

STRUGGLE ★ LA LUCHA

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Extreme weather & capitalism: DEADLY

By Scott Scheffer

Climate scientists around the world are alarmed by a triple climate-change-related crisis that hit the western U.S. and Canada in June and July.

Normally climatologists are careful in their assessment of extreme weather events, under pressure from energy industry profiteers and anti-science climate change deniers. They go to great pains to avoid being accused of exaggeration, and rarely (really never) point to climate change as the cause of specific freakish weather events.

The severity of what has happened in June and July has pushed past many of their carefully calculated projections. The fingerprints of capitalist-induced global warming are all over the crime scene.

A severe drought in the western states of the U.S. that has been worsening for months has nearly drained Lake Mead in Nevada, Lake Oroville in California and other major reservoirs, threatening power generation for millions of people. A series of intense, widespread, sustained heat waves tortured a quarter of the U.S. as well as western Canada for weeks, taking the lives of hundreds of people.



The super-dry conditions in the region have caused 83 wildfires, including the Dixie Fire in Northern California and the Bootleg Fire in southern Oregon. They are two of the largest wildfires in history and are both still raging.

Mild Pacific Northwest goes wild

The Southwest U.S. is no stranger to deadly heat, but what is most unexpected is that this extreme heat has hit the Pacific Northwest, a region known for mild temperatures and damp weather.

Roads buckled in Seattle from the sweltering heat. For several days Portland, Ore., was the fourth-hottest place on earth. British Columbia suffered the highest death toll with more than 800 deaths between the end of June and middle of July — quadruple the average number of deaths.

The village of Lytton in British Columbia burned to the ground just as Paradise, Calif., did in 2018 — essentially nothing left but ashes and smoke.

In Canada's British Columbia province, and the U.S. states of Washington, Oregon and Northern California, the heat broke all-time temperature records, and then broke those records again, and then again.

Nevada and California's livability depends on a system of 1,500 human-made reservoirs, not only for drinking water and agriculture but for electricity from hydroelectric generators.

Engineers say that the water level in Lake Mead will be below the minimum water level needed to generate power to 1.3 million people in a matter of days. Lake Oroville will likely last until September, when it won't be able to supply electricity for another 800,000.

Normally, power companies buy power from nearby regions when needed. But constantly running air conditioning in a wide swath of the western U.S. during 2021 has diminished power surpluses that normally allow that to happen.

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Long Live Revolutionary George Jackson!

By Gloria Verdieu

"If I leave here alive, I'll leave nothing behind. They'll never count me among the broken men, but I can't say that I'm normal either. I've been hungry too long, I've gone angry too often, I've been lied to and insulted too many times. They've pushed me over the line from which there can be no retreat. I know that they will not be satisfied until they've pushed me out of existence altogether. I've been the victim of so many racist attacks that I could never relax again. ... I can still smile now, after ten years of blocking knife thrusts, and the pick handles of faceless sadistic pigs, of anticipating and reacting for ten years, seven of them in Solitary. I can still smile sometimes, but by the time this thing is over I may not be a nice person. And I just lit my seventy-seventh cigarette of this 21-hour day. I'm going to lay down for two or three hours, perhaps I'll sleep."

George Jackson – "Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters" April 1970

August 21, 2021, marks the 50th anniversary of the assassination of revolutionary George Jackson.

In 1960, 18-year-old Jackson was accused of stealing \$70 from a gas station in Los Angeles. His court-appointed lawyer advised him to plead guilty in exchange for a light sentence in the county

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Cuba's freedom and Assata Shakur's

By John Parker

For all of those saying that Cuba is not free, consider the freedom of our sister and former Black Panther Assata Shakur, who, like many other Black liberation fighters, was framed for murder in a blatantly racist and unfair trial.

Her freedom today would not be possible if not for the solidarity and principled leadership of the Cuban Communist Party and the revolutionary people who make up the great majority in Cuba. They gave our sister asylum.

If not for Cuba, Assata would instead be dead (the U.S. currently has

a \$2 million bounty on her head, dead or alive) or among the ranks of over 2 million incarcerated people in the U.S. The U.S. has the largest jailed population in the world; by far the largest in actual number and percentage of population, predominantly Black, Brown and other oppressed people.

So for those people who live in the U.S. and continue to lie about Cuba, we say enjoy your "freedom" and your ignorance and we'll enjoy wishing our free sister Assata a very happy belated birthday. (She was born on July 16.)



DEFEND THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

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Caravan condemns residential school legacy, honors Indigenous resistance

Zola Fish is a member of the Choctaw Nation.

By Zola Fish

On July 18, between 50-60 cars gathered at the historic Sherman Indian School in Riverside, Calif., for a caravan to honor “Indian resilience” in the face of brutal European colonialism. The event also honored “lost children,” a reference to the many Indigenous youth who perished while attending the boarding school.

The gathering was called in response to news out of Canada that the remains of 215 children were found in a mass grave on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia.

Beginning in the mid-19th century, European colonizers to the Americas began forcing young Native people out of their reservation homes and into off-reservation boarding schools, with the express purpose of assimilation into European culture and training for menial labor.

Caravaners dressed in bright orange and their cars were decorated with bright orange flags and signs that read “Honor the children” and “Honor the survivors.” The route proceeded from the campus to the Sherman Indian School Cemetery five-and-a-half miles away, where the remains of 67 Native children reside.

It has been reported that the causes of death of the children were from disease (typhoid ravaged the school in 1904), “accidents” and bad water. Ten children were reported to have



SLL PHOTO: ZOLA FISH

died from typhoid, including three siblings and a 1-year-old baby girl. The average age of youth who attended Sherman were from 4 years old into their twenties.

