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# Coronavirus surges in U.S.: Capitalism is the crisis

By Greg Butterfield

July 1 — As a consequence of bosses' rush to "reopen the economy" for profit amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic — and the unwillingness or inability of bought-and-paid-for political "leaders" to stand up to their demands — infections and hospitalizations are surging throughout much of the United States. During late June, the rate of confirmed infections reached new highs every single day. The U.S. death toll now tops 127,000.

The surge of infections has especially engulfed states in the South and West, like Texas and Florida, whose leaders, following the lead of President Donald Trump, largely ignored measures to slow the virus's spread and then quickly dropped any pretense of protecting public health as pressure to "reopen" grew from Wall Street right on down to the small capitalist on the corner.

California is another epicenter of the virus surge. That state had earlier taken relatively strong measures, but like other Democratic-governed states, caved in to capitalist pressure and began dropping public health measures at the end of May. Now, other states like New York, which had slowed the spread but is now barreling ahead with reopening amid the surge in the rest of the country, could soon face a new spike.

Appearing before Congress on June 30, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases director, Dr. Anthony Fauci, stated that he would not be surprised if the surging rate of infections in the U.S. reached 100,000 per day. Currently, it is around 40,000. Experts say that the rise is not primarily a result of increased testing — which is



still wholly inadequate in much of the country. In fact, Trump bragged at his poorly attended campaign rally in Tulsa, Okla., on June 20, that he had ordered that testing be slowed down.

Demand for testing is growing in the most affected states and far outstrips supply, even months into the pandemic. On July 1, the Washington Post reported "unprecedented demand for testing with lines stretching miles in the summer heat, supplies running out and medical workers left exhausted" in cities like Phoenix, Ariz., and Austin, Texas.

The rest of the world is watching, dumbfounded, at the utter criminality and ineptitude of the U.S. ruling class and its officials. On June 30, as the European Union prepared to lift travel restrictions, it announced that people from the U.S. would not be permitted to visit because of the lack of control over the coronavirus here.

### From panic to profit-driven 'reopening'

There has not been a clear or consistent policy to combat the spread of the virus at the federal, state or local levels — just a hodgepodge of half-measures and no measures.

When it was finally acknowledged in March that the virus was quickly spreading, projec-

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## SOCIALISM & DIGNITY

# A job is a right!

By Stephen Millies

Over 20 million workers are unemployed in the United States. That's a catastrophe. Joblessness hasn't been this high since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

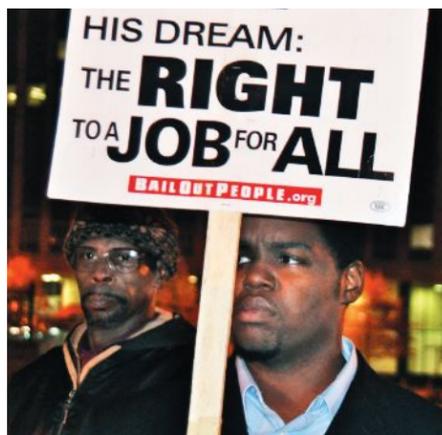
Extended unemployment benefits under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act are set to expire July 31. The various state moratoriums on evictions and utility shut-offs are also scheduled to end soon.

What are people supposed to do then? COVID-19 infections are spiking in Arizona, California, North and South Carolina, Florida, and Texas. Even when this pandemic ends, or at least slows down, many of the lost jobs are not coming back.

That doesn't bother Larry Kudlow, President Trump's \$185,000 per year director of the National Economic Council. He thinks "recessions are therapeutic."

This millionaire collects \$3,557 a week from the feds but doesn't want to extend the \$600 per week federal unemployment benefit. Kudlow claims it's a "disincentive" that will discourage people from going back to their jobs.

So people are staying home because they're lazy? The continuing pandemic and massive job destruction have nothing to do with it?



Larry Kudlow is what white privilege looks like. He was fired from Wall Street's now shuttered Bear Stearns bank in 1994 because of his cocaine addiction. But Kudlow never had to worry about being arrested for drug possession.

Lee Otis Johnson, the Black leader of Houston's Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) chapter, wasn't so lucky. He was framed in 1968 for allegedly having one marijuana joint and sentenced to 30 years in prison.

It was fear of what tens of millions of suddenly jobless workers might do that forced Trump and Congress to cough up \$600 per week and a stimulus check, too.

The millions of people who are marching in the streets, chanting "Black lives matter!" are why unemployment benefits may be extended and another stimulus check mailed out.

Why can't everyone have a job?

Before it was destroyed, in the socialist Soviet

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## Outrage in Compton

# JUSTICE for Andrés Guardado!

By John Parker

Los Angeles, June 21 — Today, outrage can be heard on the streets regarding the decision by the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department to place any findings by the coroner regarding the shooting death by sheriffs of 18-year-old Andrés Guardado on a "security hold." That means the information could be withheld from the public for years. This, while the city of Compton and politicians including Reps. Maxine Waters and Nanette Díaz Barragan demanded that the state attorney general conduct a full investigation into the killing.

On Thursday, June 18, Andrés Guardado, working as a security guard at an auto body shop in Compton, was approached by police who drew their weapons, frightening the youth, who reportedly ran and ended up getting shot with 6 rounds of bullets from sheriff's deputies. Some witnesses reported that Andrés was on his knees with his hands behind his head when he was shot.

The cops, of course, have another story and rely on their being in possession of the security cameras and the DVR that recorded the incident, and the fact that none of the sheriffs had body cameras recording the brutal assault, so they can spin whatever version of reality they like. However, the family of Guardado are demanding the footage.

The day after the shooting, Friday, June 19, there was a vigil held in front of the auto body shop with the family, including Guardado's mother, father and cousins. The vigil was initiated by Unión del Barrio.

