defund the left," by ensuring unions go broke. And then out of business and out of business's hair.

As usual in House hearings, the minority party, the Democrats in this case, was allowed one witness while the majority, the GOP, got three. No union leaders were invited to testify. And for the Republicans, Right to Work VP Mourad was the extreme star of the show.

That left the defense of unions, their benefits to all workers, and their voluntary political contributions to DeSaulnier and to veteran George Washington University political scientist Adam Dean, author of two books on unions and their impact, with another forthcoming.

"Unions make sure workers they represent share in the benefits of economic growth," Dean patiently explained. "Although economic theory predicts workers' wages will automatically rise with productivity, in the real world we see wage growth lagging far behind productivity growth."

Even Adam Smith, free market enthusiasts' hero, admitted "this happens because workers have far less bargaining power than their employers, who can hold out in wage negotiations much longer than workers can," Dean pointed out.

"My research shows unions can help solve this problem. In 28 industries across 117 countries...wages are more likely to rise along with productivity when workers have strong unions and well-protected labor rights."

The corollary is nations—and individual U.S. states—with strong worker rights and strong unions have far less income inequality than other countries do, other factors being equal.

Income inequality, Dean did not have to say, has become a big political factor in the U.S. Politely, he also did not point out that states with the largest income and wealth gaps between the rich and the rest of us are right-to-work "red" states, such as Texas, Mississippi, and West Virginia.

"Labor unions often fight for policies that protect non-union workers, too," Dean added. His example was recent United Farm Workers success that covers all of California farm workers and other outdoor workers, such as utility workers, and not just the 2% of California farm workers who are unionized, Dean said.

"My research compared deaths in California to neighboring states without heat standards and found California's law was associated with a 33-51% reduction in heat-related deaths among outdoor workers."

The hearing ended with no particular conclusions, and the parties hardened in their positions, but not before DeSaulnier, the California Democrat, made a pitch for enactment of the Protect the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, labor's #1 priority in Congress. That law would help level the playing field between workers and bosses.

But it's going nowhere in this Congress, especially in the Senate, thanks to corporate clout and campaign contributions.

Three dead in three months: Taxi Workers Alliance condemns dangerous conditions

By Chauncey K. Robinson

NEW YORK—"We are supposed to work to live, not live to work." Those were the words of New York Taxi Workers Alliance (NYTWA) Executive Director Bhairavi Desai when speaking on the recent death of fellow driver Jagjit Singh.

Singh, a yellow cab driver for more than 20 years, was found dead in his taxi after having reportedly suffered a medical episode. This is the third taxi driver death in three months, and another example of what Taxi worker advocates say is the growing physical and emotional toll of the job, with long hours and intense stress in a time of economic pressure.

In July, when the United States and the world experienced record-breaking heat, taxi driver Richard Coulibaly died in his parked cab overnight. Coulibaly immigrated from the West African country of Ivory Coast over three decades ago to work in the U.S. The father of four rented a one-bedroom apartment in Harlem and was described as a hard worker who was "working, working, working, every day working."

With no family in the country, it was NYTWA and other fellow drivers who took up the tasks of identifying their colleague when he was found by police and paramedics and spending days searching for his family in Ivory Coast.

It was through social media and WhatsApp that they were finally able to contact Coulibaly's brother and let him know his brother was deceased.

The union and friends of Coulibaly's then came together to raise the funds for his funeral and—as NYTWA described it—go through the "long process of bureaucracy and paperwork" of sending Coulibaly to his final resting place in Ivory Coast. He was 73 years old.

In late August, Khalifa H. Siwa, a worker who originated from Tanzania, died alone in his parked taxi on the Henry Hudson Parkway with his insulin injection in his hand. He was the eldest of four children, helped raise his siblings, paid for their education, and cared for their mother. Khalifa had recently had a stroke and, in the last week of July, was admitted to the hospital for a few days due to his diabetes.

Despite these obstacles, he still worked—and eventually died on duty. "He was alone in this country and lived a life of sacrifice," NYTWA stated in a press release. He was only 53.

Jagjit Singh, an immigrant worker from India, is the latest in this string of tragic deaths. On Sept. 11, the yellow cab driver of more than 20 years was found in his car, deceased after having suffered a heart attack. On that Friday afternoon around 5 pm, Singh reportedly pulled over after dropping off passengers in the West Village. Friends and family realized something was wrong when they couldn't reach him for hours. At 11 p.m., they traced the car to his last drop-off, where they found him. The husband and father of 10-year-old twin sons was 53.

In a social media post after reports of Singh's death, the NYTWA stated: "How many strangers passed him? How many hit the hood for the car to move or lamented there were too many cabbies taking up parking spots? There lay a man, a devoted father and husband, with a wife in a frantic search and with parents and siblings far away."



Taxi drivers, like all workers across the country, are facing an intense affordability crisis. The cost of living is soaring, and so is the cost of working for drivers whose ability to survive depends on the rise and fall of gas prices.

Over the years, with the rise of rideshare apps like Lyft and Uber, many taxi drivers saw their incomes decline, pushing them to work longer hours and take more trips to make up the difference. This strain has only grown as taxi, Uber, and Lyft drivers now find themselves confronted by the corporate push for driverless AI "robotaxis" that threaten job security even further.

With over 28,000-members of their union feeling the pressure, NYTWA Executive Director Bhairavi Desai asserts that something has to be done. Joining with Singh's family at the site where he died to lay flowers, the director made it clear that the current situation is not sustainable.

"Drivers like our deceased brothers work grueling days and nights. As trips shrink while costs grow, they're left with little time to take care of themselves while they work longer and longer hours to try to make ends meet," Desai said. "They have less time for breaks, less time to go to the doctor, less time to pick up medications. We urgently need economic reforms in this industry so drivers can earn enough to stop working themselves to death."

Capitalist sources of the housing crisis

By Dennis Moore



The reasoning here is backwards, however. The need to transform single-family zoning to multi-family zoning suggests that the land/housing (in actuality, those who speculate on that land) demands a greater profit from ground rent. That profit cannot be acquired from the housing currently in place either because a) the home is paid off and thereby does not supply capital with continued payments, or b) the residents of the home cannot generate the surplus value that the ground rent demands. In either case, partitioning the home into multiple units will allow for greater extraction of rents because population density increases and as such exploitation per plot of land increases. But this does not resolve the tension; it reproduces it on a smaller scale, a scale which will grow larger with time until the crisis reappears. As such, the desire to transform single-family homes to multi-family homes — or similar zoning changes — is not a cause of the housing crisis, but an effect of it. Zoning changes provide temporary relief yet leave the underlying cause of the crisis untouched.

More broadly, we must beware of arguments that suggest deregulation as a solution to the housing crisis. While some zoning laws can certainly be updated or removed, we must ensure we do not erode protections for tenants, homeowners, and the environment. David Madden and Peter Marcuse have insightfully stated that deregulation, "has not meant getting rid of regulations so much as rewriting them to make real estate a more liquid commodity." (26) Examples include the privatization of public housing, fractionalizing housing plots and units (such as pushing for accessory dwelling units), the advent of real estate investment trusts and mortgage-backed securities (such as those that led to the Great Recession), among other measures. The goal in all these "deregulations" has been to allow capital to flow through housing much easier, even if ownership of property does not change hands. And in increasing the flow of capital, deregulation provides more opportunities for exploitation and the extraction of surplus value. Further steps in this direction will not solve the housing crisis; it will make the crisis even more painful upon its eruption.

Finally, if capitalists have enough material and labor and they can transform it profitably, crisis may still form if the capitalists are unable to sell the finished commodities. In this case, the housing crisis forms if housing is too expensive for consumers to purchase. This appears to be a point so obvious it doesn't bear mention, but the secret of the housing crisis lies in asking why there is now a disconnect between what housing costs and what the average person can afford. After all, even if the average housing unit cost a million dollars, so long as the average person made a million dollars a year, there would be no housing crisis.

Wages versus rent: the class antagonism

The discrepancy is made clear when we analyze the tension within the housing commodity as it expresses itself in class struggle. Marx could see the multi-factional tension arising when he begins the final chapter of Capital Vol. 3 by stating "the owners merely of labour-power, owners of capital, and landowners, whose respective sources of income are wages, profit, and ground-rent, in other words, wage-laborers, capitalists, and landowners, constitute then three big classes of modern society based upon the capitalist mode of production." (27) Marx is right to view these three classes in conflict; landlords and capitalists are in conflict to extract surplus value, and workers are stuck in between.

On the one hand, the value of labor power is determined by the value of the commodities necessary to reproduce it.(28) And as discussed above, housing is a fundamental part of the reproduction of labor power. It is in the interests of capitalists to cheapen the value of labor power so as to extract more surplus value. (29) Even higher-valued labor (i.e. skilled labor) becomes conceptually grounded in unskilled, simple labor. (30) Therefore, capitalists pay for labor power (through wages) based on the reproduction of unskilled labor and the cheapening of the reproduction labor power allows for a greater acquisition of profits (at least for a time, until equilibrium returns to the market).

On the other hand, as mentioned above, the value of real estate is in part determined by its best use. In the residential sphere, the best use of housing is the reproduction of the highest-valued labor power. This is in part determined by location in that some locations will have access to higher paying jobs. (31) The ground rent, therefore, must be as high as possible to allow for maximal surplus value extraction.

The antagonism is clear: the capitalist class consistently pays for labor power as cheaply as possible while the landlord class demands the highest ground rents possible. Both capitalists and landlords demand the surplus value of labor power, but in opposing ways. Owing to the 'anarchy of capitalist production,' we should not be surprised that these forces have created unbearable conditions for a great mass of the working class. Those with higher wages — typically those in positions of capital management — can avoid the worst excesses of the housing crisis, while those in less profitable (i.e. more exploited) positions must endure atop the rack of capitalist and landowner exploitation. But this is just the crisis of income inequality by another name. The housing crisis, therefore, is the manifestation of income inequality in tangible form, of the class conflict in the built environment.

If then, the housing crisis is concomitant with income inequality, and income inequality is a necessary result of capitalism, is the housing crisis an essential part of capitalism? Yes!

Why the crisis isn't new

Those that believe that the housing crisis is a novel phenomenon and thereby divorced from the logic of capitalism rely on the observation that housing prices have exploded in the past twenty, thirty, fifty, etc. years at a rate much quicker than before. While this observation is correct, it is far too hasty to suggest capitalism is not the cause. While technology and material conditions have changed over the last century (especially in regard to the ways that financial exploitation through housing can occur), the root of the housing crisis remains centered on ground rent and the exploitation of labor power. There are three reasons why we've seen the sudden increase in housing over the last few decades:

Part 3 will be in next week's print.

How a small park became part of D.C. mayor's anti-immigrant agenda

By Jamal Rich



WASHINGTON—Since 2014, residents of the Mount Pleasant community in Washington, D.C. have advocated for the establishment of a small community-controlled park adjacent to Kenyon St. and the main roadway. The piece of land has long been frequented by Latino immigrants and day laborers who play board games and gather as a community.

This led to the proposed name of Amigos Park, or Friends Park, to be representative of the Latino population in the neighborhood and to symbolize the spirit of the people who regularly use the space. It would be the first park named for Latinos in the District's history. The effort to develop the park was sparked by late community advocate Arturo Griffiths, Jr.

There have been a variety of different visions for what the park might become. Some initially wanted a dog park, which has historically been tied to gentrification in D.C.; others wanted more police presence in the area since some white residents reportedly felt unsafe around the people that frequented the current area.

Griffiths' vision was for a "welcoming, culturally rooted public space that brought neighbors together across generations." The coalition that Griffiths founded to push this campaign forward, the Amigos Park Coalition (APC), states in its mission that it wants a "beautiful, welcoming, culturally rooted park and a design that tells the story of Mount Pleasant's diverse working class and immigrant communities."

The D.C. Council has secured over $1 million for the project, led by Councilmembers Brianne Nadeau (D-Ward 1) and Janeese Lewis George (D-Ward 4). The APC, working alongside professional architects and greenspace experts, presented a concept design of Amigos Park to district agencies and gathered more input after resolutions were passed by the local advisory neighborhood commissioners.

Other forces, however, had different plans.

One of the major hold ups in the effort was that the parcel of land where Amigos Park would sit was only partially owned by the District of Columbia. Half of it was owned by a private developer, which initially housed a 7-Eleven convenience store and later a Streets Market grocery store.

The district (led by Mayor Muriel Bowser and the Department of General Services, DGS) was in negotiations to purchase the private parcel from the owners of 7-Eleven until they ended up selling the property to a developer in California named Blake Megdal, who then leased the property to the owners of Streets Market.

Megdal, initially open to negotiating with the district to sell the land parcel for the full park development, ran into a roadblock with his new renter. Due to D.C.'s right of first refusal laws for renters, the Streets Market owners can block any transaction between the landlord (Megdal) and the district.

The owners of Streets Market apparently have no interest in the development of the park. Negotiations were eventually dropped by the mayor's office due to the refusal of the Streets Market ownership.

Because of this roadblock, community members, alongside the APC, have temporarily abandoned efforts to advocate for a "full park" along the public and private parcels. But the mayor's office, initially led by the now defunct Office on Latino Affairs, moved forward with a "half park" concept without input from the Mount Pleasant community. As of early August, the mayor's office put fencing around the area where the "half park" would be built and removed all of the belongings of those who frequented the area.

The community and the APC quickly sprang into action and painted banners that were hoisted along the fencing following the measure. The slogans read "The community wants a full park," "No valoran los sentimientos de los hermanos latinos ("They don't care about the feelings of the Latino brothers"), and "People = park = trees." The city removed the banners the next morning and posted official documents about the Amigos Park development with AI-rendered photos that did not match any community concept of the park.

Residents are furious with how they are being treated and are now demanding city officials to pause construction of the poorly-designed "half park" until a new mayor assumes office in January 2027. The APC, a diverse representation of the community, is urging more transparency and public input on the development.

The dropping of negotiations to secure the full parcel of land during Trump 2.0 solidified what many see as outgoing Mayor Bowser's anti-immigrant agenda. Not only has she put immigrants in harm's way by collaborating directly with Trump's federal agents and their terrorizing of the D.C. community through the "Safe and Beautiful" Task Force, but she has also actively undermined projects that would empower the Latino community throughout the district—like Amigos Park.

Bowser has also joined Trump's anti-DEI tirade and abolished D.C. offices representing different communities.

Susan Collins in trouble: Pay-for-play scheme exposed

By John Wojcik

Susan Collins, the Republican U.S. senator from Maine, is in a close election battle that could determine which party controls that chamber after Nov. 3. She benefited from illegal contributions from a defense contractor she helped win federal money. A report from *ProPublica* published on Tuesday said that by the end of 2024 the FBI was pursuing a probe into what amounts to a pay-for-play operation involving Collins.

It started, according to *ProPublica*, in 2019, when Scott Reed, who was the head of a pro-Collins super PAC, met with three executives from Navatek, a Hawaii defense contractor. After the meeting, Navatek's CEO, Martin Kao, sent $150,000 to the super PAC.

Kao reportedly told the FBI that his company's work provided no real value to the U.S. government. Regardless, it is illegal for government contractors to make political contributions.

Collins helped steer millions of dollars in defense funding to Navatek, and Kao told company executives that she had committed to getting it $32 million in naval contracts. The money for the super PAC was routed through a shell company to hide its source. Kao pleaded guilty in 2022 to making illegal campaign contributions.

According to *ProPublica*, Collins was not the only politician under scrutiny for illegal fundraising. Kao gave the FBI a list of lawmakers, and the probe could have ensnared members of both parties.



The investigation into Collins went nowhere, however. After Trump was elected for the second time, the Justice Department's anti-corruption prosecutors were ordered to drop cases, and FBI Director Kash Patel purged the bureau's anti-corruption squad agent by agent.