The Sherman Indian School, also known as the Sherman Institute, was founded by Frank Miller and named after James S. Sherman, U.S. vice president in the Taft administration. Originally the Perris Indian School located in Perris, Calif., it moved to Riverside in 1903.

Modeled after the infamous Carlisle School in Pennsylvania, the school's motto was “Kill the Indian, save the man.” Miller said his goal was to “make the Indian useful” by teaching English, a little math and

science, with the rest of the curriculum consisting of sewing, smithing, shoemaking, baking, gardening and barbering.

Legacy of racism and greed

Miller's motive for moving the school was to build a resort for the wealthy in Riverside, using cheap Native labor and entertainment for guests of his Mission Inn. The school and the inn were dedicated in the same year.

By 1912, the Sherman Institute had 631 pupils from 12 states and 55 tribes. It included a 400-acre-farm on which students raised produce used at the school. It continues to operate on the original campus as a

high school administered by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Native children were subjected to brutal and inhumane treatment in colonial boarding schools. They were forbidden from practicing their own traditions and religions. Nor were they allowed to speak their own languages. Their hair was cut and they were forced to wear colonial clothing.

Children were punished and humiliated when caught practicing anything “Indian” and were made to do hard labor as punishment. Physical beatings were a common punishment for violations of school rules.

Corporal punishment was unheard of in Indigenous culture. Its use at Sherman helped cause great psychological anguish among Native youth.

Sexual abuse was also rampant. One survivor remembered, “We had many different teachers during those years; some got the girls pregnant and had to leave.” She went on to describe her own story of sexual abuse at the hands of one of the nuns.

At the cemetery Native people prayed, lit sage and placed tobacco on the graves. There was a women's drumming circle with Paiute Salt Songs to aid in community healing and to assist with the transition to the next world.

In attendance were the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice from Los Angeles, the Answer Coalition, BAYAN USA, Unión del Barrio, the San Diego Leonard Peltier Defense Committee and many more. [\[link\]](#)

The ‘Land Back’ Campaign: Oklahoma is only a start

By Zola Fish

Last year the U.S. Supreme Court made a decision that affected 40% of Oklahoma. The court decided to uphold a 19th century treaty made with five Indigenous tribes of Oklahoma: Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, Cherokee and Seminole. This was very significant for the five tribes.

Tulsa, the second biggest city in Oklahoma, sits on Creek land. So does the fourth biggest city, Broken Arrow. The ruling gives Native governments better protections over the citizens of each nation.

The state of Oklahoma no longer has the legal authority to prosecute cases involving Native Americans in territory previously owned by the state.

The Creek Nation released a statement that partly read: “Today's decision will allow the Nation to honor our ancestors by maintaining our established sovereignty and territorial boundaries.”

The Supreme Court decision was 5-4, with Justices Neil Gorsuch, Sonia Sotomayor, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Elena Kagan and Stephen Breyer in the majority, while Justices John Roberts, Brett Kavanaugh, Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas dissented.

This was a good start for the LANDBACK Campaign. The 40% of land is Eastern and expands to the South of Oklahoma.

Trail of Tears

The history of the five tribes is a sad one. The traditional lands of the

tribes are Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana. The Seminoles' homeland was as far as Florida.

The Trail of Tears was brutal and not all made it. They were colonized along the way. Most became farmers with crops of corn, beans and squash. Wild turkeys were also a food source.

The colonial government quickly broke the treaty it had signed and the tribes were forced onto a small portion of what was promised. Other Native peoples already inhabited Oklahoma. The Wichita, Plains Apache, Quapaw and Caddo tribes were there during the colonization by the Spanish and French.

By the early 1800s the Osage, Pawnee, Kiowa, Comanche, Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes migrated into

“Indian Territory” — also known as Oklahoma. Tribes Native to present day Oklahoma are the Caddo, Osage and the Wichita.

There is a “Land Back” movement building momentum. It's beginning with the Black Hills and is trying to shut down the Mount Rushmore monument.

To quote the NDN Collective working on the LANDBACK Campaign: “South Dakota is our cornerstone battle, from which we will build out this campaign. Not only does Mount Rushmore sit in the heart of the sacred Black Hills, but it is an international symbol of white supremacy and colonization.”

The land that was given back to the five tribes is a good start, but we want all of our land back. [\[link\]](#)

Reparations must be paid!

By Stephen Millies

“They stole us, they sold us, they owe us!”

Those powerful and truthful words were chanted at the African Burial Ground in lower Manhattan on July 23 to demand reparations for slavery. The noontime rally was called to push the New York State Senate to pass the reparations bill already overwhelmingly approved by the State Assembly.

Omowale Clay of the December

12th Movement opened the rally by reminding everyone that the late Sonny Abubadika Carson stopped a bulldozer from desecrating that hallowed ground. It was only because of struggle that the U.S. government was forced to declare the site a national monument.

State Assembly Member Charles Barron explained how the reparations bill would set up a commission that wouldn't just have members hand-picked by New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo. It would include two

members each from the following community organizations: the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA); the Institute of the Black World; and the

December 12th Movement.

The commission would determine how much the state would have to pay up to Black people.

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SLL PHOTO: STEPHEN MILLIES

Baltimore's unemployed workers speak out



By Struggle-La Lucha Baltimore bureau

Coming off its second court victory against Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan's plan to cut off federal pandemic unemployment relief early, the Unemployed Workers Union planned a Town Hall Assembly at Baltimore City Hall on July 29.

A worker testifies about the crisis created by unjust withholding of unemployment benefits, July 29.