On Sunday, June 21, Unión del Barrio and the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice held a 4-mile march from the shop where Guardado worked to the sheriff's headquarters, demanding justice and the immediate jailing of the cops responsible. About a thousand people attended the spirited march, led by a Black motorcycle grouping in Compton who had participated in a car caravan two weeks prior in protest of the

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# Coronavirus surges in U.S.: Capitalism is the crisis

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tions of 100,000 or more deaths sent Washington and Wall Street into a panic. It was too late for areas like New York, Seattle and Los Angeles, where the pandemic was already out of control. But at last some stay-at-home measures were implemented in late March.

But already in early April, the capitalist class — the bosses, bankers and landlords who hold true power over U.S. society — overcame their initial panic and decided that workers must be dragooned back to their jobs for the sake of profits, deadly contagion or no, even as those same bosses laid off millions of others. They were more fearful of the capitalist crisis of overproduction that coincided with the pandemic, and were determined to scrape up whatever profits they could on the backs of the workers.

By the beginning of May, the modest measures to control the virus's spread had already fallen by the wayside in most of the country. Only those early centers of the health crisis — mostly major coastal cities where the victims were largely Black and Brown people and elders — maintained or strengthened public health measures. And by the Memorial Day holiday at the end of the month, those too were being loosened.

The virus spread in meat-processing plants in the Midwest and South, in Amazon warehouses, in newly reopened churches, restaurants and bars. In many places, bosses and politicians alike flouted regulations meant to enforce mask wearing, social distancing and other safety practices, and thus encouraged middle-class white “consumers” to do likewise.

The president — who can hardly be described as anything but a virus himself — gleefully ignores any state or local public health measures that he encounters, the very picture of a wealthy oligarch who has a team dedicated to protecting his own health.

What we see now are the perfectly predictable and preventable consequences of a system that prioritizes profits over people's lives.

U.S. capitalism, the wealthiest empire that has ever existed on planet Earth, could have pumped trillions of dollars into finding a vaccine in cooperation with other countries. It could have guaranteed a job, home and income to every single person living in this country for the duration of the health crisis.

But that's not what capitalism is for. It exists to enrich the few at the expense of the many. The system and its political representatives, whether of the Donald Trump or Joe Biden varieties, “conservative” or “liberal,” Republican or Democrat, all dance to the tune of the profiteers, the lives and health of the working class be damned.

## Protests are urgent public health measures!

Following the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25, many politicians and media pundits were quick to warn that the nationwide uprisings against killer cops would contribute to the spread of COVID-19.

That didn't happen. In fact, six weeks into the protest movement,

with daily actions happening in cities large and small in every part of the country, there is no correlation between the protests and the surge of the virus. Rather, it is all down to the capitalist-driven rush to “re-open the economy.”

“In what's considered the first systematic look at the question, a team of economists determined that only one of 13 cities involved in the earliest wave of protests after Memorial Day had an increase that would fit the pattern,” the Associated Press reported July 1.

“It was Phoenix, where experts say cases and hospitalizations surged after a decision by Gov. Doug Ducey to end Arizona's stay-at-home order on May 15 and ease restrictions on businesses. Arizona residents who were cooped up for six weeks flooded Phoenix-area bar districts, ignoring social distancing guidelines.”

Why is this? For one thing, unlike the white supremacist “reopen” protests at state capitols in April and May, the anti-racist protesters are highly conscious of their social responsibility to wear masks, avoid unnecessary physical contact, use hand sanitizers or gloves, participate in car caravans, and stay home or get tested if feeling under the weather.

Unlike the megachurches, bars and factories that have been among the “superspreaders” in much of the country, the protests against police terror have been held out of doors, where transmission is less likely, especially when people are wearing masks.

Since late May, this writer has attended several protests in Brooklyn and Manhattan. At every demonstration, almost every person has worn a mask. Organizers, street medics and volunteers provided masks, hand sanitizer and other items in case anyone needed them.

The proportion of people wearing masks was higher at these protests than in any other setting I observed in the city — often much higher. This was true even before the recent loosening of stay-at-home measures encouraged more New Yorkers to stop wearing masks altogether.

In fact, what's been most glaring at the protests are those individuals who most often are not wearing masks — the police.

An open letter signed by more than 1,200 health care workers states: “White supremacy is a lethal public health issue that predates and contributes to COVID-19. Black people are twice as likely to be killed by police compared to white people, but the effects of racism are far more pervasive. ... Black people are also more likely to develop COVID-19. Black people with COVID-19 are diagnosed later in the disease course and have a higher rate of hospitalization, mechanical ventilation and death. COVID-19 among Black patients is yet another lethal manifestation of white supremacy.

“In addressing demonstrations against white supremacy, our first statement must be one of unwavering support for those who would dismantle, uproot or reform racist institutions. Staying at home, social distancing and public masking are effective at minimizing the spread of COVID-19. To the extent possible, we support the application of these public health best practices during

demonstrations that call attention to the pervasive lethal force of white supremacy. However, as public health advocates, we do not condemn these gatherings as risky for COVID-19 transmission. We support them as vital to the national public health and to the threatened health specifically of Black people in the United States.”

Protests are not only an urgent public health measure to fight systemic racism. It is clearer every day

that to win any kind of effective measures to combat the surging coronavirus and stop the pandemic from claiming tens or hundreds of thousands of more lives, a rebellion on the scale of the George Floyd protests and beyond, inseparably linked with the struggle against racist terror, is urgently needed.

Capitalism is the crisis. In the battle for public health, protests, uprisings, strikes and socialism will be the solution! 📌

## Outrage in Compton

# Justice for Andrés Guardado!

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George Floyd killing in Minneapolis.