Collins has not been charged with any crime, and her office told *ProPublica* it "vigorously" denies Kao's allegations, calling them "outlandish."

News of this scandal is the last thing Republicans want just weeks before the crucial election in Maine. Collins and her Democratic challenger, Troy Jackson, are virtually tied in the polls, and the winner could well determine the outcome of the effort to take control of the Senate away from the GOP.

RAPID RESPONSE: Protect our polls, no armed agents!

By People's World

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative and demand they uphold the law and block the use of FBI, ICE, military, or any other federal troops at polling places targeting Latino voters and voters of color.

Demand immediate passage of S. 4845, the Protect Our Polls Act, introduced by Sen. Elissa Slotkin, D-Mich. The bill would require congressional approval before any president could deploy troops or armed agents to polling places, and it would prohibit military personnel and federal agencies from accessing election records preserved under federal law.

Encourage your constituents to vote early and to not give in to dangerous fear tactics or threats!



Defend the power of the vote and pass the Protect Our Polls Act now!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

International News

Sudan: An arena of geopolitical struggle

By CPUSA International Department

The Sudanese Communist Party assessed the current situation in Sudan and warned that more than three years after the outbreak of the devastating war, Sudan has become an arena for the broader geopolitical struggle unfolding across the region. On Sudanese soil, the interests of imperialist and regional powers intersect, with military calculations intertwined with competition for control over resources and strategic location.

The party noted that meetings held in Nairobi and London reflect a growing tendency to shift the management of the Sudanese crisis outside the country through political arrangements formulated in foreign capitals. These initiatives have been accompanied by attempts to reintroduce the so-called "Ta'sis" coalition as a partner in the political process while disregarding the criminal record of the Rapid Support Forces militia and the war crimes committed against civilians.

The longer the conflict continues, the greater the scope for foreign intervention and the deeper the country's dependence on regional and international power blocs, the party said. Real peace, the party insists, will not be created in foreign capitals or imposed through sanctions. It can only be achieved by the Sudanese people through their independent struggle, building a grassroots front uniting national and democratic forces committed to the objectives of the December Revolution.

La campaña «Make Philly Affordable» traslada al otoño sus demandas sobre el presupuesto municipal

Por Collin Kawan-Hemler

FILADELFIA—Los residentes preocupados por su capacidad para costear las necesidades básicas tal vez quieran seguir de cerca la segunda fase de la campaña *Make Philly Affordable* (MPA). La primavera pasada, esta coalición de base instó a la alcaldesa Cherelle Parker y al Concejo Municipal a destinar una parte del superávit presupuestario de 1.100 millones de dólares a alimentación, vivienda, escuelas, centros recreativos, bibliotecas, SEPTA y energía renovable. MPA sostiene que estas medidas mejorarían la calidad de vida de la clase trabajadora de la ciudad. Tras la huelga de hambre de 21 días que la activista y organizadora Erica Brown llevó a cabo en mayo, MPA continuará con su campaña presupuestaria durante el otoño.

El 30 de agosto, MPA organizó un evento público de recaudación de fondos en el norte de Filadelfia, el cual contó con la actuación del músico TCG (Tired of Constantly Grinding) Beatz, un espacio de micrófono abierto para la comunidad y la venta de productos de repostería. Al evento asistió un público multirracial e intergeneracional que brindó apoyo material para la iniciativa *Make Philly Affordable 2.0* de este otoño.

Giavanna Troilo, organizadora principal de MPA, explicó que su campaña se centrará en sumar a más vecinos a la lucha activa por las demandas presupuestarias de la organización. MPA 2.0 también abordará lo que consideran un sistema de contratación deficiente por parte de la ciudad.

«Es responsabilidad de la alcaldesa Parker garantizar que el dinero generado por el trabajo de los habitantes de Filadelfia se utilice para satisfacer sus necesidades, y no cumplió con ello en el último ciclo presupuestario», afirmó Troilo. «Nos hemos estado capacitando y, este otoño, interactuaremos directamente con la ciudadanía mientras exigimos a la alcaldesa que inicie una transferencia de fondos a mitad de año destinada a nuestros servicios públicos».

Jendaiya y Hannah, dos artistas y organizadoras, apoyaron la campaña de recaudación de fondos en Kickstarter invitando a los asistentes a participar en los proyectos culturales «Declaración de Interdependencia» y «Jardines del Futuro». Jendaiya invitó a los asistentes a suscribir una serie de compromisos destinados a fomentar una nueva cultura que promueva la reciprocidad, el equilibrio ecológico, el conocimiento y la custodia de la tierra propios del pueblo Lenape, así como el derecho de todos a prosperar.

Hannah animó a los interesados a contribuir al «Altar de los Sueños Comunitarios», una obra creada íntegramente a partir de materiales de desecho reutilizados. Según Hannah, el proceso —que abarca desde la obtención de materiales reciclados y las invitaciones abiertas para que la gente dé forma a la obra a lo largo de meses, hasta el traslado de los proyectos a distintos barrios para fomentar la participación— ayuda a mantener vivo el espíritu de la «Declaración de Interdependencia».

MPA ha conseguido el apoyo estratégico continuo de siete miembros del Concejo Municipal, además del respaldo verbal de todos los concejales, tanto de distrito como de representación general. Incluso la alcaldesa Parker recibió a representantes de la coalición y expresó su apoyo a las demandas presupuestarias. Queda por ver si la segunda fase de MPA logrará o no obligar a los cargos electos a invertir su valioso capital político.

A pesar de la constante agitación en las escuelas públicas de Filadelfia, la desmoralización de los empleados públicos, la intensificación de las operaciones del ICE y los fenómenos meteorológicos cada vez más violentos, no hay indicios de que la clase trabajadora de Filadelfia vaya a rendirse sin luchar.

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Who defines a Third Reconstruction – and the road to it?

By Joe Sims

The fight for a Third Reconstruction is the subject of recent essays by Brad Crowder and Derek Dougherty. Reconstruction, of course, refers to the post-Civil War efforts to dismantle the legacy of slavery through measures such as land redistribution, universal public education, and voting rights. Crowder correctly points out that these radical reforms were overthrown after the Hayes-Tilden Compromise in 1877 and the withdrawal of federal troops from the South. A century of fascist-like KKK rule resulted.

After World War II, the Civil Rights movement arose to address this white supremacist legacy. The Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* aimed at ending segregation in public education and after mass protests led by Martin Luther King Jr., a new wave of reforms was enacted in the 1960s, among them the Voting Rights Act, the Fair Housing Act, Medicaid and Medicare. Affirmative Action — special compensatory measures to make up for past discrimination against people of color and women — was also a product of this period. Civil Rights leaders refer to these measures as a Second Reconstruction.

A civil rights counter-revolution

This Second Reconstruction too has been the object of a sustained many-sided assault, not only on civil rights but also on the entire edifice of the New Deal. In this regard, the Moral Majority, the Tea Party, and now MAGA represent successive moments in ongoing wars of position by ruling class proponents of neoliberal austerity.

MAGA, however, has taken these attacks to an entirely new level. Today we are witnessing a general offensive against democratic rights including DEI, abortion, and collective bargaining rights. Indeed, since Trump's election, the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department has been gutted, majority Black districts in the South have been declared unconstitutional, and white people are now officially portrayed as the main victims of racist discrimination. Taken as a whole, the country is in the midst of a veritable civil rights counter-revolution. The demand for a Third Reconstruction seeks to right these racist wrongs.

The Third Reconstruction, however, as a concept was introduced by historian C. Vann Woodward after MLK's murder in '68 to address the next stage in the fight for Civil Rights, one that would redress social and economic discrimination.



After the turn of the century the term was popularized by Rev. William J. Barber II, then head of the North Carolina NAACP, to address the systemic roots of social inequality. Third Reconstruction demands have since become the property of the African American Civil Rights movement as a whole. It is vital to point out here that this movement is independent and self-governing, and like all self-determining movements of the racially and nationally oppressed, its goals and demands must be respected. A failure to do so by outside movements or groups, no matter what their stripe or political party, could do grave harm to the cause of people's and working-class unity.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Who defines a Third Reconstruction – and the road to it?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

This cautionary note applies to Crowder's and Dougherty's articles, both of which explore finding paths toward achieving the Third Reconstruction goal. For Crowder that path lies in building an all-peoples front (the terms people's front and popular front are used interchangeably in this article) that would be guided by an anti-monopoly strategy in pursuit of what he calls a "national democratic revolution." In his opinion "Monopoly is the stage at which the bourgeoisie's capacity to lead a democratic revolution exhausts itself entirely. Bourgeois-democratic tasks are transformed into national-democratic tasks." Further, "The anti-monopoly struggle" he contends, "has to stand at the core of this rising movement, because only the working class, organized and at the head of a broad popular coalition, can finally complete the democratic revolution launched on July 4, 1776."

Dougherty calls aspects of this argument into question, and suggests that the call to build an anti-monopoly coalition immediately is abstracted from today's fascist danger. Crowder, he counters, is skipping stages. For Dougherty, before anti-monopoly measures can be taken the MAGA right has to be defeated. "The anti-fascist struggle" he writes, "is primary. It is a direct and immediate defensive struggle for bourgeois-democratic rights and working-class organizations against the most reactionary and terroristic section of monopoly capital, which today unequivocally finds political expression in the MAGA movement."

What are we to make of these contrasting arguments? Is Dougherty right? Is defeating MAGA a precondition to Crowder's approach to achieving anti-monopoly goals? Or given monopoly capital's support for the MAGA offensive, does Crowder's strategy better fit today's circumstances?

Before answering, it might be helpful to understand what's meant by people's front, anti-monopoly coalition, and national democratic revolution, as each have specific histories and meanings in Marxist-Leninist science.

The all-people's front and the anti-monopoly coalition

First, the people's front as viewed by CPUSA, is an informal multi-class coalition of the U.S. people in their broad majority, including workers, farmers, small-and-medium sized enterprises along with some big businesses. It is multiracial, multinational, multigender, and intergenerational. It includes labor, peace, civil rights, youth, environmental, and other social movements and can even — as happened during World War II — contain groups of countries.

This popular front strategy in its developed form was theorized by collectives leading the 7th World Congress of the Communist International fighting fascism in 1935. The case for a multi-class strategy against reaction, however, was first made by V. I. Lenin in his *Two Tactics* during the battle against Czarism.

In *Two Tactics*, Lenin argued for a multi-class coalition not only of workers and peasants, but also the republican bourgeoisie against feudal reaction. Defeating the Czar was the main thing, the first stage in a multiple stage revolutionary process, one that required bringing the widest — and deepest — possible coalition to bear.

This coalition concept was reintroduced into the work of the Communist International in the early 1920s after the defeat of the German and Hungarian uprisings. The united working class front tactic was developed by the Third and Fourth Congresses of the Comintern. As compared to Lenin's earlier multi-class concept, this coalition had a more restricted, that is, a more specific proletarian focus. The united working class front's primary aim was healing the rift that developed between social democratic and communist workers after the split in the Second International. It called for working-class unity on issues regardless of ideological difference.

The anti-monopoly strategy was developed after World War II and was heavily influenced by the 19th and 20th Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Like the popular front, it sought unity of action between different classes but this time minus a temporary alliance with sections of big business.

Simply put, parties advancing an anti-monopoly strategy posit that, in developed capitalist countries, big monopolies dominate the state/government, and that the interests of large majorities of workers, farmers, small businesses, and other strata are in conflict with monopoly — creating the basis for a coalition that, if led by the working class, could follow a parliamentary path to power. The theory is that this would lay the groundwork for establishing an anti-monopoly government. This anti-monopoly government, by breaking the monopolies' grip on the state, could then open the way to a socialist transition.

The national democratic revolution concept builds on Lenin's theory of imperialism. While advanced in the work of the Communist International, it too came to prominence after the Second World War to address decolonization and national liberation in Asia, Africa, and Latin America — a highlight of which was the revolution in China in 1949. It posits the need for countries subjugated by imperialist domination to form "national democratic fronts," a cross-class alliance including the national bourgeoisie to mobilize the entire nation in the fight for independence. This national democratic revolution concept today, while not used widely, is most prominently advanced by the South African liberation movement. The goal is nation building: to create a non-racist and non-sexist new nation among the land's diverse peoples, overcome apartheid and colonialism of a special type, and forge a common national identity.

Part 2 of this article will continue next week.

U.S. used trade war threat to force Canada's support for Cuba blockade

By Dave McKee



TORONTO—Reports have emerged that during the recent failed trade negotiations between the United States and Canada, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio offered the Canadian government a trade deal in exchange for Ottawa's support for the blockade against Cuba.

Specifically, Rubio sought Ottawa's promise to vote against the annual United Nations General Assembly resolution condemning the U.S. blockade of Cuba. Every year since 1992, the UNGA has voted overwhelmingly to demand an end to the nearly seven-decades-long economic blockade of the island and its people.

On every single occasion, Canada has supported the motion, joining the vast majority of the world's governments in calling on Washington to end its economic, commercial, and financial embargo.

But in an alarming move, Ottawa abstained from a UNGA vote in July, for the UN to open a special debate on intensified U.S. economic sanctions and the blockade against Cuba. On that occasion, there were several reports that Washington was pressuring countries around the world, including with tariffs and other trade penalties, to vote against or abstain the motion.

The current reports are the first concrete indication that the U.S. has directly used economic and financial threats against Canada to coerce support for the blockade. It marks an alarming escalation of Washington's willingness to hold sovereign countries and their peoples under threat of economic pain in order to advance its seven-decades-long campaign to overthrow the Cuban Revolution and deny the Cuban people's sovereignty.

Coming on the heels of Canada's abstention in July, these developments increase concern that Ottawa may shift its longstanding position in support of the Cuban people and Cuba's sovereignty.

Under the conditions of U.S. economic threats, such a shift would also mark a surrender of Canada's state sovereignty.

In a hopeful sign, *People's Voice* also received unconfirmed reports that Global Affairs Canada (GAC) denied Rubio's "request" and insisted that Canada will not change its position opposing the blockade of Cuba at the October UNGA vote. *People's Voice* is reaching out to GAC for confirmation.

Whether or not Ottawa did deny Rubio, the fact remains that the line of the Mark Carney government to this point has been largely to spout pro-sovereignty bluster while enacting policies which directly undermine Canada's independence from the U.S.

Cuba solidarity organizations in Canada are certainly aware of this, and they are mobilizing in response. The Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) has launched an important new campaign aimed precisely at pressuring Ottawa to maintain its vote in favor of the UNGA resolution condemning the blockade. The campaign includes lawn signs and, most notably, a parliamentary petition sponsored by Winnipeg Member of Parliament Leah Gaza.

Speaking to *Peoples Voice*, one CNC campaigner said that they welcome the news of Ottawa's apparent intention to continue supporting Cuba, but they are determined to build the strongest campaign and apply maximum pressure on the government between now and the vote in October.

"We welcome these unconfirmed statements from Global Affairs, but we will only know that Canada is continuing to support Cuba and oppose the blockade when we see the results of the October vote. Besides that, there is much more that Ottawa needs to be doing to support the Cuban people during this incredible escalation of the U.S. blockade and the real threat of war.

"In addition to opposing the blockade, Canada needs to deepen and defend economic and cultural exchanges between Canada and Cuba, enforce the Foreign Extraterritorial Measures Act which protects Canadian corporations who do business in Cuba against United States sanctions, lift Canada's advisory against non-essential travel to Cuba and expand opportunities for tourism and trade."

Trump administration again deploys 'foreign influence' allegations against left critics

By Kate Jones

The Trump administration's attack on its domestic critics reached its biggest stage yet at the United Nations General Assembly on Sept. 22.