SLL PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

Organizers thought severe weather would force them to cancel. Yet despite a tornado warning in the area, over 30 people showed up, drawn by the opportunity to "Tell your story and let the world know that the crisis is not over!" The assembly went ahead as planned while activists kept a close eye on the skies.

"Thousands of Marylanders have still not received a dime of unemployment insurance and benefits owed to them," says the leaflet for the event. "Instead, their claims are languishing in hold, false fraud claims, or simply not being paid. Don't let the Labor Department

sweep us under the rug.

"We are continuing to fight inside the courts, but that will not be enough. Only your voice and actions will ensure we win again."

The turnout, despite the threatening weather, demonstrates the severity of the crisis for unemployed workers in the state of Maryland.

"We will do this again so that many of those who were deterred by the storm and the tornado warnings get a chance to testify," UWU's Sharon Black said.

Watch the event and hear firsthand the experiences of unemployed workers: tinyurl.com/2hsa8mas

Unemployed Workers Union wins court victory: 'We will continue to fight'

July 13 — The Unemployed Workers Union is encouraged by today's decision by Baltimore Circuit Court Judge Lawrence Fletcher-Hill to grant a preliminary injunction to halt Governor Hogan's plan to end federal pandemic benefits early.

Along with the U.S. Department of Labor's requirement of a 30-day cut-off notice, the judge's decision means that help will continue until September.

Today's court decision is a victory for unemployed Maryland workers, especially those who collect pandemic benefits. In many cases, this \$300 a week is the only funds available for workers who have exhausted benefits or are not covered under regular unemployment benefits.

Alec Summerfield, attorney for the Unemployed Workers Union, stated, "It may make the difference whether a worker eats or not, or between paying a utility bill, car payment, mortgage or rent."

Summerfield continued, "This addresses a part of our lawsuit; the sec-

ond part revolves around the thousands of workers who have not seen a penny of their benefits, some for as long as a year, held up in the dysfunctional Maryland Labor Department's Unemployment Division."

Sharon Black, a representative of the Unemployed Workers Union, added: "We will not stop until every worker receives the benefits that they are owed. This includes continuing our lawsuit and holding protests and assemblies where workers can speak out."

At a news conference following the judge's ruling, Black declared "You were responsible for this victory!" She was addressing the thousands of unemployed workers across Maryland who've joined the effort.

"There have been many messages of thanks to our attorney and organizers. But none of us won this victory. It was your efforts — your ability to remain focused, to amplify your voice in any way possible, to sacrifice and stay the course that got us this far.



Unemployed Workers Union picket in Baltimore, July 6.

SLL PHOTO

"The grievances you filed, the picket lines you attended, even the emails and social media posts, created the irresistible force that led to this decision.

"We still have miles to travel on this road until everyone is paid. Please do not stop."

The Unemployed Workers Union will be announcing future activities soon. In the meantime, if you have

an eviction emergency, reach out to UWU representative Joyce B. by email at stillsmiling4eva@gmail.com.

Don't forget our weekly Unemployed and Workers' Rights Clinic, Thursdays from 6 pm to 8 pm at 2011 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218. Just show up — no need to make an appointment. Please come and fill out a grievance form.

Welfare Rights conference in New Orleans: 'Imagine a world where no one goes without food or affordable housing'

By Gregory E. Williams

During the first week of August, the National Welfare Rights Union (NWRU) convened in New Orleans. The meeting brought together activists from around the country to study both history and current conditions, as well as to reaffirm their commitment to struggle.

This was a good time for a national meeting on welfare rights, given the extreme situation faced by millions of working-class people in the United States. For many, life has been made bleak by decades of low wages and austerity. The COVID-19 crisis is making things even worse. The country's largest hunger-relief non-profit, Feeding America, reports that some 50 million people were food insecure during the pandemic. On the eve of this conference, 11 million families were facing evic-

tion or foreclosure. Biden only acted to extend the eviction moratorium after facing popular pushback.

In an address at the onset of the pandemic, NWRU President, Maureen Taylor, spoke of the difficulties caused by the cruelty of this system, but she also stressed the need to envision an alternative. Taylor said: "Working people—can't we imagine a world where universal healthcare is a right and cannot be tied to a job that may disappear? Working people—can't we imagine a world where preparation for pandemics are already in place because the next one is anticipated? Working people—can't we imagine a world where no one goes without food or affordable housing under any circumstances?"

The NWRU was established in 1987, growing out of the work of the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO). The NWRO was a key part

of the Poor People's Campaign organized by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. That movement terrified the capitalists. One organizer at this week's conference said, "The threat of Martin Luther King was that he was uniting the working-class." Indeed, when King was murdered in 1968, the militancy of the Black liberation struggle was spilling over to all groups fighting for their rights in this society.

The organizers with today's NWRU are carrying on the radical traditions of the NWRO founders, like George Wiley and Johnnie Tillmon, two giants of the civil rights era. In this week's discussion, conference-attendees stressed the need of getting back to basics, that is, to struggle led by poor, working-class people, not beholden to granting organizations and professional politicians. Elders shared radical history with

the younger activists, while affirming the immense potential of today's youth, as demonstrated by the 2020 rebellions against white supremacist police terror.

A lively conversation took place about the necessity of basing struggle on revolutionary education and an analysis of changing conditions.

Rev. Annie Chambers of the NWRU, Socialist Unity Party, and other organizations, summed up much of this discussion in the following way: "Facing different conditions today, what else can we do but have revolution? Young people are fighting. But we've got to give it direction, to call what we're in a revolution to change this whole system. Piecemeal change isn't enough. This whole capitalist system must fall."