Roc, who led the motorcycle contingent, said the group would continue to work together to fight this and other killings by the police. The car caravan two weeks prior was also initiated by Unión del Barrio and the Harriet Tubman Center and included Witness for Peace Southwest, the Human Rights Alliance for Child Refugees and Families, Frente Indígena de Organizaciones and other groups. That event, like the march held June 21, successfully attracted other organizations and their members and helped build unbreakable bonds between Black, Brown and Indigenous organizations in Los Angeles. It is that unity that organizers are counting on to launch a powerful fight against police terror, here and nationwide.

In that vein, organizers at the June 21 march stressed demands that would inspire a direction that empowers especially Black, Brown and Indigenous peoples towards their right to self defense against the cops and for the disarming and abolishing of cops and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. These demands echoed off of the streets and homes along the route with activists on the sound truck behind the Indigenous dancers. And, at the sheriff's headquarters facing off against the militarily armed cops, the sound truck was the platform where speakers gave powerful talks.

Rebecka Jackson of the Socialist Unity Party exposed the connection between the billionaires and the capitalists and the police they own. Jackson reflected on her recent visit to Minneapolis to report on the protests there and said her main takeaway from that experience was that the tremendous power of the people can be truly realized only if we organize and join an organization.

After four hours, marchers were still full of energy and not deterred by the phalanx of guns and cops in front of the sheriff's headquarters. The motorcycle security leading the march had already conferred with organizers to get around the cops by having the people march around them and into the plaza adjacent to the headquarters. They then made their way to the back of the sheriff's station along with the sound truck, entering the plaza and getting 20 feet from the station where a phalanx of cops regrouped to line up with steel barricades.

For the next couple of hours, militant voices reverberated off of the surrounding buildings and into the

halls of the sheriff's station, putting them on alert that the people would not be deterred and were not afraid.

Ron Gochez of Unión del Barrio let the cops and their superiors know that the large number of Latinx deputies that happened to be the ones out there didn't fool anyone into thinking that they were sympathetic to the Latinx community that had come out to protest. He told them that they, in fact, were no longer part of the Brown community, nor were the Black or Brown or Indigenous communities represented there afraid of them.

“Believe me,” Gochez said, “we have the same things you have, and if you think you'll come into my community threatening my people, you're in for a big surprise.” Gochez spoke about the determination of people present at the demonstration: “None of us here are getting paid. We're volunteers and we're here because we believe in the cause and won't stop fighting.”

Given the intimidation tactics of the cops, the family members were hesitant to make their way up to the sound truck that was right in front of the deputies. But, towards the end of the rally, the father of Guardado and his cousin came up and spoke about how shocked and heartbroken they were, but how thankful they were for those who came out fighting for justice.

Inspired by the rally, four mothers of children killed by police came up to speak and most declared that they wanted the cops who killed their children to be thrown in the worst jails possible for life and also expressed that their determination to fight for justice for their children would never end.

When the rally ended and most of the people were leaving, with the truck backing out and down plaza stairs, and eventually onto the street, shots from deputies could be heard. Tear gas and rubber bullets were aimed at the few who remained behind, even though no one was threatening the cops.

Although the march was covered by most of the corporate media, the area where the police were attacking protesters was hidden away from the cameras, so the violent cops holding guns felt empowered. However, social media posts of the police attack proved again that little can remain hidden. And, as this rally showed, the people have had enough and are increasingly expressing their willingness and their right to defend themselves by any means necessary against genocide by cop. 📌

# We must demand what we need

By John Parker

While this is happening now (from *Time* magazine):

“On Wednesday, the George Floyd Resolution to Eliminate the Oakland Schools Police Department passed 7-0. The district will eliminate its police department by the end of the year and hire more social workers, psychologists or ‘restorative justice practitioners.’ In the coming months, the district will work with students, parents, teach-

ers and the BOP [Black Organizing Project] to create a new school safety plan. ... The public school board in Minneapolis voted unanimously on June 2 to terminate its contract with the city’s police department in response to Floyd’s death. Schools leaders in Portland, Ore.; Denver and Seattle have since made similar decisions.”

Okay, are we supposed to be happy about the Los Angeles Unified School District rejecting the 90 percent cut and instead cutting just \$25 million

from their budget? The school police chief is resigning and told his cops to not show up at the schools, exposing how much these pigs care about children’s safety since they say they are essential to it.

So, the demand to take away some of the cops’ funds overshadowed and defeated and muffled the current and winnable demands to abolish these armed and dangerous cops from threatening and terrorizing our Black and Brown children in school and replace them with appropriate and more effective guardians of their safety. That’s what happened, and is happening everywhere in the country where defunding is the only and main demand, sidestepping the demands to disband; or abolish and replace; or impose community control. The weak-

er demand that was accepted leaves the cops ready for their next kill.

Some demands create reforms that empower our class and others create demands that disempower our class and allow the status quo to remain. When a new police chief for the LAUSD is found, the cops will be once again roaming the school halls with guns at the waist and at eye level of our children. We must demand what we need, not just what is palatable to the ruling class. The ruling class is desperate to find a way to soften the effects of the militancy in the streets that is now making changes at the speed of light. Let’s not help them turn off the light.

#disarmthepolice

#abolishthepolice

#communitytakeover

#communitycontrol



Wall Street, June 19.

SLL PHOTO: GREG BUTTERFIELD

## What we mean when we say ‘Defund the police’

By Greg Butterfield

Based on a talk given at a march and rally on Wall Street, June 19, 2020.

Thank you to the comrades of the December 12th Movement for organizing this commemoration of Juneteenth and putting some teeth in the call to “Defund the police.”

Millions of people have sincerely embraced the slogan “Defund the police.” But the problem is that it is such a vague demand. It can mean anything depending on who is saying it. We see pro-cop politicians like Mayor Bill de Blasio talk about “defunding” the New York Police Department. It’s not serious. Defund is only a serious demand for change when it’s combined with demands for community control and to fund people’s needs instead — to fund a public health system, to pay reparations.