During his remarks before delegates from around the world, President Donald Trump said, "The Cuban regime has...spent decades coordinating with the left-wing radicals and communist networks here in the United States. As our State Department has detailed, they've cultivated ties to subversive and radical groups such as the Communist Party USA, Antifa, and the Dumocrat [sic] Socialists of America."

This represents the culmination of months of efforts to connect opposition to MAGA to foreign influence.

The opening salvo in this most recent attempt was fired in May, when Fox News reported that the Justice and Treasury Departments were investigating U.S. nonprofits and activist groups over alleged coordination with the Cuban government.

Fox also published its own list of 145 organizations it tied to Cuba solidarity work, ranging from political organizations such as the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) and the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) to labor unions, including the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) affiliates.

The probes concern possible claimed violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) and U.S. sanctions on Cuba, which the Treasury Department enforces.

FARA has played a key role in the escalation of the Trump administration's efforts to silence its critics. The law prohibits "agents of foreign principals" from operating in the United States without registering with the Attorney General. It has traditionally been interpreted, in line with the First Amendment, not to cover opposition to government policy by Americans and American organizations.

However, National Security Presidential Memorandum 7, signed by Trump on Sept. 25, 2025, listed FARA violations among the possible crimes to investigate in its campaign against what it calls "organized political violence," a campaign that singles out "anti-fascist" movements. The memorandum named "anti-Americanism, anti-capitalism, and anti-Christianity" as "common threads" of the conduct it targets.

Since the publication of Memorandum 7, Republicans in Congress have intensified attempts to hush up MAGA's critics through the legal system. In February, Sen.Josh Hawley, R-Mo., wrote to Attorney General Pam Bondi calling for an investigation into the funding of anti-ICE protests, alleging that some funders have "possible ties to the Chinese Communist Party."

In June, Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., likewise asked the DOJ to investigate whether opposition to data centers is being driven by China, a theme Trump has echoed.



He wrote on social media that China "could not be happier with this anti Data Center movement" and told Fox News that "a lot of people say that it's a China PR thing."

July subpoenas of the People's Forum, Tricontinental Institute for Social Research, and BreakThrough News by the GOP-controlled House Ways and Means Committee, as well as a related federal grand jury investigation in Manhattan into the groups' funding, demonstrate right-wing forces' determination to use allegations of foreign influence against dissenters.

The DOJ appears to be escalating these efforts, issuing a rare statement on Sept. 16 to "remind the public" of FARA, singling out "public demonstrations designed to further the propaganda or other goals of the foreign power." This alludes to widespread false allegations that protests in opposition to the MAGA agenda are driven by foreign influence.

These developments could also serve as a potential justification for war. In a State Department report released in July, the Trump administration portrayed Cuba as a threat to the United States because of its supposed influence on the American left.

Likewise, during Trump's UN speech, he said his administration is seeking "a fundamental change in the situation in Cuba" and declared, "We'll not allow a haven for foreign adversaries to threaten America on our own doorstep." This comes as CBS News reports, citing an internal Army message and unnamed U.S. officials, that the military may be laying the groundwork for potential action involving Cuba.

The administration's approach has extensive historical precedent. McCarthyism was defined in large part by tales of foreign influence, which served as both political and legal justification for the persecution of people on the left and for the passage of some of the most severe restrictions on freedom of speech in the nation's history.

Progressive forces in the U.S. have not taken the administration's threats lying down. In a Sept. 24 statement responding to Trump's UN speech, the CPUSA quoted Co-chair Rossana Cambron, who called the allegations "a complete and unadulterated fabrication," adding,

"Our policies are made exclusively in the USA." The CPUSA also condemned the subpoenas meant to intimidate the People's Forum and other left-wing groups in an Aug. 1 statement.

Likewise, DSA responded in an Aug. 10 statement to the State Department's report, which falsely claimed to link it and other left-wing groups to a Cuban foreign influence operation.

It was stated that "DSA does not organize on behalf of the Cuban Government, only of its own accord," and that the report "is a tool for fulfilling Rubio and Trump's personal goals of regime change." The statement also reaffirmed DSA's commitment to organizing against the U.S. blockade of Cuba despite the administration's pressure.

While the administration's efforts to suppress its opposition continue, the grassroots movement against MAGA will not be silent.

Republicans worry about losing control of both the House and Senate

By John Wojcik



Many major polls are now indicating that Democrats have a good chance of taking not just the House in the coming midterms but also the Senate. Those improved odds for Democrats are fueling fears the Trump administration will roll out a playbook it has already drawn up to make sure that even a Democratic victory in one or both chambers is thwarted.

First, a look at the Senate polls that have Republicans so nervous:

The RealClearPolitics polling averages show Democrats leading in most of this cycle's competitive Senate races, including Alaska, Ohio, and Texas. Iowa is the one true toss-up: Republican Ashley Hinson holds a razor-thin edge over Democrat Josh Turek in the polling average there.

The independent Dan Osborn, challenging the Republicans in Nebraska with Democratic backing, is locked in a close race with Sen. Pete Ricketts, and Senate races in deep-red Kansas and South Dakota have tightened enough that recent polls put them within the margin of error.

With Democrats ahead in Alaska, Ohio, and even Texas—hardly friendly territory for Democrats in recent elections—it's hard to imagine Republicans feel any sense of security about holding onto the Senate. If they lose those three states and Democrats hold onto all their competitive seats, Republicans cannot retain control of the chamber.

Republicans might hold onto some hope when they look back at 2024 polling, which had Kamala Harris ahead of Trump in several key states before Trump came out ahead on Election Day.

The GOP faces headwinds this time that it didn't have to contend with in 2024, though, chief among them increased unity among Democrats. In most of the key Senate races, Republican support for Republican candidates is running behind Democratic support for Democratic candidates. Ohio is a telling example: An August Fox News poll found Sherrod Brown, the Democrat, backed by 97% of Ohio Democrats, while Jon Husted, his Republican opponent, was backed by 87% of Republicans—with Brown also winning two-thirds of independents.

The other big headwind facing the GOP is that support for its candidates among independents is shrinking, with majorities in several polls saying they back Democrats this cycle—a reversal from 2024, when Republicans often carried independent voters.

All of this—bad news for Republicans, good news for Democrats—has people fearing that the Trump administration will resort to dirty tricks in an attempt to steal the election if it doesn't go its way.

One of the major figures issuing these warnings is Miles Taylor, who served as chief of staff at the Department of Homeland Security during the first Trump administration. He was the anonymous whistleblower who, writing as "Anonymous," exposed extraconstitutional measures inside the Trump White House.

Taylor outlined this week, in an interview with *The Mirror*, what he believes the Trump administration could try if it is losing the election.

One tactic, he said, would be positioning ICE agents at polling places to drive down turnout by instilling fear in voters.

Taylor also warned the administration "will do whatever they can" to get around the Supreme Court's ruling earlier this month blocking new Trump-ordered restrictions on mail-in ballots for the midterms.

A third tactic Taylor named is sending in the FBI to seize ballots in places where the administration doesn't like the results—something federal agents have already done once this year, when they seized more than 650 boxes of 2020 election ballots from Fulton County, Georgia, as part of a Trump-aligned lawyer's fraud probe.

It would not be the first time Taylor has sounded this alarm.

In an October 2025 interview with *Tech Policy Press*, Taylor said he expects Trump to seek an unconstitutional third term in 2028 by running a "Vance-Trump" ticket—JD Vance at the top, Trump as his running mate—with Vance then stepping aside to hand the presidency back to Trump, or simply governing from the vice president's office with Trump calling the shots.

It's a prospect he repeated in a television interview on MSNOW Thursday morning, saying the move could even be part of a Trump scheme to avoid legal troubles.

Taylor suggested that Trump will try "holding onto power" as a way to "keep himself out of jail."

Labor and its allies have acknowledged the danger of a Trump administration trying to prevent any kind of defeat. Their answer, they say, is to build a turnout so overwhelming that nothing can stop the results from standing.

Taylor's warning, in the end, is blunt: "When Donald Trump loses, he lashes out," he said—and Democrats and their allies say the only insurance against that is turning out enough voters that no dirty trick can change the outcome.

RAPID RESPONSE: Stop Wall Street looting!

By People's World

Stop Wall Street looting!

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to co-sponsor and pass the Stop Wall Street Looting Act that will protect our communities, hospitals, and housing from the predatory exploitation, massive profits, and obscene corruption of private equity firms.

Just introduced by Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Rep. Pramila Jayapal, with 14 other members of Congress, this landmark legislation holds private equity firms accountable for the devastation they cause, protects worker pay and pensions when companies go bankrupt, ends extractive financial practices, and increases democratic accountability.



Demand an end to the crisis for working class communities! Pass the Stop Wall Street Looting Act now!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.

Capitalist sources of the housing crisis

By Dennis Moore



First, much like today, the housing crisis does not affect the entire working class in the same way. For much of the 20th-century, people of color (and black people in particular) have endured a prolonged and overtly racist housing scheme where they were expressly denied adequate housing, forced into substandard housing, made to pay rents disproportionally higher than their white counterparts, and generally excluded from the many benefits of homeownership. The housing crisis was alive and kicking in the 20th century for non-white people, and it would have affected the entirety of the working class more brutally had it not been for the over-exploitation of people of color. Furthermore, from the discussion on absolute ground rent above, we can see that ground rents must rely on a class or subclass of people that are ultra-exploited to establish a base ground rent from which to build atop differential ground rents. Black people were expressly forced to play this role in the 20th century and disproportionally play this role now. And although there have been decades of struggle to rectify these past injustices, much work is still left to be done. (32)

Second, the passage of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (which gave birth to the Section 8 program) saw the shift of federal spending away from public housing and toward voucher programs. This shift was epitomized in the 1998 Faircloth Amendment which prevented the construction of public housing by housing authorities if that development would increase the net number of public housing units beyond the number of units that existed on October 1st 1999. Public housing plays a crucial role in providing a bulwark against the rise of absolute rents by providing housing to people that would otherwise be unable to afford it. By shifting the stewardship of low-income housing to landlords and private interest, the exploitation of absolute rent (and ground rent in general) increased both for low-income occupants and all those in un-subsidized housing.

Third, more generally, capitalism must always face the tendency of the declining rate of profit. (33) Because profit is extracted from human labor power, and because the production process of commodities becomes more mechanized over time, the rate of profit per capital invested decreases over time (because variable/human labor becomes a small portion of the production process compared to constant/machine capital). The most obvious solution to prevent this tendency is to increase the intensity of exploitation. (34) This increased exploitation appears in housing as increased ground rents — that is, as an increased intensity of future exploitation.

From the above three points, we can conclude that the housing crisis is not a novel occurrence. Rather, it has existed in one form or another under capitalism, the form of which is determined both by the contingent material conditions of the U.S. as well as the internal tendencies of capitalism. With the housing crisis here to stay, we must tackle a further, more pressing question.

III. What is to be done?

It is easier to explain a problem than to develop a solution — even easier still to draw a rough sketch of the problem as I have done. And although this explanation of the housing crises leaves much for further development and clarification, I hope one thing is abundantly clear: the housing crisis is grounded in the exploitation of the working class. Housing and labor are necessarily linked under capitalism and as such, communists must be involved in the housing struggle.

How, then, do we get ourselves out of this crisis?

Limits of "build more housing"

The most common "solution" touted by mainstream voices to resolve the housing crisis appears simple enough: build more housing. Various sources state that the U.S. is short 3.7 to 5.5 million homes. (35) Presumably, so the argument goes, increasing the supply of housing will lower the price, thereby cooling the housing crisis and returning the market to a manageable level. This is an unsatisfactory solution in numerous ways.

First, the solution of building more housing seems to be at odds with statistics that show as much as 10% of the U.S.'s housing supply (some 15 million homes) are currently vacant. (36) In the most extreme cases like Detroit, there are 116 vacant homes for every unhoused person in the city. These vacant homes are ones available for rent, for sale, or seasonally (such as second homes). If there is a plethora of vacant housing, how can producing even more housing resolve the crisis? This disconnect can only make sense if we understand the housing crisis not as a lack of housing, but as a lack of realizable profits for landlords and housing-capitalists. Homes will remain empty and vacant, even in the face of homelessness and crisis, if it is not profitable to rent/sell them. At best, an increase in the supply will lessen the housing crisis but not eliminate it.

Second, suppose that by some miracle, private developers rapidly increase housing production across the country. But under the same logic that proposes this "solution" we can see how the crisis will rear its head again. Should housing supply increase and the price of housing decrease, there will be a point in time where developers stop producing housing because it is no longer profitable. Then, as the population and demand for housing increases, so too will the price until we return to a state of crisis. It is in this way that Engels chastises bourgeois responses to the housing crisis: "solving it in such a way that the solution continually reproduces the question anew." (37)

Third, suppose that by some miracle the U.S. housing supply increases and by an even greater miracle the population of the U.S. and the housing supply remains stagnant. In other words, a housing crisis as in the above point will not redevelop. Where does that leave us? The functions of ground rents will remain, although not as intense. Still, so long as ground rents exist, a class of people must be ultra-exploited to serve as the foundation for all rents. Homelessness and substandard housing must exist for a baseline that justifies the price of housing.

Part 4 will be in next week's print.

Chicago Mayor Johnson: No city funds for labor law-breaking firms

By Mark Gruenberg



CHICAGO—If you're a pro-worker government official, and you want to get a corporation's attention, do something unexpected and drastic: Take away their chances to grab your city's dollars.

Which is precisely what Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson intends, with an executive order he issued just before Labor Day and which, if all goes according to plan, will start in late January.

Starting early next year, if your business breaks Chicago or state or federal wage and hours laws, you won't get city contracts or cash grants of $250,000 or more. That may occur if you break other labor laws, too.

If your business breaks federal, state, or local civil rights laws, you won't get city contracts or cash worth at least $500,000. If you cooperate with GOP President Donald Trump's vicious and violent ICE agents, ditto.

If your business is a big national firm, such as Amazon, which supports "government overreach"—Johnson's code words for corporate beneficiaries of Trump's repressive ICE raids in Operation Midway Blitz—you won't get those city contracts or cash either.

If you committed any of those offenses within the past five years, forget future contracts or cash.

And if you break any "other laws protecting workers' rights," you won't get Chicago contracts, grants, or cash worth more than $250,000, unless the city procurement chief decides your services are absolutely necessary and unique.

All these bans are the result of an executive order Johnson issued just before Labor Day. It could also be a precedent for the country, or for the next U.S. Congress, if Democrats and pro-worker forces take power after the November 3 election.

Individual Chicago grants may be $250,000 or more, but the total is huge. We're talking serious money here: $3.13 billion in fiscal 2026 in federal, state and local grants alone, the City Council's Office of Financial Analysis says. There are so many contracts that adding them all up is impossible.

"Chicagoans work hard for their tax dollars, and they deserve to know those dollars are being used responsibly," Johnson, a former Chicago Teachers Union shop steward, said in a statement after unveiling his executive order. "Public money should strengthen our neighborhoods, create opportunity and serve the people who call Chicago home, not support practices that harm our communities."

Johnson's executive order makes clear there are dual targets for the contracts and grants ban, and dual good reasons, one each present and past, for it.

The present reason is "Chicago has an obligation to ensure public funds are spent in a manner consistent with ethical standards, legal compliance, and responsible business practices," it states.

Chicago "may use its purchasing power to promote ethical commerce, encourage timely delivery of goods and services, and reduce the risk that public dollars are subsidizing corruption that undermines our communities," the mayor's mandate adds.

The past reason is unstated but present in Chicago's history: More than a century of corporate graft, horse-trading and manipulation in the city's pay-to-play corrupt political culture. Bribes and boodle predated street railway and subway czar Charles Tyson Yerkes in the 1880s and extended through 2000 and beyond, enmeshing much of Chicago's long-dominant Democratic machine.