1968

Save our homes — by any means necessary

By Stephen Millies

Eleven million families face being thrown out of their homes. That's because the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) ban on evictions and foreclosures expired July 31.

So at least 30 million people have no legal protection from a landlord or bank kicking them out of their apartments and houses. At the same time, there's another upsurge in the coronavirus pandemic.

The grave health risks caused by being homeless during the COVID-19 crisis are why the CDC imposed the moratorium. Evictions led to hundreds of thousands of more cases of the coronavirus.

Families living in shelters or in their cars are much more likely to get infected. So are elderly and disabled people.

Overcrowded housing is a big reason why the death rates from COVID-19 are two and three times as high among Black, Indigenous and Latinx people as among whites.

These facts of life and death don't mean much to sexual predator Brett



Kavanaugh. The U.S. Supreme Court judge told the Biden administration that he wasn't going to allow more than a one-month extension on the CDC moratorium.

To judges like Kavanaugh, property rights always come before human rights. How are families supposed to pay their rent or mortgage when more than 30 million lost their jobs

since the pandemic began?

California, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Washington, D.C., have imposed their own bans on evictions and foreclosures. People living in these areas won't be immediately affected by the CDC moratorium coming to an end.

Worst housing crisis since Great Depression

But in the rest of the United States, landlords and bankers will be running to court demanding an avalanche of evictions and foreclosures. This is the worst housing crisis since 90 years ago during the Great Depression.

What is to be done?

Both the Biden administration and the Democratic Party leaders in Congress knew this catastrophe was coming. They did practically nothing to stop the runaway train.

Rep. Cori Bush from St. Louis is outraged at this inaction. She slept overnight outside the U.S. Capitol to demand Congress reconvene and stop evictions.

Representative Bush knows what it

is to be homeless. After being evicted, she had to live in her car with her children.

Congress did authorize \$47 billion to help pay back rent. But only \$3 billion has been spent.

Many landlords are refusing to accept the money. They just want to evict people. That's criminal.

That's what Roxanne Schaefer is facing in West Warwick, R.I. The disabled woman lives in an apartment that is not properly serviced or maintained, with a rent of \$995 per month. Her slumlord refuses to take federal rental assistance.

Behind even the biggest landlords are the banks that own the mortgages. They would rather have millions on the street in cardboard boxes than lower rents.

It was because 26 million people took to the streets demanding justice for George Floyd that Congress did anything to stop evictions and foreclosures. They need to fear us again.

We need to join and support organizations like the Crown Heights Tenant Union in Brooklyn. The housing courts need to be surrounded by people.

Ninety years ago the Unemployed Councils stopped evictions in Chicago. The power of the people can stop the tidal wave of evictions and foreclosures. [📌](#)

ICE releases migrants across Louisiana with no support

By Gregory E. Williams

Demand the release of all ICE detainees with adequate support, including vaccine access!

Immigrant rights activists in Louisiana have decried the chaotic way that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is releasing detained migrants throughout the state. Organizers with Voces Unidas: Louisiana Immigrants Rights Coalition have called the handling of the releases “inhumane,” and have stated that “ICE is dropping them off in the middle of nowhere with no support.”

Already overworked advocates like those with Voces Unidas are scrambling to deal with the crisis situation caused by the federal agency. Their efforts are nothing short of heroic.

An instance in Baton Rouge has been covered by local media. On July 16, an ICE representative called up the Society of St. Vincent de Paul—without any prior notice—informing them that 60 immigrants were being sent to their shelter. These individuals were dropped off at the Greyhound bus station without any supplies.

St. Vincent de Paul President Michael Acaldo told WAFB Channel 9, “Our shelter at that time had all filled up.” The society's volunteers nevertheless gave the released detainees supply bags. Fortunately, volunteers with Louisiana Advocates for Immigrants in Detention were able to provide shelter. The organization also filed a civil rights complaint against ICE.

Similar scenarios have played out across the state, including in rural areas with far fewer resources than Baton Rouge. Even mayors and congresspeople have complained, alleging that they are not being given notice.



Voces Unidas protest outside ICE office in New Orleans, 2019.

Dangers of COVID-19

According to ICE data, only about 20 percent of detainees passing through its facilities across the country had received one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine as of the beginning of July. This is at a time when the number of people crowded into facilities (including children, as in the tent compound at Fort Bliss, Texas) has swelled to 26,000, all during Joe Biden's tenure. During that period of increase, ICE reported over 7,500 new coronavirus cases in custody.

ICE is putting all these people in danger by releasing them without support during the current virus surge, dominated by the highly transmissible Delta variant. Released migrants are in danger of homelessness. They may end up in crowded shelters and other places where social distancing is impossible.

It's also plausible that released detainees could face further criminalization, should they be picked up for vagrancy. We must demand that ICE provide all detainees with vaccine access and coordinate their release with safety as the top priority.

Louisiana: a detention epicenter

Currently, more migrants are detained in Louisiana than in any other state besides Texas. As of July 8, there were 2,347 detainees, according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse.

The boom in the state's immigrant detention industry came when the Trump administration ramped up detentions across the country. After some state criminal justice reform legislation in 2017, there was a modest decrease in the number of inmates. But with the profit motive still in place, Louisiana sheriffs and mayors have made deals with ICE, bringing in new streams of federal money.

Private prison corporations are especially benefitting. For example, the LaSalle immigration detention facility near Jena, La., has a capacity of 1,160 inmates. LaSalle is owned by GEO Group, Inc., a publicly traded real-estate investment trust, operating in multiple countries. GEO's revenue in 2019 was \$2.5 billion, with \$4.3 billion in total assets.