Defunding is not the goal. It’s a first step to the goal.

When we talk about defunding the police, we are talking about disarming the police. Take away their weapons. Not just the military hardware, but their guns, tasers, batons. That would be a serious step to stop the police murder of Black and Brown people.

When we talk about defunding, we don’t mean a small percentage of the budget. We mean take away all of their funding. We mean dismantle

the NYPD. On Juneteenth, it seems right to remember how the police in the U.S. came into being. They came out of the patrols that chased down escaped slaves. They were created to defend white supremacy and protect private property. Those two reasons are why they still exist today.

The essential workers who have kept us all alive through this pandemic, the health care workers, all of us, are capable of defending and organizing our own community safety. We say community control as a step toward abolishing the police.

When we talk about defunding police, we don’t just mean the NYPD or police departments across the U.S. We also mean defund the global police of imperialism, the Pentagon. We mean end the wars, close the military bases, bring all the troops home. We mean end the sanctions on Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Iran, Cuba, Korea and many other countries.

The police exist only to protect capitalism, the rule of the rich over the rest of us. The only way to really get rid of the racist police system is to abolish capitalism. The only way to get there is to fight for socialism, for self-determination for the Black nation, for the working and poor people to establish their own forms of government and self-defense. That’s what we mean when we say, “Defund the police!”

## What to a prisoner is the Fourth of July?

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

On the occasion of Nelson Mandela’s visit to Philadelphia in 1993.

“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh! Had I the ability and could I reach the nation’s ear. I would, today pour out a stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed but fire, it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, the earthquake. The feeling of the nation must be quickened; the conscience of the nation must be roused; the propriety of the nation must be startled; the hypocrisy of the nation must be exposed; and its crimes against God and man must be proclaimed and denounced.

“What to the American slave is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all the other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, brass-fronted impudence. To the slave your shouts of liberty and equality are hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are to him mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety and hypocrisy! A thin veil to cover up crimes, which would disgrace a nation of savages! There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices, more shocking and bloody, than are the people of these United States at this very hour.”

— Frederick Douglass July 5, 1852.

July 4, 1993, saw African National Congress President Nelson Mandela in Philadelphia quoting this Fredrick

Douglass speech as he accepted the Liberty medal along with South African State President F. W. de Klerk. If the joint presence of Mandela and de Klerk were not enough to stir controversy, then the award presenters, Philadelphia Mayor Ed Rendell and U.S President Bill Clinton, certainly stoked controversy amongst radicals. Hundreds of Black Philadelphians, while certainly admirers of Mandela, took umbrage at de Klerk’s presence.



Although we the awarders are known as “We the People-Philadelphia,” the actual everyday people of Philadelphia had little say in choosing the Liberty medal awardees and less say in rejecting the widely unpopular honoree de Klerk. The choice of Liberty medalists was not made by the people, but by corporate Philadelphia, big business.

Why? Why were the people, many of whom have worked for more than twenty years against apartheid and for Mandela’s release, frozen out, their protests against de Klerk all but ignored? When the African majority takes power in South Africa, U.S big business wants friends there. If one reads the names of corporate sponsors of the Liberty medal, it sounds like a roll call of the Chamber of Commerce: Unisons Corp, Pennsylvania Bell and the like.

Mandela, who has not voted in a government election in 74 years,\* and de Klerk, president by way of an election counting only minority, nonblack votes, have only the hope of liberty, no more.

The white minority in South Africa has done its level best to stifle African liberty for three hundred years.

The African majority even after the awards still isn’t free.

From death row, this is **Mumia Abu-Jamal**

Reprinted from “All Things Censored,” essays by Mumia Abu-Jamal.

\*In 1994, after the first elections during which Black people could vote, Nelson Mandela was elected president of South Africa.

# Queer Liberation confronts police violence

By Greg Butterfield

New York, June 28 — For the second year in a row, the Reclaim Pride Coalition held a protest march on the last Sunday of June, traditionally the day of the city's massive LGBTQ2S Pride March marking the anniversary of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion. This year, according to the coalition, an estimated 50,000 people marched from Foley Square in Lower Manhattan, past the Stonewall Inn and ended in Washington Square Park.

Despite the official Pride parade being cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Reclaim Pride decided that it was essential to march this year in support of the Black-led uprising against racist police killings. This year's protest was proclaimed the "Queer Liberation March for Black Lives and Against Police Brutality."

Tens of thousands gathered in Foley Square, where many of the city's courts are located, including the United States Courthouse, where communists Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were



SLL PHOTOS: GREG BUTTERFIELD

sentenced to death 69 years ago. They marched out past New York City Hall, in support of a weeklong occupation demanding defunding of the New York Police Department.

Many marchers held signs saying "Black Lives Matter" or proclaiming the role of Black and Brown trans people like Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera in launching the mod-

ern struggle for LGBTQ2S liberation. Giant puppet images of Johnson, Rivera and other LGBTQ2S leaders of color towered over the colorful demonstration.

Since mass protests began, following the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, the NYPD has been on a rampage of brutality. Today was no different. As the march

approached Washington Square Park — just a few blocks from the Stonewall Inn — police charged into the crowd, swinging batons, punching and pushing protesters, and using pepper spray. They claimed to be trying to apprehend someone who had written an anti-racist slogan on a police vehicle.

Eventually, the massive, angry

# Where are the statues of Viola Liuzzo?

By Stephen Millies

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo doesn't think the statue of Christopher Columbus in New York City's Columbus Circle should be removed. Cuomo said that the statue "represents in some ways the Italian American legacy in the country, and the Italian American contribution in this country."

So where are the statues in honor of Viola Liuzzo? She was a mother of four children in an Italian American family who was murdered in Alabama on March 25, 1965, by the Ku Klux Klan. Liuzzo was supporting the Montgomery to Selma human rights march that led to the Voting Rights Act.