How dominant and how corrupt? One of the machine's last two big-name pillars, former 54-year Democratic City Council member—and Finance Chairman and floor leader—Edward Burke, 82, is now on home release after serving two years in federal prison. The other, former Democratic Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan, is serving a seven-and-a-half-year sentence. Both received under-the-table money in pay-to-play.

And at the end of his first presidential term, Trump pardoned and freed former Democratic Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who was convicted and jailed for soliciting bribes from contenders for Barack Obama's vacant U.S. Senate seat after Obama won the White House. Blagojevich, too, was a machine man.

Trump, his graft, and his repressive impact on Chicago are Johnson's executive order's other top targets. The mayor and his top union supporter, the Chicago Teachers Union/AFT Local 1, have been outspoken and effective Trump critics. CTU just endorsed Johnson for re-election for a new four-year term and promises to hit the pavement hard for him.

"The city of Chicago is living with the consequences of this corporate-funded and enabled authoritarianism and the militarization of civil immigration enforcement, which trades our communities' well-being for corporate profits," Johnson's executive order declares.

Part 2 will be in next week's print.

N.Y. reparations rally: ‘They stole us! They sold us! They owe us!’

By Brooklyn Crawford

BROOKLYN, N.Y.—A crowd of a few hundred people gathered at Fulton Park in Bedford-Stuyvesant on Aug. 29 to attend a reparations rally being coordinated by the December 12th Movement, a Pan-African human rights organization based in New York City.

The rally was held to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) held in Durban, South Africa in 2001. The conference produced the historically significant Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA).

The DDPA formally acknowledged the long-term effects of colonialism, declared slavery as a crime against humanity for the first time, and served as a practical guide for states to take action against racism. In addition, the DDPA acknowledges the need of states to address past crimes, saying that it “urges States to adopt the necessary measures, as provided by national law, to ensure the right of victims to seek just and adequate reparation and satisfaction to redress acts of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and to design effective measures to prevent the repetition of such acts.”

The Fulton Park rally received 76 endorsements from organizations across the city, including the Brooklyn chapter of the NAACP’s Justice Reform Committee, the Brooklyn Club of the Communist Party, and the New York Civil Liberties Union, among others.

The demand for reparations has been in and out of mainstream discourse over the last 25 years. Just days after the Durban conference ended, the Sept. 11 attacks occurred, stalling mobilization efforts and shifting state energy and attention towards the “War on Terror.”

In the U.S., the war energized patriotic nationalism at a time when the country had just begun to face pressure to atone for its past crimes. But even before the events of 9/11, the United States, under the George W. Bush administration, was hostile to the Durban conference. It, along with Israel, boycotted the event, upset that the actions of the Israeli state against Palestinians would be identified as racist.

People’s World spoke with Roger Wareham, founding member of the December 12th movement and one of the Durban 400 members who lobbied around reparations at the WCAR. Wareham detailed the United States’ withdrawal from the conference.

“They didn’t want to leave saying they were against reparations. So, the narrative they had and you know the one they run till this day, is that the Durban World Conference was antisemitic,” Wareham explained.

“The Palestinian delegation took the position that they were not going to push the whole issue of Israel, because they wanted to support this demand around the declaration of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and reparations.



When you look at the Durban declaration, it actually recognizes the existence of the state of Israel while recognizing the Palestinians’ right to self-determination. There’s nothing that they can point to that is antisemitic.”

Indeed, the U.S. government to this day condemns the international consensus reached at the 2001 WCAR, and the Trump administration, unlike previous administrations, doesn’t feel the need to hide its disapproval of the idea of reparations. Just this month, at the Republican Midterm Convention in Dallas on Sept. 9, the president said people asking for reparations “hate the country.”

Further, Jeff Bartos, a member of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations Representative, posted a video to X stating:

“Durban’s radicals weren’t only obsessed with Israel. They also demanded reparations from the United States and other Western countries for slavery and colonialism. They conveniently and lazily reduced history to oppressors versus victims, treated Western prosperity as evidence of exploitation, and attempted to permanently indict America and the West.”

Criticism of the United States has been a touchy endeavor for activists and scholars navigating through the white supremacist policies, practices, and pressures of the far-right. Critical Race Theory (CRT), Diversity Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and affirmative action have all been under assault by far-right figures, who claim that measures taken to address and acknowledge systemic racism and inequality are discriminatory against white people.

Bartos emphasized his disgust with the World Conference Against Racism further, saying:

“As we now know, what happened in Durban did not stay in Durban, and perhaps that was the point all along. Much of the woke ideological vocabulary that erupted across America and the West in 2020 was rehearsed there. Systemic guilt, reparations, settler colonialism, capitalism as oppression, immigration enforcement as xenophobia, and discrimination in the name of anti-racism.”

Part 2 will be in next week’s print.

International News

TKP rejects 'Mecca Agreement'

By CPUSA International Department

The Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) issued a statement condemning the so-called "Mecca Joint Defense Agreement" between Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Turkey. The agreement treats an armed attack on any one country as an attack on all three, effectively dragging Turkey into a dangerous military adventure, the party said.

The TKP warned that this pact, signed under the auspices of U.S. imperialism, chains Turkey's military power to imperialist regional plans. The ruling AKP party is selling the agreement as regional powers mobilizing against Israel, but the TKP argues that this is untrue. In reality, they said, the U.S. is working systematically to remove points of resistance and realign the region to serve its own interests, with Turkey being recruited as a subcontractor for an "American peace" that strengthens Israel and weakens Iran. The TKP called for Turkey to withdraw from NATO and build relations on the basis of equality and sovereignty.

Canadá: CP condena la «Cumbre de Inversión»

Por Departamento Internacional del CPUSA

El Partido Comunista de Canadá condenó la Cumbre de Inversión del gobierno de Carney como «una descarada subasta de los activos públicos, los recursos naturales y la infraestructura de Canadá al mejor postor».

El Partido señaló que el gobierno tiene mayoría con solo el 27 por ciento de los votantes elegibles, pero aun así impulsa la privatización, la desregulación y la militarización — destinando 150.000 millones de dólares anuales al gasto militar mientras recorta 40.000 empleos del sector público.

Muchos proyectos se encuentran en territorios indígenas, señaló el Partido, lo que plantea preocupaciones sobre el derecho al consentimiento libre, previo e informado. El PC pidió que Canadá se retire del T-MEC, que se nacionalicen industrias clave, incluida la automotriz, y que se abandonen las alianzas militares de la OTAN y NORAD.

Chile: Los comunistas conmemoran el 53.º aniversario del golpe fascista

El Partido Comunista de Chile conmemoró el 53.º aniversario del golpe de Estado de 1973 con una ceremonia en el mausoleo de Salvador Allende y una ofrenda floral en su monumento en la Plaza de la Constitución. La presidenta del partido, Lautaro Carmona, destacó el legado de Allende de nacionalización del cobre, solidaridad internacional y política antiimperialista.

Ella enfatizó que la experiencia de la Unidad Popular no fue derrotada, sino "temporalmente paralizada por un golpe de Estado", concluyendo: "Con Allende como nuestro ejemplo, triunfaremos mil veces."

Chipre: AKEL conmemora su centenario

AKEL conmemoró el centenario del Partido Comunista de Chipre, fundado el 15 de agosto de 1926, con un programa de actividades políticas, culturales y educativas.

Un evento importante está previsto para el 6 de noviembre, seguido de un simposio internacional, "La izquierda en el mundo contemporáneo", el 7 de noviembre. El programa incluirá un volumen académico sobre 100 años de la izquierda chipriota y un proyecto para digitalizar los archivos del Partido.

El secretario general de AKEL, Stefanos Stefanou, vinculó el centenario con los preparativos para las elecciones presidenciales de 2028, señalando que el objetivo era construir una amplia mayoría social para un cambio progresista. En las últimas elecciones, AKEL obtuvo un resultado mejor que en los últimos años, lo que indica una creciente demanda de políticas favorables a los trabajadores y a la paz entre la clase trabajadora chipriota.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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October 10, 2026

Who defines a Third Reconstruction – and the road to it? Part 2

By Joe Sims

With respect to Comrade Crowder's essay, then, the question is how do these concepts apply to the U.S. today? The CPUSA Program holds that in the current moment defeating the far right is the main question before the country. It postulates that at this stage, anti-fascist tasks — not anti-monopoly measures — are the order of the day. In this respect Comrade Dougherty's statement that "the anti-fascist struggle is primary" seems to have merit. While one might quibble with Dougherty's use of the word primary — a category that belongs to class struggle — Crowder does seem to be skipping stages. On the other hand, Crowder's position shouldn't be casually dismissed. Indeed, can MAGA be defeated without breaking the billionaire grip on the federal government? An interesting question no doubt, but would that require anti-monopoly measures?

Consider that the CPUSA program argues further that a multi-class, all-peoples front is the political form of coalition through which those tasks must be organized. While fully embracing the anti-monopoly strategy as a necessary goal, the party program insists that defeating the far right is a precondition for moving in that direction. Does not the rise of MAGA and the full-on fascist assault on democracy make this all the more necessary?

The working class and the struggle for democracy

Who will carry out this struggle? Crowder is very concerned — as well he should be — that big business can't be relied on: "Monopoly is the stage at which the bourgeoisie's capacity to lead a democratic revolution exhausts itself entirely" he asserts. But here one must ask when have bourgeois forces, monopoly or not, ever had the capacity to lead a democratic revolution? From the time of Lenin at the very least, the revolutionary working-class movement has never had confidence in big capital's capacity to do anything other than pursue the drive for maximum profits. Their "leadership" of the bourgeois-democratic revolution has always been to lead their class' domination over society, the result of which has been to trample over and over again the rights of workers, women, and oppressed nations. However, that does not mean that sections of the capitalist class, including sections of monopoly, cannot from time to time be compelled to support more advanced democratic demands. Hence the CPUSA's call, following Lenin, to place a working-class stamp on the democratic fight — a fight that must compel some elements of big capital to support its demands.

With regard to this democratic fight, two issues stand out.



First, as it applies to the fight for equal rights, that is, the national question, this is a struggle for the fulfillment of bourgeois-democratic rights. The movement's "reconstruction" or Civil Rights demand as Martin said in '63 was a demand to fulfill a promise. Listen: "When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, Black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the 'unalienable Rights' of 'Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.'"

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

Who defines a Third Reconstruction – and the road to it? Part 2

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Secondly, it must be recognized that this fight in the USA today is by definition a fight in a two-party political system dominated by monopoly capital: this has been the case for over a century. Notwithstanding this two-party domination, however, the Civil Rights movement has always insisted on an immediate addressing of its demands. To sum up Martin's central argument in Why We Can't Wait: "We want freedom and we want it now." And in order for those demands to be met, monopoly forces in both the Democratic and Republican parties had to be compelled to support the Civil Rights, Voting Rights, and Fair Housing Acts.

The popular front against fascism

Today, advocates of the Third Reconstruction are confronted by the same two-party system in which one of the parties has carried out a civil rights counter-revolution. Shouldn't communists support this call to upend MAGA's plans? Consider what it would mean for the Communist Party to distance itself and instead say, "Sorry, your Third Reconstruction will have to wait until the working class leads a fight to defeat monopoly." Moreover, would that be substantially different from the position taken by the Socialist Party in the early 20th century which argued that addressing racism would have to wait until the arrival of socialism?

It's well worth noting here that the all-peoples front concept was developed in the late 1980s by party collectives led by Gus Hall. They emerged in response to a shift to the far right in the U.S. ruling class after the Nixon and Reagan elections, a fight in which racism played a major role. Let's not forget that the Moral Majority rise was in large part a response to efforts to desegregate public education. Hall's "whiff of fascism" thesis marked the beginning of this process. In this regard, the party's concerns about the degree of the fascist danger grew ever more pronounced with the appearance of the GOP's Southern Strategy, Iran–Contra, Gingrich's Contract On America, the Tea Party, and now Trump.

It's important to recognize here a transition in the party's propositions from an emphasis on fighting monopoly as a whole to fighting that section of monopoly dominated by far right and fascist forces. This shift began in the mid-80s. It's true that for a time the terms "all-peoples front" and "anti-monopoly" coincided in the same documents and were used interchangeably. But as time went on, and the fascist danger grew ever more pronounced, the people's front replaced anti-monopoly as the point of emphasis.

Consider also that the popular front, since the 7th World Congress, is seen as a specific form of coalition to combat a very specific danger: fascism. Why? Because to be successful, the coalition must be able to peel off sections of monopoly itself. Thus, it is a multi-class concept. Is it risky and fraught with all manner of betrayals? Yes. But the danger posed by a dictatorship is far greater.

In this regard, the popular front does not fit with other strategic objectives and the tactics needed to achieve them, notably the anti-monopoly coalition. Why, for example, would monopoly corporations participate in coalitions predicated on breaking their very power?

One must conclude then that the anti-monopoly goal requires another front or coalition, narrower in some regards with a different political goal and program.

The national democratic revolution

This brings us then to the issue of the national democratic revolution. Does a front developed by communist and national liberation activists in the developing world to mobilize the entire nation to oppose colonialism have any application at all in the imperialist center? The main goal of the national democratic revolution — which by the way is at base a bourgeois-democratic revolution (the nation after all is a creation of capitalism) — was to establish the nation state. This meant raising an army, conquering the home market, establishing a common language etc., most of which was achieved in the imperialist centers during the 18th and 19th centuries. In other words, in the developed capitalist countries the national democratic revolution has been completed.

But has the national democratic revolution been completed on these shores? It's true that here a racist social division of labor, that is, institutionalized racism has marred capitalism's historic development. It's also true that as a result our country has experienced a somewhat incomplete bourgeois-democratic revolution. Still the answer is largely yes. It's beyond doubt that the home market has been long established along with the currency of a common language. It's also very clear that monopoly capitalism has forged in this country a single working class comprising many different nationalities, ethnicities, and cultures.

On the other hand, national questions in the U.S. continue to rage, with a people of color majority expected by 2040. But solving these questions requires an appropriate strategy for these times and the tactics needed to achieve them. Today that means placing the fight against racist inequality at the center of the fight for class unity. In other words, it would be a mistake to suggest that the tasks before the multinational U.S. today are akin to tasks before a national liberation movement: to do so would run the risk of replacing multinational, multiracial class tasks with "national"— that is, racial/ethnic — ones, a goal that Crowder seems to be advancing by arguing that achieving a Third Reconstruction would require anti-monopoly measures led by the working class.

The centrality of the fight against racism and the fight ahead

After all, achieving a Third Reconstruction as conceived by African American activists, is not a national democratic task but an advanced democratic one requiring not only the support of Black Americans as a whole, but Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, women, white workers, youth etc. Reverend Barber places the question this way.

"In a fusion coalition, our most directly affected members would always speak to the issue closest to their own hearts. But they would never speak alone. When workers spoke up for the right to organize and engage in collective bargaining, the civil rights community would be there with them... Our biggest challenge is to see the intersectionality of our issues and build fusion coalitions that are stronger than divide-and-conquer strategies."

As Henry Winston emphasized when arguing for the concept of centrality, solving African American oppression and racism is central to class unity — it does not replace it. The main issue before the country in this moment of late stage imperialism is defeating the drive towards white supremacist nationalist fascism — a struggle that on the one side cannot be won without broad multi-class unity, but on the other side, must place racist and gender inequality, in other words, the struggle for democracy at the center of the fight.

Can Third Reconstruction measures be realized given today's balance of forces domestically? Honestly, we do not know what the future will hold. What we do know is that they cannot be postponed but must be fought for as hard as we can in the here and now. And like it or not, the struggle must proceed from defeating the far right attack on civil and labor rights, to anti-monopoly or "advanced democracy" and from there to socialism. It would be a mistake to skip stages but to also mechanically place walls around each of these phases as we fight to break the billionaire grip on the federal government.