Racism and the capitalists' drive for profit are at the heart of this cruel system, which workers of all nationalities should oppose. [📌](#)

Reparations Now!

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Barron described how only Charleston, S.C., was more dependent on enslaved Africans than New York City. The city once operated a municipal slave market on Wall Street.

State senators and assembly members came to join Charles Barron in demanding this reparations bill be passed. They included state senators Jabari Brisport and Robert Jackson, and assembly members Khaleel Anderson and Stefani Zinerman.

Senator Jabari Brisport declared the bill “400 years overdue.” Brisport had been at Charlottesville, Va., in 2017 to protest the fascist mobilization.

Hawk Newsom, a leader of Black Lives Matter in New York, declared that “the biggest terrorists are the white capitalists.” Newsome emphasized that the rally was being held on sacred ground.

That didn't stop the National Park Service from initially locking the gate to the burial grounds. It was only because people demanded entrance to the public monument that the gate was finally opened.

New York City Council Member Inez Barron described her efforts in motivating the council to support the reparations bill in the state capital. A member of Operation POWER, a militant community group based in the East New York section of Brooklyn, demanded the reparations bill be passed.

People were urged to contact New York State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins to urge that reparations bill S.7215 be passed by the legislative body. Her district phone number is (914) 423-4031, while her Albany number is (518) 455-2715. Stewart-Cousins can also be reached by email at scousins@nysenate.gov.

Reparations now! [📌](#)

Stop killing workers with heat!

By Stephen Millies

There's nothing natural about the heat waves and massive forest fires scorching the earth. Capitalist climate change is unnatural.

Record high temperatures in the western United States and Canada are matched by temperatures of 100 degrees Fahrenheit in Siberia.

Yet millions of workers are forced to work in these dangerous conditions. Among them was Oregon farmworker, Sebastian Francisco Perez, who collapsed and died on June 26, one day after his 38th birthday. He had been working in temperatures above 100 F.

Sebastian Perez came from the Guatemalan town of Ixcán to put food on our tables. Bigots want us to hate immigrants who are the majority of farmworkers.

California farmworkers have to work in 114-degree heat. The Golden State is one of only four states that have any regulations to protect workers from heatstroke. The other states are Minnesota, Washington and Oregon.

California requires bosses to provide workers with one quart of fresh water every hour. That didn't prevent Maria Isabel Vasquez Jimenez from dying in 95-degree heat in 2008. The 17-year-old was working on the grape harvest.

No heat safety regulations

Forty-six states don't have any regulations to protect workers from heat death and injury. Neither does the federal government's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

That's despite the Center for Disease Control's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health requesting OSHA to do so in 1975. That was 46 years and nine U.S. presidents ago.

Government figures show 815 workers dying from heat between 1992 and 2017. Over 70,000 were injured. The real numbers are far higher.

Construction workers accounted for 36% of these heat deaths, six times their percentage of the workforce. But it isn't just workers who work outside who can die.

Millions of warehouse workers also suffer from extreme heat. During a 2011 heat wave, Amazon workers at the Breinigsville distribution center near Allentown, Pa., were pushed to meet production quotas.

Instead of opening loading dock doors to help ventilate the facility, supervisors kept them locked because they were worried about theft. Employee health was less important.

Amazon instead stationed ambulances outside with paramedics who would whisk away workers who had collapsed from the heat.



Organize against death

There's nothing new about the rich driving workers to death in hot weather. Enslaved Africans had to work from "no see" in the morning to "no see" at night no matter what the weather was.

The reason why OSHA hasn't been allowed to issue any rules to protect workers from extreme heat is that it would cut into capitalists' profits. Treating Amazon workers humanely could cost Amazon big boss Jeff Bezos some of his \$200 billion stash. He might not be able to go on a space rocket again.

Even if the feds issued safety rules to protect workers from heat death and injury, who's going to enforce them? In 2019 there was only one full-time OSHA employee per 88,977

workers. Most workplaces never see an OSHA inspector for years.

Fox News wants us to get mad at anyone calling to defund the trigger-happy, club-swinging, choke-holding police. OSHA and other safety agencies have been defunded for years.

In 2016, New York City cops issued 90,600 summons to people for allegedly slaking their thirst with a cold beer or some other liquid refreshment. How about some "law and order" to keep capitalists from cooking workers to death?

Unions are what will really protect workers at Amazon and every business from injury and death. It's only unions that will prevent workers from being fired for refusing to work in dangerous conditions.

Working and poor people die from the heat off the job, too. At least 739 people died from a 1995 heat wave in Chicago.

Workers can die on the job just because they're not able to cool themselves during the night. Children and seniors are the greatest victims of heat waves like the one in Chicago.

With capitalism cooking the earth, air conditioning is more than ever a human right. Millions of families need free air conditioners and cheap electricity to operate them.

If the people are willing to fight for it, it can be won. 📌

Frito-Lay workers win strike against 'suicide shifts'

By Scott Scheffer

Workers at the Frito-Lay factory in Topeka, Kansas, held their ground and won a favorable union contract after a solid three-week walkout. Frito-Lay is owned by PepsiCo and operates 30 other manufacturing centers throughout the country. The company made \$4.2 billion last year.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, to meet rising demand, instead of hiring more workers and paying decent wages, the bosses were imposing 12-hour shifts, separated by only 12 hours off, 7 days a week.

Lawsuits for racial discrimination, first in June 2020 and again in February 2021, pointed to the company passing over Black employees for promotions, and giving Black employees less training and more demanding jobs. The plant's workforce is represented by Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 218.