Four Klan members were in the car from which the fatal shot was fired. Two of the Klansmen — Collie Leroy Wilkens and Eugene Thomas — said Gary T. Rowe was the shooter. Rowe was on the FBI payroll.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King went to Liuzzo's funeral in Detroit. So did the leader of the United Auto Workers, Walter Reuther, and Teamsters leader Jimmy Hoffa Sr. Viola Liuzzo's grieving husband, Anthony Liuzzo, was the business agent of Teamsters Local 247.

Viola Liuzzo believed Black rights matter and gave her life for it. Christopher Columbus was a slaver who spent a dozen years before 1492 raiding Africa in the Portuguese slave trade.

In 1495, Columbus kidnapped 1,500 Arawak women, men and children to be sold as slaves in Spain. In Haiti, Columbus ordered every person 14 years or older to collect gold or have their hands cut off. By 1550, all the Arawak people in Haiti had been exterminated.

The statues of Columbus are not just commemorating a war criminal. They are saluting the African Holocaust and genocide of Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas.

These two greatest crimes in human history created the capitalist world market. As Karl Marx wrote,



Viola Liuzzo walking with civil rights activists before she was shot and killed in Alabama.

"Capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt."

Alaska, Maine, New Mexico, Oregon and Vermont now celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day instead of "Columbus Day," while South Dakota observes Native American Day. Governors in Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, North Carolina and Wisconsin have also proclaimed Oct. 12 as Indigenous Peoples' Day.

The Connecticut cities of Middletown and New London have removed statues of Columbus, while Hartford and New Haven are doing the same. The Columbus statue in California's state Capitol is coming down as well. New York Gov. Cuomo should follow their example.

## For and against Mussolini

Exposing the crimes of Columbus is no more anti-Italian than being against Mussolini. The fascist dictator came to power as a strikebreaker who had Italian trade unionists beaten and socialists thrown in jail. That's why he was adored by the ruling class in both the United States and Britain.

In 1927, Winston Churchill said that he was "charmed" when he met Benito Mussolini in Rome. Chur-

chill praised fascism, saying that "it proved the necessary antidote to the communist poison."

Generoso Pope, the millionaire publisher of *Il Progresso*, the biggest Italian language daily newspaper in New York City, also thought Mussolini was a swell guy. Pope was a prime mover in making "Columbus Day" a federal holiday and was a longtime grand marshal of New York City's "Columbus Day" parade.

In 1936, Pope attended a tribute to Mussolini at Madison Square Garden. At the time, Mussolini was invading Ethiopia, killing a million Africans with bullets, bombs and poison gas. Hundreds of thousands of Africans were also killed in Italian-occupied Libya.

Many Italian American workers hated Mussolini. On Aug. 3, 1935, the Rev. Adam Clayton Powell led over 25,000 people who marched in Harlem in solidarity with Ethiopia. Hundreds of Italian Americans joined the protest. ("Communists in Harlem during the Depression" by Mark Naison)

Mussolini was executed by Italian communist partisans on April 28, 1945. His naked body was hanged upside down in Milan. The statues of Columbus deserve the same fate.

## Always remember Sacco & Vanzetti

Where are the statues to honor Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti? The two Italian American anarchist labor organizers were burned to death in the Massachusetts electric chair on Aug. 23, 1927. They were framed for allegedly killing two persons in a 1920 payroll robbery.

Two former FBI agents—Lawrence Letherman and Fred J. Weyand — wrote that evidence exonerating the two Italian American heroes was suppressed. ("Twentieth-century Cause Célèbre: Sacco, Vanzetti, and the Press, 1920-1927" by John F. Neville)

Sacco and Vanzetti were convicted during a period of intense anti-immigrant bigotry. It was a decade

when workers on strike were often killed. There was a fascist-like parade of the Ku Klux Klan, including a march of 30,000 through Washington, supported by wealthy bosses and landlords, including Donald Trump's father.

Trump is building a wall on land stolen from Mexico and refers to Haiti with racist language. The 1924 Immigration Act sought to keep Italians and other workers from Southern and Eastern Europe from coming to the United States. Big Business demanded these restrictions because these workers were on the front lines during the post-World War I strike wave.

This bloody legislation was also deliberately crafted to keep Jewish people out of the U.S. It guaranteed more hundreds of thousands of people murdered in Hitler's ovens.

It wasn't a coincidence that this bigoted law was repealed in 1965, the same year that the Voting Rights Act was passed. Viola Liuzzo's martyrdom was not in vain.

Neither were the deaths of Sacco and Vanzetti. The worldwide defense campaign wasn't able to save their lives, but it helped inspire the successful effort to stop the execution of the Scottsboro defendants.

Nine African American teenagers were arrested in 1931 on phony rape charges in Scottsboro, Ala. All except 13-year-old Roy Wright were sentenced to death.

Black communist leader William L. Patterson — who had fought to save the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti — led the defense campaign that stopped the executions of Olen Montgomery, Clarence Norris, Haywood Patterson, Ozie Powell, Willie Roberson, Charlie Weems, Eugene Williams and Andy Wright.

## The real legacy and contribution

Father Jim Groppi should be remembered, too. The Italian American priest fought against racism in

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# U.S. special forces, mercenaries terrorize Colombia and Venezuela

crowd was able to push back the police. Several people were detained by the cops, including a vendor working at a neighborhood fruit stand. Four people were arrested.

Protesters were outraged to learn that at the very same moment that the NYPD was attacking LGBTQ2S people, pro-cop Mayor Bill de Blasio's twitter account was sending out "congratulations" to the community!

For decades, Heritage of Pride, the nonprofit organization that heads up the official Pride events, has been dominated by upper-class white faces catering to Big Business and capitalist politicians. Many in the LGBTQ2S community grew weary of the commercialization, promotion of mainstream politics and uniformed police being allowed to march in an event that is supposed to celebrate a rebellion against police brutality.