N.Y. reparations rally: 'They stole us! They sold us! They owe us!' Part 2

By Brooklyn Crawford

Bartos' statement encapsulates the fascist far-right's resentment towards popular mass movements that threaten systems of oppression.

Proponents of reparations for Black Americans argue that the idea has historical precedent. In fact, the U.S. paid reparations to some Japanese-Americans for its criminal incarceration of Japanese-Americans in concentration camps during World War II. These facts were noted by a speaker from an organization called Tsuru for Solidarity, a Japanese-American group "working to end detention sites and support directly impacted immigrant and refugee communities."

Tsuru for Solidarity also carries on a reparations campaign aiming to help Black Americans receive reparations and to build solidarity between Japanese and Black communities.

Interestingly enough, there is another historical form of "reparations" to be found in U.S. history: Many former slave owners were compensated for freeing their slaves after the Civil War.

"If you study your history, you know that in 1862 in Washington, D.C., they passed legislation to give reparations for slave owners for freeing their slaves—$300 a piece," New York State Sen. and DSA member Jabari Brisport said as he spoke to the crowd at the rally.

Brisport has been involved in trying to pass reparations legislation in the New York Senate since 2021 and was the prime sponsor of the Reparations and Remedies Community Act, which passed in 2023 and established a commission on reparations remedies. Brisport says it was no easy feat.

"It was because of the work being done by the December 12th movement, by all the organizers here, that we were indeed able to pass that reparations commission in the New York State legislature a few years ago.

"Now, it was a fight to do it. There were deep arguments and debates over whether or not there should be a commission. I had white Democrats telling me behind the scenes, 'Oh, I don't know, that's kind of controversial,' or…'It sets a bad precedent.' And even on the last day when we were voting on it, we still had white Republicans on the floor, I remember one of them saying 'Well, can I get reparations?'"



The idea that reparations are unfair is one that many opponents cling to. But Black community members, leaders, and representatives contend that they aren't asking for handouts; rather, they're demanding what they are rightfully owed.

New York Public Advocate Jumaane D. Williams was also present at the rally, saying, "They owe us. Some people act like you're trying to ask for something. We're just trying to get what we're owed."

The federal government doesn't agree. President Trump and his Justice Department, headed by Todd Blanche, are joining a lawsuit against the city of Evanston, Ill., for passing legislation that gave some 300 Black residents $25,000 to address historical housing discrimination. Trump and the DOJ are allying themselves with conservative groups who argue that reparations programs are "reverse racism."

At the same time, Trump feels he and his allies deserve their own reparations for perceived political persecution. At a press conference this past August, he said, "They went after me. And what they did here was very, frankly, if you talk about reparations or if you talk about payment, what they did to me, I had a very good case against them…."

While some aspects of reparations include direct checks to individuals, like those in Evanston, reparations advocates' main focus is on addressing institutional and systemic inequality.

When People's World asked Wareham what reparations might look like in the United States today, he answered:

"Our view of reparations...would be an institutional response to the institutional damage that we suffered. And we don't envision it so much as somebody getting a check. We think that we suffered collective damage and that the repair has to reflect that."

Wareham cited a campaign December 12th started during the Biden administration to push the president to sign an executive order for a $50 billion payment that would provide state of the art medical care and facilities in Black communities as an example of institutional repair.

When it comes to reparations, advocates say that while a one-time check might sound nice, addressing racial inequality on a fundamental institutional level would be even better.

Capitalist sources of the housing crisis Part 4

By Dennis Moore



What we can now see is that the mainstream "solution" out of the housing crisis fails to target the crux of the issue, fails to prevent the reproduction of the crisis, and maintains a system of exploitation that targets one of the most disadvantaged communities in our society (the unhoused and those at risk of being unhoused). That is not to say that we should not produce more housing; we should. But mere housing production cannot resolve the crisis.

Immediate and long-term struggle

If the mainstream solution fails, what is the alternative?

As an immediate step, we must involve ourselves in local housing movements to better the conditions of renters and homeowners. We must win victories in rent control or freezes, foreclosure and eviction protections, increased housing production, etc. Such gains not only better the conditions of working class folks in our communities, but also increases the reputation of communists and our work. We need only look at how our comrades in Graz have spearheaded the housing fight and won the trust of the people. (38) Only if we can prove through our actions that we fight for the working class will our neighbors listen to our analysis of the housing crisis.

As members or leaders of the housing struggle, we must bend the movement to include long-term goals that will resolve the housing crisis. Ultimately, the housing crisis cannot end so long as the capitalist mode of production reigns supreme.

But we should not accept this in a defeatist attitude where we must first wait for the fall of capitalism to usher a world of better housing. Rather, we ought to see this as an opportunity. After all, Marx said that "an attack upon one form of property... may cast considerable doubt on the other form." (39) Capitalism and housing as a commodity rely on the legal framework of private property. In fighting against private property under capitalism, we weaken the justification of private property of housing. And vice versa too, by fighting against private property in housing we weaken the position of private property in capitalist society generally.

Public and social housing

And we weaken private property in housing by advocating for public housing.

To do so would require joining national campaigns to repeal the Faircloth Amendment and thereby unlock public housing stock. Public housing, like other government services, does not rely on a profit to exist, and can continue functioning at a loss indefinitely. Crucially, public housing has historically worked to prevent elderly, disabled, and poor people from falling into homelessness — that is, those most likely to be exploited in substandard housing to increase absolute ground rent. Should public housing expand and should its roles as a bulwark continue, public housing has the unique opportunity to attack the basis of absolute ground rent. If adequate public housing is available to all at little to no cost to the occupant, absolute ground rent in the private market will crumble.

A robust system of public housing would allow for a private housing market to exist simultaneously. Yet the private market's ability to exploit tenants and homeowners will be hamstringed by public housing. After all, tenants will be much less likely to allow for landlord abuses if there is housing available that is of equal quality and cheaper. Over time, it may come to be that public housing becomes the dominant if not only form of housing. Singapore, for example, despite being a hub of global capitalism, had 90% of its land and housing in the public sphere only a few decades ago. (40)

Alternative housing models such as housing cooperatives and social housing have a role to play too in reducing the housing crisis. Due to the nature of their organizational structures, these social housing models can curb the worst excesses of private property in housing.

Still, these models operate within the framework of private property and are therefore rely on ground rent and land valuations to remain afloat. Ground rent is the source of the housing crisis and only through the elimination of ground rent may we truly end the housing crisis. And that is only possible under a robust configuration of universal public housing.

The United States is a materially vast landscape, and crisis manifests in similarly vast ways. The tactics in both short- and long-term housing struggles will ultimately need to be developed in accordance with on-the-ground conditions. What may be successful in one part of the country may be futile in another. Yet every challenge offers a new opportunity to weaken the housing crisis and thereby weaken global capitalism. The fight against capitalism in housing is a fight against capitalism writ large.

RAPID RESPONSE: Demand voter protections now!

By People's World

Call, write, or visit your U.S. Senators and Representative to demand that they pressure businesses in their district to support the May Day Strong coalition's Businesses for Democracy pledge that will protect free and democratic elections from the Trump administration's escalating attacks on voting rights.

The Businesses for Democracy Pledge demands these companies tell their workers how and where they can vote, publicly oppose the blocking of eligible voters, and refuse to stay quiet if ballots go uncounted or winners go unseated.

Demand an end to the assault on our democracy! Pressure corporations and main street businesses to sign the Businesses for Democracy Pledge now!

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your U.S. Senators and Representative. Click here to send them a letter.

Then, fill in your info to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.



In addition to sending a letter to your Senators and Representative, see the actions hosted by the May Day Strong coalition:
Culver City, CA (Oct. 3): March and demonstration calling on Amazon, Sony, Apple, and Pinterest to act. Organized by Culver City and Friends Rising.

Minneapolis, MN (Oct. 3): March calling on Delta, Target, and the Pohlad family to act, organized by Step Up for Democracy, UnidosMN, and CTUL.

New York, NY (Oct. 3): Door-to-door canvass focused on Amazon/Whole Foods, organized by NYC-DSA

New York, NY (Oct. 5): March focused on JPMorgan Chase, organized by Hands Off NYC and May Day Strong NYC.

Philadelphia, PA (Oct. 6): Protest calling out hedge fund billionaire Jeffrey Yass, organized by the Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO.

Philadelphia, PA (Oct. 6): Press conference and action focused on Palantir, organized by Make the Road.

San Francisco, CA (Oct. 7): Protest and flyering focused on Palantir and PG&E, organized by the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment.

Nationwide (Oct. 8): National mass call for allies and Starbucks workers, organized by Starbucks Workers United.

Seattle, WA (Oct. 10): Flyering event focused on corporations enabling the administration, organized by Communities Rising.

Additional actions are planned in Chicago, IL (Oct. 6); Davenport, FL (Oct. 3-11); Tucson, AZ (Oct. 7); Albuquerque, NM (Oct. 6); Phoenix, AZ (Oct. 8); and San Francisco, CA (Oct. 8).

Chicago Mayor Johnson: No city funds for labor law-breaking firms Part 2

By Mark Gruenberg



That includes violence by Trump's ICE agents during Operation Midway Blitz in Chicago last year against the city's Latino and other migrant residents. Trump's corporate backers "underwrite authoritarianism," says the non-profit group promoting the cash cutoffs, Not With Our Money.

Chicago's Johnson was the first city mayor to agree to the cutoffs. So, apparently, do Chicagoans.

A poll that Not With Our Money commissioned found 71% would ban city contracts for wage and hour lawbreakers and 12% would not. The same margin holds against a firm that greases a politician's palm in hopes of getting a grant or contract, regardless of whether it wins or not.

The margin against money for civil rights lawbreakers is 66%-21%. By a 64%-15% score, voters would not send city money to the Amazons of the world—big firms whose CEOs cozy up to Trump and reap millions, or in Amazon's case, billions in federal contracts as rewards, or who cooperate with Trump's troops.

To root out such malefactors and set standards for dealing with them, Johnson, a noted progressive, will set up a commission to travel the city, holding hearings on such corporate lawbreakers and how to penalize them by banning city procurement officers from funneling them money.

Johnson's giving the panel 180 days to report, make recommendations and write regulations to ban such largesse. All its work will hit the streets just days before next year's mayoral primary in February.

Not With Our Money pushes the idea of battling corruption—including Trump's—by cutting off the cash.

The group is campaigning for other cities and states to put their money where their mouths are. Not With Our Money says on its website that it's in talks with leaders of other cities about similar edicts. One is Albany, N.Y., which for decades had its own machine, without Chicago's scale of graft.

Chicago is also the group's example of how to combat graft and corruption.

Johnson's executive order declared "an unprecedented level of corporate corruption is undermining democratic norms, eroding labor standards, reducing affordability, weakening our public safety, undermining our small businesses, harming our immigrant populations, and surveilling Chicago's workers and communities."

And while federal, state and local laws "have long prohibited individuals and companies from bribing public officials or supplementing public officials' salaries to advance their own business interests," many do so anyway.

Such corruption, Johnson's order says, "evades timely disclosures" and does not just hurt city "taxpayers who foot the bill, but it also has direct impacts on our communities' well-being by supporting government overreach."

The mayor's executive order also praises "responsible firms which have taken a stand against overreach...and pay-to-play deals," losing contracts and grants as a result. And it says anti-discrimination workplace practices "enhance productivity and increase the likelihood of timely, predictable, and satisfactory delivery of goods and services" while "avoiding the complications" the city hits by dealing with law-breaking companies.

The big problem with Johnson's anti-corruption campaign is that Trump has gotten in the way. That's another reason his corporate backers are targets of Johnson's executive order and will be targets of the commission and its rules, too.

Trump's trashing of workplace protections is also a direct contrast with laws his second-term predecessor, Democrat Joe Biden, proposed and the then-Democratic-run Congress approved, as well as with Biden executive orders. Biden ordered federal procurement officers to weigh a firm's labor relations—including allowing organizing drives—obedience to anti-discrimination statutes and its tax-payment record when awarding contracts. Trump dumped that mandate.

And Congress inserted two provisions into jobs laws to encourage unionization. One gave an extra tax credit to buyers of union-made electric vehicles. The other mandated Project Labor Agreements on most federally funded construction projects.

That's a direct contrast to Trump, as Johnson's executive order makes clear.

"The federal government has in recent years undermined compliance efforts, especially with respect to critical workplace anti-discrimination protections, weakening enforcement of civil rights laws and enabling practices that exacerbate inequality in our workplaces and communities," it reads.

"Follow the money, and you find the same pattern in city after city: Companies enriching this White House's political operation or underwriting the president's pet construction projects are winning lucrative federal contracts in return, and then showing up on municipal vendor lists for the cities they helped attack," Dorian Warren, Co-President of Community Change Action and spokesperson in the city for Not With Our Money, told WBEZ public radio.

"The people's checkbook is not a getaway car. If you want the privilege of doing business with the City of Chicago, you have to do business the right way."

Trump's Iran war is costing you thousands of dollars

By Amy Hanauer

Affordability is getting worse, especially if you have to drive to work or anywhere else.

By late September, the total cost of the higher gas and diesel prices triggered by President Donald Trump's war against Iran exceeded $103 billion, according to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy's analysis of the federal government's energy data. And those higher prices aren't showing any sign of slowing. If current trends hold, the price tag by the end of this year will approach $180 billion.

For the average household, that comes out to $750 extra so far, and that figure is on pace to top $1,300 by year's end.

For a family of four with two drivers, those costs are even higher, topping $1,000 already and slated to be over $1,700 by the end of the year if the war continues. An interactive tool, online at itep.org/iran-war-fuel-cost, lets you punch in your region and household size to get a sense of how much your family's costs are rising.

To be clear, this isn't the cost of the weapons and soldiers fighting the war, which the Pentagon estimates to be around $44 billion. This is the higher cost you're paying directly right now to fill up your gas tank and buy products that cost more to move.

In a normal year, fall is when drivers get some reprieve at the pump. As summer travel winds down, demand for gas falls, and prices should fall too. But not in 2026.

According to AAA, Americans have never paid this much for gas at this time of year. The national average gas price is $4.47 per gallon as of this writing, and a growing number of states are seeing average prices top $5 per gallon.

Equally troubling is the sky-high price of diesel fuel, which has hit record highs this year and now stands at $6.45 per gallon. When diesel prices rise, the cost of making and shipping products rises too. While most of us don't buy diesel fuel ourselves, this raises the cost of everything else, bumping up the high rate of inflation we've already been seeing.



These soaring fuel costs hurt businesses, local governments, and families.

Businesses have had to shell out $48 billion extra for motor fuel this year, mostly on diesel, because of the Iran War.

Local governments also feel the squeeze. Higher fuel prices make it more expensive to operate school buses, garbage trucks, construction equipment, fire trucks, police cars, and other vehicles and machinery. So far this year, our local and state governments have had to pay over $1.98 billion extra for fuel because of the Iran War, and we expect that figure to top $3.35 billion by the close of the year. This expense, of course, ultimately falls on local taxpayers.

These expenses come on top of other new costs for households, like rising interest rates, the Trump administration's widespread tariffs on products you buy every day, and high healthcare prices, made worse by cuts to government programs like food assistance and Obamacare.

If life feels more expensive today, that's because it is. The higher price you're paying for gas because of the Iran War isn't the whole reason for that. But it sure doesn't help.

Michigan, Georgia GOP Senate candidates have feet held to the fire

By John Wojcik



In the Thursday, Oct. 8 debates, Republican candidates for the U.S. Senate showed they will have a tough time winning if they can't shake off their deep loyalty to Donald Trump and, in Georgia, their ties to known fascists and neo nazis.