By early July, after nine months of negotiations hadn't yielded a fair offer for a new contract, workers' frustrations were coming to a head. The punishing shifts and 84-hour workweeks were the straw that broke the camel's back, but stagnant wages, speedups, and unsafe working conditions were also a major factor in the struggle.

Two workers died on the job

One of the striking workers, Cherie Renfro, wrote an opinion piece in a Topeka newspaper during the walkout that revealed that two workers

have died under the harsh conditions being imposed. At the time of one of the deaths, the man collapsed while working and the bosses didn't even stop the production line. They had workers move the body so that a co-worker could stand in for him and production never stopped.

The company denies that it happened, but her account is backed up by co-worker and union steward Mark McCarter, who told Vice News, "I can tell you that many people have had heart attacks in the heat at Frito-Lay since I've been here. One guy died a few years ago and the company had people pick him up, move him over to the side, and put another person in his spot without shutting the business down for two seconds. It seems like I go to one funeral a year for someone who's had a heart attack at work or someone who went home to their barn and shot themselves in the head or hung themselves."

Workers also have complained about fire hazards because boxes are packed and stacked up without stopping. People have been working fast out of fear of retaliation, and exits are often blocked up by stacks of boxes.

Although Kansas is less unionized than the national average at less than 9%, Topeka is a union city. A full 26% of workers there are members of unions—well over double the national rate of 10.8%.

The membership at the Frito-Lay plant voted down an offer on July 3, when bosses offered wage increases that for many workers would have been less than 50 cents an hour. In

this unionized city, as prices are increasing and as workers had been working throughout the pandemic and risking their health without even receiving hazard pay, the 50 cents per hour offer was insulting.

In several other unionized workplaces in Topeka, workers have won annual cost-of-living increases of 77 cents per hour, in addition to regular wage increases fought for and won in contract negotiations. The offer was in fact voted down because the company was trying to get away without adequately addressing the grueling "suicide shifts" as workers called them.

But the company's bargaining team still tried to paint a picture of a generous offer being rejected by irresponsible union officers. They pushed the idea that they have a labor shortage, clinging to the corporate line that the Federal Unemployment Supplement established under the CARES Act was erasing incentive for the unemployed to work.

Frito-Lay's practice of Amazon-style hyper exploitation shows their difficulty maintaining a workforce is self-inflicted. Union steward McCarter told the Topeka Capital-Journal, "The problem is they hire (new people) and then work them 12 hours a day, seven days a week, and after about a week of that, they go, 'Oh no' and don't show up."

Picket line solidarity

As pitiful as their July 3 offer was, Frito-Lay bosses still sulked and



walked away from the bargaining table after it was rejected. That's when the workers at the Topeka plant hit the bricks.

When the walkout happened the bosses vowed to continue running the idled plant and sent a welcome message to any workers that cared to cross the picket line.

The e-mailed statement oozed with the confidence that bosses across the giant U.S. economy have developed during this long 4-decades of anti-union rampage. But 600 workers continued walking the picket line. UAW members from two different locals in Kansas City gathered money donations on Facebook, and food and supplies from small businesses and other union workers and then caravanned the hour-long drive to the picket line for a support rally.

Soon Frito-Lay snacks started to disappear from grocery store shelves. In just under three weeks the bosses blinked. The new contract bans suicide shifts and puts a cap on hours of 60 per week and at least one day off per week. Workers got a 4% raise over two years, and there will be a team of workers and management to address safety conditions in the plant. 📌

July 26th became a movement: The Cuban masses make history

By Gregory Williams

Today the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba is a museum and a school — fitting, given the Cuban Revolution's well-known commitment to education. But this was the site of a battle that radically altered the course of history on the island.

In the early morning hours of July 26, 1953, an “army” consisting of approximately 120 rebels (including two women, Melba Hernández and Haydée Santamaría) attacked the Fort Moncada Barracks, beginning the revolutionary process that would create the Cuba of today.

This group of young revolutionaries had begun organizing only a year before, meeting in an apartment in Havana. Among them was Fidel Castro, who was only 26 when those meetings began; he was barely out of law school.

Their beginnings were as humble as their goals were ambitious. They wanted to oust the U.S.-backed dictator, Fulgencio Batista, and usher in a new era of democracy and people-centered development.

At the time of the Moncada attack, a simple accounting exercise might have suggested that the revolutionaries' prospects were not great. They had already failed to bring down Batista through legal agitation, and militarily they were vastly outnumbered. Some sources claim there were up to 1,000 soldiers quartering in Moncada alone. Batista's military was supplied by the United States government.

In fact, even the revolutionaries' immediate aim of capturing supplies was only partly successful. And in the aftermath, Batista's police and military forces lashed out with unprecedented fury. They fired at civilians in the streets, adults and children included. Civil rights were suspended. Revolutionaries were arrested, executed and tortured.

Nevertheless, the regime had been exposed, and the masses were activated. By 1959 Batista would be out and the revolutionaries would be in power.

Oppression breeds resistance

Cuba is a rich, fertile land that came under Spanish colonial control beginning in the 1500s. On behalf of the rising capitalist class in Europe, the colonial forces committed genocide against the Indigenous peoples, such as the Taíno and Guanahatabey, and forced enslaved Africans to toil on plantations.

The colonial society was as rotten as that of the U.S. South. Slavery was not abolished in Cuba until 1886, 21 years after the end of the U.S. Civil War.

Oppression breeds resistance. A wave of slave rebellions swept the island in the 1840s. One of the most famous insurrectionists was Carlota Lucumí, a Yoruba woman who led an uprising at the Triumvirato sugar mill.