So last year, Reclaim Pride called for a real protest march on the 50th anniversary of Stonewall. At least 35,000 came out to that historic action. The explicitly anti-racist character of this year's march made it historic as well. 📌



U.S. troops on the tarmac in Colombia.

By Scott Scheffer

At a press conference in January 2019, then-White House National Security Advisor John Bolton made sure a notepad that had the words "5,000 U.S. troops to Colombia" scrawled on it was visible for photographers. Pretending it was inadvertent, he signalled a threat to Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro. Three weeks ago, a brigade of specially trained U.S. troops began arriving in Colombia.

The troops are positioned in Bogotá and to the north of the state of Santander, close to the border with Venezuela. The brigade is part of a U.S. Department of Defense plan to send relatively small groups of specially trained U.S. troops and "advisers" along with significant numbers of U.S. contracted mercenaries, called Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs.) They hope to gain an edge in war zones where the imperialist military has been mired down and unable to defeat the people's resistance. All under the command of U.S. Brig. Gen. Scott Jackson, similar brigades have previously been sent to Afghanistan and to Africa. This is the first in Latin America.

Their mission is touted by Trump and Secretary of Defense Mark Esper as "an enhanced counternarcotics mission." For two decades the U.S. has used coca production and cocaine trafficking as an excuse to keep troops in Colombia and to supply the Colombian military with billions of dollars and advanced military equipment.

The cover story couldn't possibly be more hypocritical. The U.S. is the world's largest cocaine market, and U.S. spy groups have been implicated in numerous drug trafficking scandals to finance other illegal operations ever since the 1950-1953 Korean War. The real mission of the SFAB being organized now is part of the overall U.S. plan: to defeat the armed revolutionary struggle in Co-

lombia — the most enduring in Latin America — and to strengthen the Colombian military for an invasion of Venezuela. They aim to overthrow President Nicolás Maduro and destroy the Bolivarian revolutionary process that has lifted millions of Venezuelan people out of poverty.

The top brass in the U.S. and in the Colombian military don't do all that much to conceal the true mission. The scam indictment of President Maduro and other leaders in Venezuela was handed down by a U.S. court in April. The indictment draws a phony link between Venezuela's Bolivarian revolution and the drug trade.

That was meant to strengthen the imperialist narrative that the U.S. is fighting against drug traffickers. It's easy enough to find more candid language about the true mission.

In the May 28 issue of *Army Times*: "U.S. officials have blamed Venezuela President Nicolás Maduro for failing to clamp down on militant groups and allowing their activities to continue unchallenged." They blame President Maduro for the Colombian revolutionary movement that precedes the Venezuelan revolutionary process by decades. Then, there is the May 2020 issue of *Business Insider*: "Experts believe the move is actually meant to keep an eye on neighboring Venezuela, where the U.S. has attempted to oust current president Nicolás Maduro."

A long series of Colombian administrations have kept the Colombian military in the orbit of U.S. imperialism: harassing, trying to politically isolate and serving as a launching pad for violent attempts to end the revolutionary process in Venezuela on behalf of Washington. Just last month, 60 mercenaries that had set off from Colombia in boats with a plan to kidnap President Maduro were captured and arrested. One of their leaders, Jordan Goudreau, had met with Trump and with Secretary of State Pompeo. That was denied by

the White House, of course.

The attempted coup was easily defeated by the Venezuelan military and by a local group of fishers who were armed. The mercenaries were arrested as they landed along the north coast of Venezuela. But there were additional mercenaries already in Venezuela, waiting for the invading armed unit with arms and vehicles. Over the ensuing weeks, the Bolivarian forces captured them all.

Previous to that, in the summer of 2019, President Maduro revealed that they had foiled another coup attempt that the Colombia government, Israel and the government of Chile were all backing. John Bolton was named as one of the co-conspirators and was more than likely the driving force. Venezuela operatives had infiltrated their planning meetings and had learned that their plans included the assassination of President Maduro.

Colombian people don't benefit in the least from their government's collaboration with the U.S. empire. As COVID-19 has spread through cities and the countryside in Colombia, the poor hang red cloth out their windows as a signal to ask for food donations, or go door to door to ask for food. The government claims it has distributed food that is supposed to alleviate hunger during the pandemic, yet hundreds of thousands are desperately hungry.

By contrast, Venezuela has canceled rent payments and credit card payments, ordered that telecommunications could not be cut off, has banned layoffs and has taken other measures in the face of the pandemic. This is on top of the tremendous achievements in housing, medical care, literacy and other areas since the late President Hugo Chávez wrenched Venezuela from the grip of U.S. imperialism and empowered the Indigenous, Afro-Venezuelans and the poor.

U.S. troops and weapons out of Colombia! 📌

Continued from page 4

super segregated Milwaukee.

He worked with Black community leaders Vel Phillips and Lloyd Barbee. As an advisor to the local NAACP Youth Council, Groppi led nightly marches in 1967 going to all-white neighborhoods demanding a fair housing law. Dick Gregory would sometimes come to march with him.

Frederick C. Pirone died doing the right thing. The Italian American Transit Workers Local 100 member rescued a 12-year-old Black girl being beaten up by a white gang of 20.

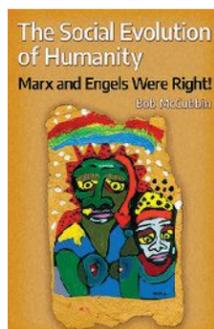
The assault occurred in the Glen Oaks section of Queens, New York, on Dec. 11, 1975. Some gang members thought they were insulting Pirone by saying that he liked Black people, using the "n" word, of course.

Pirone was later found by his family in a pool of blood in a nearby parking lot. He died of a heart attack with three of his ribs broken and his nose smashed. (*Jet* magazine, Jan. 15, 1976.)