The Georgia Democrat, Jon Ossoff, running against the Republican, Mike Collins, repeatedly challenged Collins for his open ties to extreme right white nationalists and neo nazis.

Ossoff accused Republican Rep. Mike Collins of "personal bigotry" by surrounding himself with people linked to white nationalists and people online who push Nazi imagery. "You hired half the Third Reich to staff your office," he told Collins, who seemed to squirm at the remarks. "You have brought dishonor to the state of Georgia."

At no point did Collins specifically deny that he had connections to white nationalists and white supremacists.

Collins hired an online supporter of several white nationalist groups to work in his office. "If John Lewis were marching today from Selma to Montgomery, you would be grabbing a billy club," Ossoff declared.

John Lewis, the iconic civil rights activist who rose to hold office in the U.S. Congress, was beaten almost to death by Alabama cops on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma in a march that helped launch the modern-day civil rights movement.

In Michigan last night, the Democrat, Abdul El-Sayed, called his Republican opponent, Mike Rogers, on the carpet for his record in support of almost everything the Trump administration has forced on the people of the country. He said that Rogers has strongly backed all the policies, the war on Iran, the tariffs, the immigration policies, and more that have contributed to the high prices people are facing every day.

Going on the defensive, Rogers tried to disassociate himself from some Trump policies, including immigration. He said of the ICE attacks on immigrants and their supporters that "there are things that could have been done differently."

Dr. El-Sayed scoffed at that, saying that ICE agents were murdering people all over the country, and he asked Rogers, "What would you do differently regarding that?"

Visibly uncomfortable, Rogers said of the immigration policy, "It has to change." On the war in Iran, he also said simply, "It has to come to an end."

Activists in Michigan are saying that in Iran, in particular, Rogers is extremely hypocritical. He has been a supporter of the war on Iran since the beginning and has been calling for attacks on Iran for years, even before the current conflict began.

At no point during the discussion on immigration policy or the war on Iran did he specify what should have been done differently.

Rogers also said that "the tariffs against Canada have to come to an end, it's time now for that to happen."

Rogers' mentor, Trump, has accused El-Sayed of being a supporter of terrorism who sides against Israel "every chance he gets." Rogers tried to put El-Sayed on the spot over his opposition to genocide in Gaza, and he demanded of El-Sayed that he tell the audience. "Which is a bigger threat to the U.S., Israel or Iran?" El-Sayed characteristically did not flinch and responded by saying both countries, at different times, posed a threat, and accusing one or the other of being worse did not serve the interests of making peace in the region.

Trump judges are making the affordability crisis worse

By Paul Gordon

With gas prices through the roof, grocery prices higher than ever, interest rates going up, and good jobs harder to find, it's a challenge for a lot of people to make ends meet. Affordability is a key economic and political issue.

But many would be surprised to know that it's a *legal* issue, too.

Around the country, decisions made by federal judges have an enormous impact on the affordability crisis.

Those decisions usually don't make headlines. But their importance shouldn't be overlooked.

For instance, job security is critical to being able to make ends meet. That means not just having a job, but having one that pays well, has good benefits, and has meaningful protections from workplace hazards, discrimination, and being fired unfairly.

Over the years, Congress has passed a lot of laws to make that possible. But far-right judges — especially ones nominated by President Trump — have been sabotaging those laws. And the impact of their decisions affects millions of people, not just the parties involved in the case.

For instance, Hannah Whitbeck tried to form a union at her Starbucks store and was illegally fired. The National Labor Relations Board ordered the company to pay Whitbeck damages. But a Trump judge on the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that even if Starbucks had acted illegally, the National Labor Relations Board had exceeded its authority by ordering the company to pay Whitbeck for certain "direct or foreseeable" financial harms resulting from the unlawful firing.

That set a precedent way beyond Whitbeck and Starbucks. It essentially changed the law — and weakened protections for working people — in all the states covered by the Sixth Circuit: Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee.

Decisions like that are happening all over the country.

Trump judge Drew Tipton blocked the Biden administration from raising the minimum wage for federal contractors. That took a much-needed raise away from more than 300,000 people.

Trump judge Ada Brown struck down the Biden administration's ban on noncompete agreements that prevent employees from joining competing businesses or launching ones of their own. This limits job opportunities for 30 million Americans up and down the economic ladder who have had such agreements imposed on them as a condition of employment.

Decisions by Trump judges are making it easier to underpay people for overtime work, retaliate against people with serious illness for taking medical leave, and avoid paying damages for sickness caused by workplace hazards.

Undermining protections against consumer fraud and financial protections is another way these judges are contributing to the affordability crisis. For instance, a Trump judge in Texas struck down a Biden administration rule protecting consumers from excessive credit card late fees.



This would have saved consumers $10 billion every year. But now that money will go from consumers' pockets to the big banks.

Another Trump judge in Texas struck down a federal regulation that would have removed unpaid medical debt from the credit reports of 15 million consumers. Research shows that including medical debt leads to denials of loans that people could have repaid.

One of the ways we avoid financial disaster is to buy insurance. We think the insurance company will make us whole. But that isn't always how it works. For instance, Trump judges dismissed a class action brought on behalf of roughly 90,000 Tennessee State Farm policyholders who alleged that the company systematically undervalued totaled vehicles.

In another case, an insurance company in Ohio promised to cover the actual cash value of a totaled car. But they didn't cover taxes and fees, which customers got stuck having to pay. And a Trump judge ruled that this was legal.

Sometimes the market feels like predator and prey, and we're the prey. Judges are supposed to protect us from that. It's hard enough making ends meet these days. The last thing we need is to have more Trump judges on the bench helping powerful companies take our money away from us.

International News

Tudeh Party raises alarm on ‘unlimited war’

By CPUSA International Department

The Tudeh Party of Iran reported on the devastating impact of the ongoing U.S. war against Iran. Since the attacks began, hundreds have been injured and dozens martyred, including women and children. Several cities have been heavily attacked by U.S. military forces, causing serious damage to the country’s economic infrastructure. Iran has responded by targeting U.S. military bases and facilities in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Jordan.

The Tudeh Party described this as an “unlimited war” that blurs the lines between battlefield, economics, politics, and security. Economic sanctions, intelligence operations, cyberattacks, and infrastructure destruction have become unified tools of warfare aimed at gradually eroding the ability of governments to govern. The party warned that the continuation of this war only serves the interests of imperialism, arms monopolies, and the Israeli government, whose desire is to further destroy Iran and impose complete imperialist domination in the region.

CPUSA se reúne con el Partido Comunista de Vietnam en Nueva York

Por Departamento Internacional del CPUSA

Secretario general del Partido Comunista de Vietnam (PCV) y presidente To Lam se reunió con el copresidente del CPUSA, Joe Sims, y otros dirigentes del partido en Nueva York el 21 de septiembre, antes de la reunión de la Asamblea General de la ONU. To Lam agradeció al CPUSA sus felicitaciones por el XIV Congreso Nacional del PCV y expresó su gratitud por el apoyo que los comunistas y progresistas estadounidenses han brindado a Vietnam, desde su lucha por la independencia hasta su actual construcción nacional. Reafirmó la importancia que el PCV concede a su amistad histórica con el CPUSA e hizo un llamamiento a intensificar los intercambios.

Sims dijo que el CPUSA está muy inspirado por los continuos éxitos del PCV y del pueblo en la construcción de una sociedad próspera y moderna. “Sobre la base de 40 años de políticas de renovación Doi Moi,” dijo, “el XIV Congreso del PCV de este año estableció objetivos claros para garantizar que Vietnam se convierta en una nación sólida y próspera a mediados de siglo.

“Gracias por ayudar a iluminar el camino y superar las circunstancias tan difíciles de las guerras sucias libradas contra su pueblo en el siglo XX,” dijo Sims. “Nunca olvidaremos el papel de nuestro país y continuaremos nuestros modestos esfuerzos para garantizar que se aborden los efectos del Agente Naranja/dioxina, que sigue afectando al pueblo vietnamita.”

Portugal: ¡Avante! El festival cumple 50 años

Cientos de miles de personas se reunieron en Seixal, Portugal, del 4 al 6 de septiembre para celebrar el 50.º aniversario del Festival Avante!, organizado por el Partido Comunista Portugués.

El festival celebra la Revolución de los Claveles de 1974, que puso fin a más de 40 años del régimen fascista del Estado Novo, y la progresista Constitución portuguesa de 1976. La solidaridad con Palestina fue uno de los temas principales de este año, con representantes de la OLP en la sección internacional y banderas palestinas por todo el recinto.

El secretario general del PCP, Paulo Raimundo, reafirmó su apoyo a Palestina, afirmando que la solidaridad «les llega de la gente que sale a las calles en todo el mundo». El presidente cubano Miguel Díaz-Canel se dirigió a los asistentes durante la clausura por videoconferencia, elogiando la defensa de la soberanía cubana por parte del PCP.

El festival tuvo lugar en medio del auge de Chega, el partido portugués de extrema derecha, mientras un gobierno minoritario inestable liderado por el partido de derecha PSD lucha por mantener unida su coalición favorable a la austeridad. La CGTP, la mayor confederación sindical de Portugal, ha encabezado una serie de huelgas generales exitosas para combatir los intentos del gobierno de debilitar las leyes laborales.

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PEOPLE'S WORLD
CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER FOUNDED 1924

October 17, 2026

HBCU students march to demand justice for Nolan Wells: "No water in his lungs!"

By Erica Meade



ATLANTA—These were the chants of Atlanta University Center (AUC) students as they marched through the school campus on Thursday night. It was also the findings of the Mississippi State Medical Examiner's autopsy of Nolan Wells that the family released on September 26. Wells was an 18-year-old Black Mississippi teenager who went missing and was later found dead on a boating trip on July 4. Investigators initially ruled Wells' death a drowning. However, due to a combination of the autopsy, Wells' parents' skepticism of the local police, and the lengthy history of Black lynching in Mississippi, concerned Americans around the country have demanded a deeper look into Wells' death.

The rally, organized by the Spelman College NAACP chapter, came together following the release of Mississippi's autopsy of Wells. According to the report, Wells had no water in his airways at the time of his death. The coroner also found evidence of injury to the back of Wells' head in the form of two contusions. That release came only three days after a grand jury determined that there were no criminal charges to bring forward.

A'nija Hughley, president of the Spelman College NAACP chapter and third-year student, helped to organize the rally. The march was initially planned after the autopsy was released, although it wasn't the first rally the chapter had organized. Previously, in January, the group organized a march to the Georgia State Capitol to protest the Trump Administration.

The march started outside the Robert W. Woodruff Library on the college campus. Following a prayer, the crowd of students marched their way through the campus of the Historically Black Universities. Those not attending the rally cheered from their apartment balconies, or joined the stream of chanters and protestors.

The chapter's goal of the rally was to return "to the Atlanta Student Movement ideas of protest and civil disobedience," Hughley reported to the *People's World*. Just 65 years earlier, AUC students formed the movement to protest segregation not only in the City of Atlanta, but across the entire South.

"What we really want from this march is to make students in the AUC aware about the situation," Hughley commented. On top of that, the students wanted to send a message to the AUC administration that they "are not going to be silent or apathetic to situations like this, and that we actually care about what's going on, and we want to do something to fight back against it."

Hughley was not the only one who planned to raise her voice on the campus. Thousands of students carrying signs reading "Black Boys Deserve to Grow Old" and "He Did Not Drown" marched in unison across campus.

Another Spelman student and NAACP member, Myana Garrison, called out Mississippi Attorney General Lynn Fitch during the protest. "Treat this case as you would treat it if it was a white boy." Garrison spoke of the student's collective outrage and anger over the teenager's death, emphasizing they "should not have to ask and beg for justice" not only for Wells, but every victim of racist violence in Mississippi. According to Tuskegee University, 539 Black people were lynched in Mississippi from the years 1882-1968.

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO

CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER
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For over a century, People's World and its predecessor publications have taken the side of the 99 percent and worked to promote the struggle for a sustainable environment, jobs, democracy, peace, and equality.

HBCU students march to demand justice for Nolan Wells: “No water in his lungs!”

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

The rally lasted a few hours, but the organizers pleaded to the student body that the night of protest couldn’t be their only and last action for Wells. The activists behind the bullhorns acknowledged and condoned the crowd’s anger and frustration, but told them their anger “should be driving them to register to vote.” The rally attendees agreed, and chanted back at the speakers: “Vote for Nolan Wells!”

First, for the students and those invested in the case, there is the symbolic importance of voting in this election cycle. As Hughley pointed out to People’s World, “this would’ve been the first election [Wells] was able to vote in, and he is not able to.” Essentially, AUC students recognize they can vote in honor of a Black teenager who never had the opportunity to exercise his constitutional right.

Continuing on the importance of voting, Hughley remarked that “the people who handled his case are elected officials.”

When students go out and vote for positions such as attorney general, they can ensure “cases like this have a better outcome,” Hughley clarified.

Rally speakers reminded the protestors they have until October 5 to register to vote, and can begin early voting on October 13.

The rally concluded at the Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel. The civil rights leader graduated on the very same campus from Morehouse University. During a 1959 Morehouse commencement speech, Dr. King asked the graduating students: “Can we in America stand idly by and not be concerned?” about the racial terror that gripped the South. In his spirit of persistence and dedication, he declared the answer to be negative.

That was sixty-seven years ago. On Thursday evening, students again answered his question. As the signs, the chanting, and the speeches proved, AUC students are not standing by and are more concerned than ever for Nolan Wells.

Contested memory: The German Democratic Republic and its erasure

By Jenny Farrell

I have been asked many times about life in the GDR, where I was born and grew up. So, I am opening a blank page on my laptop to note some thoughts.

A Brief Historical Background

Following the defeat of fascism in Germany – above all by the Soviet Union – the country was divided into four zones administered by the USSR, the US, Britain and France. With the onset of the Cold War, the three Western zones were consolidated into one, separate from the Soviet zone, which comprised about a third of the country in the north-east. In May 1949, the Western zones unilaterally established the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG); four months later, the Soviet Union responded with the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Although the Allied agreements signed at the end of the war had clearly called for thorough denazification, the division of the country resulted in starkly different approaches to the Nazi past. While the GDR pursued rigorous denazification, removing hundreds of thousands of former Nazis from public office by 1947, by 1960 over 70 per cent of senior FRG public servants and 77 per cent of Justice Ministry officials were former Nazis, most of whom simply returned to their former jobs. The first chancellor of the Federal Republic, Konrad Adenauer, found nothing strange in appointing Hans Globke as his chief of staff. Globke was co-author of the Nuremberg Race Laws that had led directly to the Shoah. The GDR, by contrast, was led by anti-fascists such as Wilhelm Pieck, Otto Grotewohl, Walter Ulbricht and Erich Honecker. The land reform of 1945–48 expropriated all estates over 100 hectares, distributing 2.1 million hectares to 500,000 small farmers, workers, and refugees. The industrial reform placed nearly 10,000 enterprises into public ownership. These measures destroyed the Junker class and created the economic foundation of the new state.



Germany’s division into two states was never the intention of the Soviet Union. Throughout the 1950s, the USSR strove to create a united, neutral Germany, similar to Austria. The West resisted these efforts. From the outset, it sought to isolate the GDR, ruin its economy and its viability by attracting its graduates and skilled workers with higher wages, better material conditions and resettlement support. This brain drain became unsustainable. West Berlin, situated at the heart of the GDR, was turned into a shop window for the West and a channel for GDR citizens to move to the West. It was also an ideal centre for espionage, sabotage, and a possible flashpoint for a third world war.

By 1961, the drain on GDR resources had reached such dramatic proportions that the Wall was built around West Berlin, sealing it off to stem the hemorrhaging of qualified workers, academics and professionals and defuse a ticking time bomb. Even JFK stated at the time: “It’s not a very nice solution, but a wall is a hell of a lot better than a war”.