Later in the 19th century, Cuban people were inflamed by the revolutionary writings of José Martí, who—like Carlota Lucumí—is celebrated in Cuba to this day. They



Members of Cuba's 26th of July Movement.

fought the Spanish from 1868–1878, from 1879–1880, and from 1895–1898. Independence came in 1902.

Unfortunately, the U.S. imperialists were against Cuban independence. U.S. military occupation began during the conflicts with Spain because the long-term goal was to make Cuba a U.S. colony.

These imperial ambitions were not secret. Speaking in New Orleans in 1858, Senator Stephen A. Douglas said, “It is our destiny to have Cuba and it is folly to debate the question.”

Meanwhile, the U.S. capitalists were buying up the sugarcane and tobacco farms along with mining properties on the island (iron ore, manganese, and nickel). The imperialists forced the Platt Amendment into the Cuban constitution, making subordination official. The Cubans had run the Spanish out, but Wall Street came in.

Batista's Cuba of the 1950s was, unsurprisingly, a nightmare for the great majority; he was Washington's hand-picked stooge. The capital city of Havana was a playground for the world's rich.

Countrywide, per capita income was half that of Mississippi, the poorest state in the U.S. The average Cuban was living on 312 pesos or \$6 per week. Few rural areas had schools, and children often died early from infectious disease. Most workers were employed on the huge farms and were out of work—suffering from malnutrition and other plights—during the off season.

This was not a situation that could be tolerated. As Fidel Castro said while standing trial following the Moncada attack, “The future of the country and the solution of its problems cannot continue to depend on the selfish interests of a dozen financiers, nor on the cold calculations of profits that ten or twelve magnates draw up in their air-conditioned offices.”

Zig-zags of the revolution

The revolutionaries were forced into retreat after the events of 1953. Principal leaders like Fidel and Raúl Castro spent time in prison.

To some, this may have looked like the end, but the arc from then until the seizure of power in 1959 was one of deepening the revolution by building among the masses.

There was no straight path to victory, and no shortcuts, but victory would come.

The revolutionaries traveled the Western Hemisphere raising funds. They regrouped in Mexico and underwent serious military training (along with Argentinian Che Guevara) under 63-year-old Colonel Alberto Bayo, who had fought the fascists during the Spanish Civil War.

They made blunders, as when they nearly drowned at sea and failed to successfully carry out a campaign when returning to Cuba from Mexico.

Regardless, throughout various phases of the revolutionary process, they communicated with the people via radio broadcasts. Resistance to Batista increased throughout the population.

Sympathizers distributed radical literature, despite censorship. Workers identifying with the movement carried out strikes in urban areas. Meanwhile, the ranks of the rebel army swelled, primarily with farm laborers. July 26th had truly become a movement, incorporating the broad, democratic forces of the society and giving those forces direction.

Writing in 1994, U.S. Marxist leader Sam Marcy observed: “The Cuban Revolution came after the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia and the revolutions in China, Vietnam and Korea. The industrial development of Cuba was greatly advanced compared to some of the other areas of Latin America, despite the constraints imposed by the imperialist control of ownership—and the poverty and underdevelopment of much of the countryside [...]

“It's important to note that before the rise of the 26th of July Movement that launched the revolutionary struggle for power, Cuba had for many years had a strong Communist Party and trade unions that survived years of repression. [...] Objective and subjective conditions in Cuba had matured to the point where a strong Communist Party was possible.”

Indeed, in its archives, U.S. State Department writers soberly note: “In 1958, the labor movement was a powerful force in Cuban society. [...] Almost all sectors of the economy were organized, with union members reaching nearly one million or one in five workers.”

The objective and subjective

groundwork for revolution had been laid over a long period of time. Part of the July 26th Movement's success lay in the fact that it was able to creatively fuse with these existing forces (who had their own internal dynamics and zig-zagging development) while bringing new people into struggle.

Thus, the 1959 victory was not merely a military one, and it certainly was not a coup d'état. The July 26th organization effectively built a peoples' army that acted in concert with the broad masses. This explains why the Cuban Revolution was so profound, and has lasted to the present.

Cuba and the global class struggle

Because the Cuban Revolution occurred after the October Revolution of 1917—and because it was based on the masses—it could only succeed by building socialism.

The new government was led by a Communist Party that resulted from the fusion of forces that occurred during the fight for power. They swept away the existing state machinery. They dissolved the old military and replaced it with a revolutionary army. They did away with the big landowners, capitalists, and foreign domination, to boot. They gave land to the farmers.

They set up popular Committees in Defense of the Revolution. They advanced the interests of women and LGBTQ2S people. They routed the racist structures rooted in the colonial past. They sent fighters to aid in the anti-colonial struggles throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Cuba may be a small country, but its revolution has had global effects. The revolution has to weaken links in the chain of world imperialism.

None of this was easy. The U.S. attempted an invasion in 1961, and has used economic strangulation to try to kill the revolution ever since. The tactics have changed from administration to administration, but the goal is still to recolonize Cuba on behalf of the capitalists.

None of this has worked. Cuba remains a bulwark of socialism, despite being forced to make some concessions to capitalist markets in the long period of world revolutionary retreat, especially given the fallout from the counterrevolution in the USSR.

Cuba is a beacon for oppressed and exploited people. Cuba's medical internationalism during the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated an entirely different model of global development than the one pursued by the U.S. and its lackey states.

Cuba has survived and remained independent, 90 miles south of Florida. For all these and other reasons, we can conclude that the spirit of July 26 lives on.