New York City police covered up Pirone's murder and denied it had anything to do with racism. There's no statute of limitations on murder. The case of Frederick Pirone's murder needs to be reopened.

Thousands of Italian Americans are joining demonstrations against racism. They're chanting "Black lives matter!" Many want the statues of Columbus — like the statues of other racists — torn down.

The real legacy and contribution of Italian Americans are fighters for justice like Viola Liuzzo. 📌



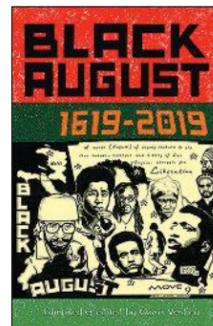
Paperback or Kindle [tinyurl.com/vwarcv7](https://tinyurl.com/vwarcv7)

## The Social Evolution of Humanity Marx and Engels were right! Bob McCubbin

This study augments Frederick Engels' *'Origin of the Family, Private Property & the State,'* focusing on social/sexual relations, in particular, the changing social status of women.

McCubbin is the author of *'Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View.'* First published in 1976, during the first flush of the modern LGBTQ2S movement, McCubbin's unparalleled

achievement was to offer a historical analysis of when, where, why and how LGBTQ2S oppression developed.



[tinyurl.com/vn3qvn5](https://tinyurl.com/vn3qvn5)

## BLACK AUGUST 1619-2019 commemorates 400 years of Black freedom struggle.

This book examines the construction of a racial capitalist venture — slavery — where the histories of African, Native and working people overlapped.

- ★ Matsemela-Ali Odom
- ★ Gloria Verdieu
- ★ Carl Muhammad
- ★ Zola Fish
- ★ Mary Lou Finley
- ★ Dennis Childs
- ★ Eusi Kwayana
- ★ Mumia Abu-Jamal
- ★ Curtis Howard
- ★ Sylvia Cameron Telafaro

# Un Nobel verdaderamente merecido

Por Ángel Guerra Cabrera

Un grupo de importantes personalidades ha lanzado la iniciativa de pedir el otorgamiento del Premio Nobel de la Paz a las brigadas médicas cubanas que combaten la covid-19 en 27 países y que a lo largo de los años han intervenido heroicamente en el enfrentamiento a numerosos desastres naturales y epidemias alrededor del mundo. La idea es muy justa y oportuna pues los médicos internacionalistas cubanos son, en estos tiempos de pandemia, desigualdad extrema e insostenible injusticia social, un paradigma difícilmente igualable de solidaridad humana y entrega a la causa de salvar vidas. Ello, en marcado antagonismo con el desenfrenado egoísmo de America First enarbolado por Donald Trump, cuando la Casa Blanca expone la salud y la vida de millones de estadounidenses en el altar de business is business, gatillando la propagación desbocada del virus y la muerte, como si fueran pocas las gravísimas violaciones a los derechos humanos que comete sistemáticamente, dentro y fuera de sus fronteras. Si el Nobel ha de ser un galardón a quienes buscan el bien común, la justicia y la cooperación internacional, estos candidatos son sus merecedores, pues como afirmó Noam Chomsky ningún país ha tenido una actitud internacionalista como la de Cuba ante la pandemia. Para apoyar la propuesta, firmar en [www.CubaNobel.org](http://www.CubaNobel.org)

Chomsky es precisamente uno



La brigada médica cubana parte hacia Angola el 9 de abril para luchar contra Covid-19.

FOTO: RADIO HAVANA CUBA

privar a Cuba de su primera fuente de divisas, ya que aunque en países pobres la

de quienes aboga por la entrega del galardón a los galenos cubanos junto a los Premios Nobel Adolfo Pérez Esquivel y Alice Walker, el líder del Movimiento de los Sin Tierra de Brasil Joao Pedro Stédile, el periodista Ignacio Ramonet, los actores Danny Glover y Mark Ruffalo, los músicos Chico Buarque, Silvio Rodríguez y Tom Morello, los escritores Luis Britto y James Early y los realizadores Oliver Stone y Pedro Costa. Una campaña de apoyo a la iniciativa ha sido lanzada en Brasil por el teólogo Leonardo Boff y el capítulo brasileño de la Red En Defensa de la Humanidad y existen convocatorias semejantes en Francia, Argentina e Italia. El movimiento se expande velozmente mientras desde Washington, con Pompeo a la cabeza y un odio irrefrenable, se vierten veneno y amenazas contra la cooperación médica cubana un día sí y el otro también. Es natural que a un grupo filofascista, como el que hoy detenta el gobierno en la potencia del norte, le provoque rabia una actividad de tan hondo contenido humanista y totalmente contraria a la lógica del mercado. Se trata también de

cooperación de Cuba es casi gratuita, o gratuita del todo, hay otros muchos que sí dan una contraprestación

La mitad de los 6250 médicos de que disponía Cuba en 1959 desertó poco después del triunfo de la Revolución. Pero en 1960, La Habana envió una brigada médica a asistir a las víctimas del megaterremoto que asoló a Chile. En 1963 envió una brigada de 55 médicos a la Argelia recién independizada. A partir de entonces fue común encontrar galenos cubanos en África. En 1970 despachó una brigada médica a Perú para atender a las víctimas del terremoto de Ancash. La visión y la voluntad política de Fidel Castro hizo que muy temprano se emprendiera un programa de formación de personal de salud que ha llevado a que hoy existan 13 universidades médicas y a que Cuba sea uno de los países que posee más médicos por habitantes en el mundo. También condujo a la creación del gran complejo de centros de investigación biomédica, que ha sido imprescindible para producir medicamentos de punta a pesar del cada vez más asfixiante bloqueo yanqui, proteger

a la población de muchas enfermedades infecciosas y producir nacionalmente ocho de las vacunas que se administran anualmente.