Why was the GDR considered such a threat? Its very existence represented an alternative to capitalism on the West's doorstep, even if it could not compete with Western consumer goods, material well-being and affluence. It offered a stable and secure life, with the right to housing and work, free healthcare and excellent education.

The GDR kept everyday living costs at a minimum throughout its 40-year existence. Economically this represented a gigantic effort under inimical circumstances. From my experience, and comparing it with what I know of the West, people were always put first. Housing, heating, electricity, transport and basic foodstuffs were expenses nobody worried about. Healthcare was comprehensive and free, with polyclinics established countrywide and medical centres attached to workplaces. All education, from nursery through vocational training to university, was completely free, with everyone trained for a profession.

Women's Liberation

From the outset, the full emancipation and social participation of women was a core objective of the GDR's socialist project, with equal rights anchored in its constitution. Relevant policies were introduced soon after the state's founding in 1949 and developed throughout its existence.

In reproductive health and rights, the GDR began producing a contraceptive pill as early as 1965, making it freely available. In 1972, it passed a new Termination of Pregnancy Act, legalizing abortion and becoming the first of the two German states to give women the right to terminate a pregnancy within the first 12 weeks, no questions asked. In the FRG, abortion remained a criminal offence until 1974 and thereafter remained legally restricted. To this day, abortion in Germany remains technically illegal. Until 2022, doctors were banned from advertising abortion services — a law enacted in 1933, shortly after Hitler took power. It was only repealed after years of pressure and high-profile prosecutions of doctors who had stated on their websites that they performed abortions. Amnesty International has repeatedly called on Germany to fully decriminalise abortion and remove medically unnecessary waiting periods and mandatory counselling.

Support for working mothers was a cornerstone of GDR social policy. A year after its foundation, the GDR passed the Protection of Mothers and Children and the Rights of Women Act, establishing 14 weeks of paid maternity leave, extended to 18 weeks in 1972 and 26 weeks in 1976. From 1976, mothers with two or more children were entitled to one year's paid leave. In 1986, this was extended to all mothers and, in certain cases, to fathers. My brother took this leave, as his wife was already working while he was still at university.

Child benefits and support for young families also increased steadily. Introduced in 1950 from the fourth child onward, child benefits were extended in 1972 to 20 GDR marks per month for the first and second child and 50 marks for the third, rising in 1987 to 50, 100 and 150 marks respectively. From 1972, first-time married couples under 26 received an interest-free loan of 5,000 marks, with partial or full repayment cancelled when children were born; a maternity grant of 1,000 marks was also introduced for every child.

The expansion of childcare was key to enabling women's high employment rates. Crèche places per 100 children aged under three increased from 80 in 1955 to 165 in 1965, 256 in 1970 and 304 in 1972. By the early 1970s, there were more places than children, allowing full coverage and flexible care. By 1980, 60 per cent of children aged 0–3 attended crèches; by the late 1980s, coverage had reached approximately 80 per cent. Kindergarten places for ages 3–6 exceeded 90 per cent by 1980 and approached 95 per cent by the late 1980s.

Women's employment rose from 61.2 per cent in 1955 to 81.9 per cent in 1970 and 91.2 per cent in 1989 – among the highest rates in the world at the time. Particularly remarkable was the range of professions women entered. By the late 1980s, women made up 55 per cent of students in higher education and technical colleges. The state actively promoted women's professional development through targeted "women's promotion plans" aimed at furthering the personal and professional careers of the female workforce.

In the West, professions like crane operator, construction worker, bus driver, locksmith, engineer, steelworker and miner were almost exclusively male domains. In the GDR, women did all of these routinely. In some factories, all the large workshop cranes were operated by women. In 1959, around 39,390 women worked in construction, approximately 8.7 per cent of the sector's workforce. In 1970, 5,181 university-trained engineers graduated; from 1972, women consistently accounted for over 25 per cent of students enrolling in technical sciences.

Gender ceased to be a barrier to who you could become, as it remained in Western societies. Women did not need to define themselves in opposition to men; equality was a given, not a demand. This is not to imply that patriarchy had vanished – it lingered – but it was not the organizing principle of life. Women were persons first; gender came second, if at all.

Remarkably, this transformation happened within a single generation – an incredibly short historical period to undo centuries of patriarchy. Women's rights, easily accessible childcare, full employment and free education helped shape not just what women could do, but also how they saw themselves.

Housing: A Central Concern

In the context of Ireland's housing crisis, it is worth mentioning that the GDR's housing programme was a central concern throughout the state's existence. In the aftermath of the war and the enormous destruction, housing was a vital but scarce resource. The goal was to provide adequate housing for the entire population of 16.4 million – no mean task. Rents never exceeded 4–5 per cent of income. In 1989, the proportion of household expenditure on rent was just 2.4 per cent. By the end of its 40-year existence, the GDR had largely achieved its goal of adequate housing for all citizens, with 3.5 million flats built, renovated or modernized.

Income and Living Standards

Incomes for most people were more than adequate. Professionals, public servants and managers were not paid substantially more than qualified workers. Wage differentials were much flatter than in the West, creating a more egalitarian society.

In 1988, the average gross wage of a shop-floor blue-collar worker was 1,110 marks compared with 1,370 marks for a foreman. The same goes for wage comparisons between skilled workers and graduates. Nobody lived in poverty and no one was excessively rich: the wage system was designed to compress the income scale from top to bottom. Subsidized rent, heating, transport, food, healthcare, and education were extensions of personal income, adding real value to every wage. All of this was financed by the economy.

The class divisions, homelessness, and level of poverty widespread in the West were absent. People felt they were all essentially in the same boat, part of one community. In fact, when I speak to people who still remember the GDR, it is that sense of community they experienced then that they miss most.

Public Transport and Culture: Access for All

Public transport was inexpensive and access to culture was similarly very low cost. The state heavily subsidized theatres, concert halls, museums and cinemas, keeping tickets affordable for everyone. The GDR had 213 state-subsidized theatre companies, and many enterprises distributed theatre and concert tickets to their workers free of charge.

Children and young people had access to comprehensive cultural education through youth clubs, sports and interest groups, most of which were free. Entire sectors of the economy were oriented towards creating a state in which the overriding concern was the welfare of the people.

The GDR was not a perfect state, it had its contradictions and problems, but at its heart lay a genuine commitment to the collective good.

International Solidarity and Anti-Fascism

Active solidarity with liberation movements, opposition to imperialist war and a central concern for peace are among the GDR's lasting contributions to world history. The same is true of its radical approach to confronting the Nazi past: replacing Nazis in public office, keeping alive the memory of the anti-fascist struggle, and acknowledging the central role played by the Soviet Union in the defeat of fascism.

The GDR was not internationally recognized by the West until the 1970s. The FRG had enacted the so-called Hallstein Doctrine by 1955, declaring itself the sole international representative of Germany and threatening sanctions against any country that traded with or recognized the GDR. Yugoslavia (1957) and Cuba (1963) were among those punished for defying these threats: Bonn severed diplomatic relations with both. Zanzibar was equally undaunted. In January 1964, the newly liberated island established diplomatic relations with the GDR – creating an awkward diplomatic puzzle when, a few months later, Zanzibar united with Tanganyika to form Tanzania. The FRG found itself maintaining relations with mainland Tanganyika while refusing to have anything to do with Zanzibar, now part of the same country. Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) learned that even a consulate could trigger sanctions. In February 1964, when the GDR's mission in Colombo was upgraded to the status of Consulate General, Bonn reacted by cancelling its development aid.

Ironically, the doctrine ultimately backfired. It delayed the GDR's international recognition for nearly two decades, but also tied the FRG's hands, making normal relations difficult with any country that so much as smiled at East Berlin. With the decolonisation wave of the 1960s, that became an increasingly long list. The doctrine was quietly abandoned under Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik in the late 1960s, having served its purpose – and demonstrated its absurdity. Amusingly, or should I say happily, this diplomatic aggression led students at Berlin's Humboldt University to initiate pen friendships with counterparts at Western universities, which in turn led to my parents meeting. Nevertheless, the Hallstein Doctrine effectively prevented the GDR from gaining broad international recognition until the 1970s. For the GDR, this meant exclusion from many international organizations and scientific exchange groups, and it could not join the United Nations until 1973.

So What Went Wrong?

One of the big problems for individual citizens was the restriction of travel to the West. In one sense, the GDR government was not overly troubled by this: it reduced the number of citizens being seduced into defecting. But, before widespread recognition of the GDR, its passports were not recognized by most Western countries and its mark was not freely convertible outside the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), leaving GDR citizens without financial means when traveling in the West. Given widespread misconceptions, it is worth noting that travel within the socialist community – from Cuba to Mongolia – was relatively unproblematic. The GDR's aid programs also meant that many families involved in them spent time living in Africa and Asia.

After 1961, ordinary GDR citizens' image of the West derived predominantly from West German television, accessible in most parts of the country. Imagine obtaining your sole impression of the US from its advertisements and soap operas – yet this is precisely what happened. Many GDR citizens therefore developed a rather rosy-eyed view of the FRG. Now add growing domestic discontent and the enormous economic struggle of maintaining social services and provisions at minimum cost. This was compounded by the GDR's often ham-fisted information systems and poor propaganda, leaving it badly equipped to counter the sophistication of West German advertising, which presented a paradise just next door. With few opportunities to discover the realities of the West for themselves, discontent grew.

The GDR also had a relatively young, highly educated and curious population, increasingly unwilling to accept travel restrictions or state-regulated information. By the late 1980s, this disaffection had grown enormously. Significant numbers, mainly young people, were seeking to defect by traveling to socialist countries, entering West German embassies there and requesting political asylum. The growing economic and political problems throughout the socialist bloc, followed by Gorbachev's glasnost (transparency) and perestroika (restructuring), did much to dismantle and discredit socialism. He too naively believed in the goodwill and honesty of Western leaders. This was the final straw. It is noteworthy that the GDR's demise occurred without the use of state violence against its people; it was a peaceful transition.

Part 2 will print next week.

Far-right surge in Brazil forces Lula into a runoff

By C. J. Atkins



Speaking to supporters Sunday night, Brazilian Sen. Flavio Bolsonaro—son of the country's imprisoned former head of state, Jair Bolsonaro—declared the "end of the era" of President Luiz Inácio da Silva's Workers' Party (PT).

Bolsonaro junior's boisterous claim was made after his far-right Liberal Party (PL) scored a significant victory in Sunday's general election, with Bolsonaro finishing ahead of Lula in the first round of presidential voting. The PL also emerged as the largest force in both houses of Congress. The presidential race now goes to a runoff on Oct. 25.

With all ballots counted, Bolsonaro took 47.03% of valid votes to Lula's 45.16%, a margin of roughly 2.2 million votes, according to Agência Brasil. Neither candidate cleared the 50% needed to win outright, but the result came as a shock, as surveys on the eve of the vote had Lula ahead, 45% to 42%.

Flavio Bolsonaro is running essentially as the stand-in candidate for his father, who is barred from the ballot and currently sits in prison serving a 27-year sentence for leading a Jan. 6th-style Trump-inspired coup to overturn the 2022 election in Brazil.

Lula ready for next battle

Lula, for his part, said the second round would let voters compare two starkly different projects and urged people not to conclude too quickly that the Workers' Party cannot win the presidency.

"A new campaign is about to begin," he announced in a statement. "The second round is the moment of truth. It's time for us to show the true picture of Brazil today and the Brazil we want.

"Starting tomorrow, we begin a new campaign. A campaign in which, between only two candidates, we will be able to show the difference between the proposals that exist for Brazil.

"On the other side, we have only uncertainty, with the biography of a dark past," he said, while pledging a direct appeal to the roughly 28 million Brazilians who didn't vote on Sunday.

Lula said he intends to focus his campaign on defending social inclusion programs and investments in education, health, science, and industry.

Among the proposals mentioned are the expansion of full-time schools, the universalization of social welfare programs, the strengthening of the country's public health program and the "Farmácia Popular" (a government-sponsored pharmacy program), and the resources allocated to the "Nova Indústria Brasil" (New Industry Brazil) initiative.

"We will show what has been done.... No one, more than us, can offer Brazilian society a future," he said.

A family affair

While the presidential race is still to be decided, the numbers are already in for the legislature. Generally, the outcome was a bad one for the working-class coalition led by Lula and the PT, with bright spots few and far between.

Bolsonaro's PL won 121 of the 513 seats in the Chamber of Deputies—the most for any party since Brazil's 1988 constitution—and is projected to hold 28 of 81 Senate seats when the new Congress convenes in February. The PT-led federation, which includes the Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB) and the Green Party, won 88 Chamber seats.

The Bolsonaro family dynasty grew, too. Former first lady Michelle Bolsonaro won a Senate seat, and Jair's son Carlos was also elected as a senator. Another son, Jair Renan, won a seat in the Chamber of Deputies, as did the former president's brother, Renato.

Even if Lula wins on Oct. 25, he will have to face the PL as the largest opposition bloc in both houses. PL leaders are already maneuvering with right-wing allies to take the presidency of the Senate.

Washington's biggest prize

No election in the hemisphere this year mattered more to the Trump administration. Brazil is Latin America's largest economy, a founder of BRICS, and a country whose trade with China hit a record $171 billion last year. Under Lula, it has refused to bow to the tariff dictates of the current White House occupant.

The U.S. pressure campaign has been relentless. As *People's World* has reported, it includes tariffs of up to 50% (justified by Jair Bolsonaro's supposedly "unjust prosecution"), terrorist designations of Brazilian criminal gangs reportedly requested by Flavio himself, and suspicions that Rockbridge, a donor network in the orbit of Vice President JD Vance, funneled money toward Bolsonaro's campaign.

Brazil's own intelligence agency rated U.S. interference at a "critical level."

In the campaign's final days, the State Department earmarked $1 million for a project targeting Brazil's Supreme Court, and Washington abruptly closed its embassy and every consulate in the country two days before the vote, citing unspecified security threats, the PCdoB-aligned newspaper Vermelho reported.

Communists: Sovereignty on the ballot

The PCdoB, a member of Lula's governing coalition and part of the PT electoral alliance, has framed the race as a fight for national sovereignty against U.S. imperialism. In June, the party warned of a Trump offensive against Brazil and put forward proposals for a sovereign development path under Lula.

On the eve of the vote, interim party President Nádia Campeão called Flavio Bolsonaro's candidacy a threat to democracy and sovereignty, saying Lula's re-election was vital because of his commitments "to national sovereignty, to democracy, and to the rights of the people."

The editors of *Vermelho* warned that the presidency of Bolsonaro junior would mean "total vassalage to the White House."

After the count, the Communist Party pointed to wins for its candidates in the legislature, despite the tough night the left coalition had as a whole. The PCdoB expanded its representation in the Chamber of Deputies, electing 11 candidates, seven of whom are women.

Among them are veteran Deputy Jandira Feghali and economist Elias Jabbour in Rio de Janeiro and Deputy Daiana Santos, re-elected in Rio Grande do Sul.

The result was the party's best in the last four elections and consolidated a female majority among representatives in the Chamber starting in 2027.

The celebrations were short, though, as the PCdoB turned immediately to mobilizing for the runoff.

Lessons for the U.S.

Brazil's runoff is three weeks away, and the U.S. midterm elections follow just days later. Communist Party USA Co-chair Joe Sims says there are lessons to take from what happened this weekend in South America.

Quoting Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who fought Benito Mussolini and Italian fascism in the 1930s, Sims said, "The old won't die, and the new cannot be born. This is the time of monsters."

Sims pointed to pre-election surveys in Brazil that showed Lula comfortably defeating Bolsonaro and compared them to current polls in the U.S. that predict the Republicans will lose control of one or even both houses of Congress.

"We're fighting the most powerful ruling class in history. Therefore, don't take anything for granted in our midterms," he said. "We can't afford to sit this one out. Register. Vote!"

The outcome in the U.S. also holds consequences for the countries of Central and South America and elsewhere. Ending MAGA Republican domination of Congress can have an impact on U.S. foreign policy and open the possibility for legally blocking some of the White House's intervention in other nations' internal affairs. A loss for the GOP won't come in time to reduce the imperial pressure on Brazil in this election, though.

In 2022, Lula defeated Jair Bolsonaro by less than two percentage points. This time, with the Bolsonaro machine strengthened in Congress and Washington's thumb still on the scale, the margin for error may be even thinner.

Chicago Mayor Johnson's campaign against corporate crooks should be copied nationwide

By Mark Gruenberg

Now here's an idea that should really get the attention of the nation's cavalcade of corporate crooks: If your company breaks federal, state, or local wage and hour laws—or anti-discrimination laws—or finances the politicians who wink-wink-nod-nod at repression of citizens and workers by an overbearing government, then you should hit 'em in the wallet, hard.

If the firm has federal contracts or grants, take them away. If it plans to bid on federal contracts or grants, put out the word to forget about it. If it greases politicians' palms to achieve the same goal, same result. If your company broke those laws or bribed those lawmakers within the last five years, ditto.

That's what Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson intends, with an executive order he announced just before Labor Day and with a commission he's setting up to gather evidence and write rules for such penalties. Its report and recommendations are due in late January.



Johnson got the idea from a non-profit group, Not With Our Money. His executive order aims at all those forms of corporate corruption, and most importantly, at the corrupters as well as the corrupted.

We're not talking small sums here. The total of federal, state, and local grants that Chicago alone distributes is $3 billion in this fiscal year. And the city has so many contracts with private firms that the list would be the size of a telephone directory.

Think that's large? USAspending.gov lists $754.97 billion in federal contract spending for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, covering almost 44,000 contracts. California is first, with $114 billion in contracts. Then come Tennessee ($83 billion), New Mexico ($80.4 billion), Washington state ($65 billion), Virginia ($58 billion), Texas ($45.4 billion), and South Carolina ($32 billion).

See a pattern? We do: Most of the money comes from the military. It doesn't take any great imagination to realize military contractors such as Boeing in Washington state, Virginia, and South Carolina, and Lockheed-Martin, SpaceX, and Tesla in Texas and California reap big dollars.

By military contractor, Lockheed-Martin is first ($44.5 billion), followed by Boeing ($25 billon), RTX, which used to be Raytheon ($21.4 billion), General Dynamics ($21.3 billion), and Northrop Grumman ($9.8 billion). All are aircraft, seapower or information systems builders or all of those.

Then come Huntington Ingalls shipyards ($7 billion), AmerisourceBergen Drugs and Humana Healthcare (tied at $5.6 billion), the TriWest Health Care Alliance ($4.9 billion) and BAE Systems, another aerospace firm ($4.2 billion). And all that's not counting the $22.9 billion multi-year contract Raytheon won on Aug. 17 to replenish the military's usually bloated supply of Tomahawk missiles, depleted by President Donald Trump's Iran War.

Now add in state and city grants and contracts, and we're talking trillions of dollars, not just billions.

All of a sudden that executive order by Mayor Johnson, if extended nationwide, carries quite a wallop.

Which is why, as a model for the entire country, it becomes extremely important.

It's also extremely popular, at least according to a scientifically selected poll of approximately a thousand Chicagoans which Not With Our Money commissioned. The margins for banning contracts and grants to corporate malefactors started at a 3-to-1 ratio for such bans against firms which broke civil rights laws, and the ratios only increased from there, reaching as high as 6-to-1.

Take away those federal contracts, and the violators get hurt hard. Like we said, hit 'em in the wallet, unless they really obey workers' rights and civil rights.

Could Johnson have taken another step against the corporate crooks by denying them local tax breaks, too? He might have needed the city council to OK that move, and you can bet your bottom dollar the corrupters would target council members in next year's election with campaign cash or attack ads.

Such "tax increment financing" is another big pot of money, according to labor-supported Good Jobs First. That non-profit, co-founded by Chicago native Greg LeRoy, also splits out TIFs by company.

One guess who reaped the most TIF dollars—money that otherwise would go to cities and states for social services and not into corporate profits and pockets. Amazon, of course: $11.61 billion over the last decade. About 40% was a TIF for one data center in New Carlisle, Ind. Nobody else was close.

In short, Mayor Johnson's campaign against the corporate boodlers, bribers, and palm-greasers is a great start. If the next Congress winds up in control of Democrats, who at least still have to take account of workers' demands, putting through such a national grant and contract ban would really shake things up in the CEOs' suites.

Who knows, the threat of taking their money away might even induce them to obey the law.

Tennessee recognized as birthplace of 250 years of Indigenous resistance

By Albert Bender

NASHVILLE—The Indigenous Peoples Coalition (IPC) on Sept. 12 commemorated 250 years of Indigenous resistance in the United States and recognized Tennessee as the birthplace of that fightback. The meeting began with a presentation on the Cherokee War that began on July 20, 1776.

The gathering was well attended by Indigenous, Black, and white participants and featured a panel discussion that included Melba Checote-Eads, a citizen of the Muscogee Creek Nation and a longtime resident of Middle Tennessee; Sabrina Buer, Cherokee and Shawnee, a member of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and a professor at Tennessee Tech University; Larry Davis, community activist of Cherokee descent and a member of the IPC from Lewisberg, Tenn.; and Paulino Solorzano of Indigenous Nicaraguan heritage and also a member of the IPC.

The purpose of the meeting was to recognize Tennessee as the birthplace of two-and-a-half centuries of indigenous resistance and to chart a path forward to confront the current politics of the Trump administration. The commemoration featured an analysis of the Cherokee War and its causes.

The Cherokee War began in East Tennessee and was the first so-called "Indian War" fought by the newly minted United States against an Indigenous nation. It began just two weeks after the Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776.

The cause of the war was the illegal encroachment by thousands of white squatters on Cherokee land in violation of treaties with the colonial governments. Cherokee leadership had made numerous complaints to the colonial governments demanding the removal of the squatters to no avail. The war began as an eviction action.



The Cherokee Nation sent eviction notices to the offending settlers giving them 40 days to relocate. After the notice period had expired, the Cherokee leadership sent war companies headed by the redoubtable Dragging Canoe to evict the squatters.

The Cherokee forces were attacked by the squatters, and the war was on. It continued for 18 long years and has been called not only the first but also the longest "Indian War" in American history.

It was noted that the War reached Middle Tennessee, enveloping the environs of present-day Nashville, when white settlers invaded the area in December 1779.

Each panelist gave a poignant presentation. Checote-Eads spoke of the tragic history of the Muscogee Creek Nation, highlighting the travails of the colonial era. Buer noted the repressive, recent laws of Tennessee to suppress the teaching of truthful and factual history.

Davis recounted the racism of the rural area where he resides and the atrocious actions of ICE in his county, a mere 50 miles south of Nashville. His account made it sound like parts of rural Tennessee were untouched by the civil rights movement of the 20th century. Solorzano spoke with emotion advocating for greater involvement in current struggles.

The discussion next revolved around how best to confront the current political crisis. There was great animation from the participants when the prospect of the collapse of the United States was presented. The meeting concluded by the forming of an Ad Hoc Action Committee that was committed to demonstrations, meeting with public officials and political bodies, and further addressing social justice issues both locally and nationally.

Hands off Ilhan Omar! No election intimidation!

By Twin Cities Club, MN CPUSA and Minnesota/Dakotas District, CPUSA

The Twin Cities Club of the Communist Party USA and the Minnesota Dakotas District of the CPUSA condemn in the strongest terms the unwarranted raid on Congresswoman Ilhan Omar's home by Trump's MAGA administration, as well as the ongoing stream of ridiculous and false accusations against her. This is clearly a targeted attack by a violent and wildly unpopular administration desperate to cling to political power against a duly elected and popular sitting member of Congress, meant to influence the outcome of the upcoming 2026 midterm elections.

We recognize this as another push by the racist, fascistic Trump administration and its financial backers to get the American working class to conflate immigrants with fraud. We recognize this as one of the oldest tricks in the capitalist playbook — divide working people along ethnic or national lines, ruthlessly exploit them for profit, force them to fight for scraps, and viciously attack anyone who points a finger at those who are actually and materially responsible for social ills and corruption.

The only "fraud" worth discussing is the systemic larceny that emanates from the Trump family and its powerful, moneyed private backers, who are using machinery of state to plunder public resources and tax monies in order to line their own pockets. Trump being continuously flanked by some of the world's wealthiest individuals is not an accident or a mistake.



This is a targeted attack on Representative Omar because she:

- Has stood up to Trump's fascist immigration enforcement, an apparatus designed to kidnap families and deport workers of color.
- Is Somali — Trump has repeatedly targeted Somali people, calling them "garbage" and coordinating attacks against the Somali community in Minnesota. Operation Metro Surge and the racist rhetoric surrounding it have led to mass deportations, families torn apart, and the deaths of Alex Pretti and Nicole Good.
- Is a progressive Democrat — It is no coincidence that this is happening as the midterms draw near: Omar is a popular candidate who opposes Trump and his agenda.
- Opposes funding Israel's genocide on Palestine while the Trump administration supports it.

The timing speaks for itself. Federal agents searched her home less than a month before the November midterms, despite the Justice Department's longstanding protocol to avoid overt investigative actions involving candidates within 60 days of an election. The administration has hinted at this investigation for months: Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin said there was an "ongoing investigation" into whether Omar lied on immigration forms, and Vice President J.D. Vance has accused her of immigration fraud without evidence.

Trump himself brought her up at a Tennessee rally over the weekend, suggesting Vance "and our people" were investigating her.

These are not the actions of a government pursuing "justice." They are the actions of an administration weaponizing federal power against a political opponent — a Somali-born, Muslim-American congresswoman — in the final weeks of an election.

We stand with Ilhan Omar and her family. We reject this blatant attempt at political intimidation meant to further a fascist right-wing agenda. We call on all people of conscience to do the same.

Susan Collins forced onto defense in Maine Senate debate

By John Wojcik





PORTLAND, Maine—In the first of three scheduled debates Tuesday night, Oct. 6, Susan Collins had an unexpectedly hard time fending off blame directed at her by Democratic opponent Troy Jackson for helping advance Brett Kavanaugh, an abortion rights opponent to the Supreme Court, for failure to resist President Trump's anti-Canada tariffs, and for doing almost nothing to stop ICE raids on the state's towns and cities.

ICE agents fatally shot Johan Sebastian Duran Guerrero in the back in Maine this past July.

"You don't claim you are fighting Trump policies when you vote for funding at least three separate times for an agency that is murdering people across the country," Jackson declared. Collins said she is not President Trump's favorite senator and that she has voted against Trump's agenda on some occasions. Jackson shot back, "You have supported his agenda 96 percent of the time."

On the Kavanaugh vote, Collins cast in favor of seating him on the Supreme Court. Jackson said that the women of America have Collins to thank for helping to pave the way for the removal of some of their most basic rights, including the right to control their own bodies.

It appeared Collins hoped that, since Jackson has little experience debating on the national stage and has focused much of his career on battles at the state level, he would stumble in the debate with her. His strong performance Tuesday night dashed those hopes, at least for that debate. AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said that "Troy Jackson has a strong record that appeals to working families. They know him, and they know where he stands—in a good place to win this election."

Most observers said Jackson had done an impressive job of challenging Collins on several major issues. Particularly strong in his attacks on her record was his repeated mention of her votes in favor of ICE funding.

It is not normal for a sitting senator with a comfortable lead to agree to debate in the period leading up to the election. Collins' agreement to a debate is seen as an admission by her campaign that they are in trouble and that Jackson, in their estimation, is within striking distance of winning the election.

Close Senate races are not the only worry Republicans have in the lead-up to the midterm elections. A new NBC/Telemundo poll shows that Trump, for example, is rapidly losing Latino support, with that figure dropping to only 27 percent in the latest poll.

Although Republicans lead in fundraising, the latest figures show that in Maine the Dems have raised $151 million this quarter, not bad for a union-backed candidate like Jackson without significant corporate support. With strong performance in debates, much of the GOP's fundraising superiority can be countered.

International News

Tudeh Party raises alarm on ‘unlimited war’

By CPUSA International Department

Over 500,000 people attended the 91st Fête de l’Humanité, held September 11-13, where PCF National Secretary Fabien Roussel declared his candidacy for the 2027 presidency.

The festival recalled the 1936 Popular Front, the anti-fascist coalition that defeated an insurgent far right in France. Roussel, nominated on a line of “communism of conquests,” called for nationalizing key sectors of the economy and emphasized solidarity with Cuba and Palestine.

Speakers addressed France’s militarized economy and the Macron government’s attacks on workers’ rights, including the forced passage of a regressive pension reform in 2023 that sparked mass strikes. The far-right National Rally leads recent polls, prompting many to conclude the necessity of continuing the popular front.

El CPUSA responde al discurso de Trump en la ONU

Por Partido Comunista de los Estados Unidos

En una diatriba de 38 minutos ante la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas el martes, el presidente Donald Trump se jactó de secuestrar a líderes extranjeros, bombardear barcos pesqueros en el Caribe, iniciar una guerra injusta contra Irán y calificar a Cuba de Estado fallido. Señaló específicamente al Partido Comunista de EE. UU. (CPUSA), a los Socialistas Democráticos de América y a "Antifa" como parte de una "red subversiva coordinada" supuestamente controlada por Cuba.

"Eso es una invención total y absoluta", declaró la copresidenta del CPUSA, Rossana Cambron. "Nuestras políticas se elaboran exclusivamente en EE. UU.".

El discurso de Trump estuvo plagado de afirmaciones exageradas y sin fundamento sobre la fortaleza de la economía y la supuesta prosperidad de sus ciudadanos. Afirmó que, gracias a él, Estados Unidos ha alcanzado una "Edad de Oro".

"El mundo entero se está viendo impulsado por la riqueza, la fuerza, el espíritu y el ímpetu de un Estados Unidos revitalizado y muy poderoso", dijo.

Trump afirmó que todas las naciones deberían proteger su soberanía, pero luego se jactó de las innumerables formas en que su administración ha violado la soberanía de decenas de naciones, incluido el secuestro del presidente electo y la primera dama de Venezuela.

Asimismo, permitió que monopolios con sede en Estados Unidos se apropiaran del petróleo venezolano, se atribuyó el mérito de ataques militares contra embarcaciones que han causado la muerte de 234 personas hasta la fecha e inició una guerra no provocada contra Irán.

Calificó a Cuba de "refugio para adversarios extranjeros" y se jactó de que el Partido Comunista de Cuba estaba "bajo una gran presión, la mayor presión a la que jamás se hayan visto sometidos". La delegación cubana abandonó la sala en señal de protesta, como era de esperar.

Trump concluyó: "El comunismo nunca llegará a Estados Unidos, pero la libertad llegará a Cuba".

El copresidente del CPUSA, Joe Sims, desestimó con ironía las acusaciones de Trump: "Nuestras relaciones con Cuba son abiertas y públicas. Reafirmamos nuestro derecho a mantener dichas relaciones y defendemos el derecho del pueblo cubano a vivir libre de agresiones imperialistas, así como a ejercer su derecho a la autodeterminación". Anita Waters, secretaria de organización del CPUSA, declaró: «Trump califica a Cuba de Estado fallido, pero el único fracaso es la política cruel y en bancarrota de Estados Unidos, que busca someter al pueblo cubano mediante el hambre».

«Nosotros no conspiramos. Nos organizamos. Es demasiado tarde, señor presidente», afirmó. «Llevamos aquí 107 años y no nos vamos a marchar».

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