Desde 1963 más de 600 mil trabajadoras y trabajadores de la salud cubanos han brindado sus servicios en más de 164 países. Más de 2000 combaten el coronavirus en 28 naciones, alrededor de 700 en México. En el Caribe lo hacen más de 600.

En 2005, a raíz del paso del huracán Katrina por Nueva Orleans, Fidel propuso al gobierno de Estados Unidos el envío de una importante fuerza médica para asistir a los damnificados. Con Bush en la presidencia la respuesta fue negativa pero el hecho dio lugar a la creación por el comandante del Contingente Internacional de Médicos Especializados en Situaciones de Desastres y Graves Epidemias Henry Reeve. Reeve fue un joven de Brooklyn que murió combatiendo en las filas independentistas cubanas, donde por su valor y capacidad ganó muy joven el grado de brigadier y una gran admiración y cariño de los cubanos.

Desde su creación, el contingente ha actuado ante terremotos (Paquistán, 2005; Indonesia, 2006; Perú, 2007; China, 2008; Haití, 2010; Chile, 2010; Nepal, 2015; Ecuador, 2016), lluvias intensas (Guatemala, 2005; Bolivia, 2006; México, 2007; El Salvador, 2009; Chile, 2015; Venezuela, 2015), emergencias médicas (cólera en Haití, 2010; ébola en Sierra Leona, Guinea Conakri, Liberia, 2014) y huracanes (Dominicana, 2015; Islas Fiji, 2016; Haití, 2016).

Fuente: Pupila Insomne

## A job is a right! SOCIALISM & DIGNITY

Continued from page 1

Union everyone had a job. Unemployment was unknown. During the height of capitalist "prosperity" in the U.S., millions of workers are jobless.

The difference was that the Soviet Union had an overall economic plan. The industries belonged to the people. Soviet banks didn't lend money to real estate sharks like Donald Trump.

While U.S. corporations and the federal and state governments have budgets — which are plans — capitalism can't be controlled. Dog-eat-dog capitalist competition prevents it. As Karl Marx wrote, "Capital has a life of its own." (No offense meant to dogs, who never eat other dogs; it's just a saying that a capitalist first used to describe capitalist competition.)

The biggest monopolies employ thousands with marketing degrees who try to determine what goods and services can be sold in the capitalist market. But ultimately, "too much" stuff is produced.

How can this be? At least a billion people on earth go to bed hungry, including millions of people in the U.S.

Overcrowded housing is one of the reasons so many Black, Indigenous and Latinx people have died of the coronavirus. People need more health care, schools and transportation.

Capitalist overproduction has nothing to do with people's needs. It's producing more stuff than can be sold at a profit.

Every ten years or so since 1825, a capitalist economic crisis breaks out and creates more misery. COVID-19 accelerated the current recession,

but it started earlier, particularly with the overproduction of oil.

Frederick Engels — the friend and co-worker of Karl Marx — described how a capitalist economic recovery is guaranteed to turn into another recession:

"The industrial trot breaks into a canter, the canter in turn grows into the headlong gallop of a perfect steeplechase of industry, commercial credit, and speculation, which finally, after breakneck leaps, ends where it began — in the ditch of a crisis."

### Unemployment isn't equal

Capitalism requires unemployment, a phenomenon that didn't exist in previous social systems. Engels called jobless workers an "industrial reserve army."

Capitalist production often needs a sudden increase in the number of workers, like during the Christmas buying rush. Unemployed workers are recruited from the industrial reserve army to handle the extra work.

That's a secondary feature of the industrial reserve army. Its main function is to increase the average rate of profit.

If there was a permanent shortage of labor under capitalism — instead of a continual surplus of workers seeking employment — it would be impossible to maintain the level of exploitation. Working and poor people wouldn't tolerate being overworked and abused.

Samuel Insull — a 1920s Midwest utilities czar whose \$3 billion empire collapsed in the Great Depression — best expressed the thought of his

fellow exploiters: "My experience is that the greatest aid to the efficiency of labor is a long line of men waiting at the gate." (That is, a mass of unemployed women and men trying to get hired.)

The industrial reserve army also plays an important political role in the racist U.S. The Black unemployment rate is almost always at least double the white jobless rate.

It's even worse for Indigenous people. Latinx people also suffer from higher joblessness.

Hiring discrimination not only means that whites have the better paying jobs. It means that a white applicant is more likely to be hired for a lousy paying job.

This material factor has helped capitalists poison the minds of too many white workers. But look what's happening now.

The Black Lives Matter movement has gotten the support of millions of whites across the U.S. The wealthy and powerful are terrified.

### Don't starve, fight!

When the Great Depression started 90 years ago, there was no unemployment compensation or welfare. The Communist Party raised the slogan "Don't starve, fight!" and organized unemployment councils.

Despite police attacks and even killings, communists stopped evictions in Chicago and other cities. A mass movement won unemployment insurance and Social Security.

Millions of workers were hired by the Works Progress Administration to build schools, parks and bridges. Organizing drives forced the biggest corporations, like General Motors and Ford, to sign union contracts.

We can do even more today. Many union members are supporting the Black Lives Matter movement.

The Seattle Labor Council has expelled the local police "union." The AFL-CIO should follow Seattle's example and kick out the cops.

The labor movement needs to demand "A Job is a Right!" and "Jobs not Jails!" Unemployed councils have to be started again.

Millions of young people need jobs with union wages and union benefits. The rich can pay for it.

Evictions and foreclosures of homes have to be stopped. So do utility shut-offs. The water must be turned back on!

Amazon, FedEx and Walmart workers need to be organized. Millions of other workers need unions, too.

We can win if we organize and struggle. We must win millions to the need for a socialist revolution that will abolish unemployment forever.

**STRUGGLE** ★ **LA LUCHA**  
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