And as the crises of capitalism worsen and increasing numbers of working class and oppressed people here in the belly of the beast turn to socialism, we can look to Cuba for revolutionary solidarity, as countless movements have done since 1959. 📌

Defend the Cuban Revolution!

No U.S. intervention from Cuba to Haiti

By Struggle-La Lucha

On the weekend of July 10–11, a series of counter-revolutionary provocations took place in Cuba in the form of street protests blaming the socialist government for the shortages of medical supplies, fuel and food caused by the unilateral U.S. blockade, which was tightened by Donald Trump and enforced by Joe Biden. The Cuban government has identified U.S.-funded opposition groups and media outlets as the source of these provocations.

In a televised address to the Cuban people on July 11, President Miguel Díaz-Canel denounced the destabilization attempt emanating from Washington, D.C., and Miami. He reviewed the serious problems caused by the tightening of the U.S. blockade under Trump and Biden, after the brief thaw in relations under President Obama. He urged the Cuban people to take to the streets to defend their Revolution and to continue fighting alongside people worldwide for an end to the cruel blockade.

“The streets belong to the revolutionaries,” Díaz-Canel proclaimed. In response, workers, farmers, students and members of the revolutionary armed forces held demonstrations Sunday across the island in support of the Cuban Revolution and its leadership. Many carried portraits of the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro. Earlier, President Díaz-Canel himself went to San Antonio de los Baños, a small town south of Havana where the provocations began, where he walked through the streets and held discussions with the people.

It is now apparent why President Biden’s administration hasn’t reversed Trump’s cruel intensification of the blockade, as he had promised during his election campaign. The U.S. capitalist ruling class, the bosses and bankers who call the shots for both the Republicans and Democrats, are united in their hatred of Cuba. After the retirement of former president and Communist Party leader Raul Castro earlier this year, the U.S. bosses are testing for cracks in the Cuban government and military that they can exploit to destroy the Revolution.

The hypocrisy of U.S.-funded “human rights” and “independent media” groups is blatant. They are trying to stir up anger at the Cuban government among people affected by shortages which are purely the responsibility of the U.S. government and its six-decade criminal blockade.

Despite the difficulties imposed by the blockade, Cuba has done so much in the past 18 months



to help protect not only its own people, but poor and working people around the world, from the scourge of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has sent medical brigades to dozens of countries to help combat the virus. Cuba has even developed its own very effective vaccines — but lacks the necessary syringes to administer doses to the people because of the cruel blockade.

Nor is it a coincidence that this is happening just days after the assassination of the discredited U.S. puppet president of Haiti, Jovenel Moïse, in a sophisticated operation carried out by U.S. and Colombian mercenaries. The new acting leaders of Haiti have already called for the intervention of U.S. troops. A U.S. occupation of Haiti could serve as the launching pad for an invasion of Cuba.

The U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, site of ongoing “War on Terror” torture of prisoners, is on illegally-occupied Cuban territory. This is a cancerous tumor that threatens not only Cuba but Haiti and all of the Caribbean.

The U.S. rulers have never forgiven the people of Haiti for carrying out the first successful slave revolution. Likewise, they’ve never forgiven the Cuban people for carrying out the first socialist revolution in the Western hemisphere right under their noses — and successfully defending it for over 62 years.

But significantly, this attack also comes at a time when the U.S. blockade is more unpopular than ever. More and more people in the U.S. and around the world have been coming out in the streets to denounce the blockade with monthly caravans. Cuban American opponents of the blockade are currently participating in a 1,300-mile protest walk to Washington, D.C. Dozens of cities and labor councils have adopted resolutions calling for an end to the blockade and medical cooperation with Cuba. Solidarity groups in many countries are collecting #Syringes4Cuba — including in the U.S., where \$500,000 has been raised so far.

And, on June 23, 184 countries in the United Nations General Assembly once again supported Cuba’s resolution against the blockade. Only the U.S. and its tool Israel voted against it.

Now is the time for every worker, every progressive person, every revolutionary, to lift their voice and come to the defense of Cuba, which has done so much to give the world health, solidarity and hope for a humane future.

U.S. hands off Cuba! No intervention in Cuba or Haiti! End the blockade now!

Support the international solidarity campaign to bring Cuba tens of millions of medical syringes by visiting Ghpartners.org/syringes4Cuba.

Defending Cuba in New York City

By Stephen Millies

Two hundred people came to Manhattan’s Union Square on July 15 to defend the Cuban Revolution. They rejected the lies of the big business media that’s attacking socialist Cuba.

The rally was called by the Young Communist League and supported by many different organizations. Among them were the New York-New Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition; the December 12th Movement; the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO): Vencemos Brigade, The People’s Forum; and the Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network.

Chants of “Cuba sí, bloqueo no!” filled the park. A contingent of Brazilians came to support Cuba.

Everyone pointed to the 62-year-long criminal blockade of Cuba by the U.S. as the source of the socialist country’s shortages. They denounced any intervention in Cuba or Haiti.

Justine Medina, co-chair of New York’s Young Communist League, described how her parents emigrated from Cuba. She said they’re not socialists but they are against the U.S. blockade of Cuba.

Maicol Lynch and Cameron Orr also spoke from the YCL. Lynch denounced the U.S. economic sanctions on Iran, Syria, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. Like the sanctions on Cuba, they are cruel and inhuman.

Gail Walker, executive director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), spoke. She and her late father, the Rev. Lucius Walker, have broken the blockade many times with the Pastors for Peace caravans.

“When Africa called, Cuba answered,” was a chant started by members of the December 12th Movement. Thousands of Cuban soldiers gave their lives alongside their African comrades in helping to defeat the Nazi armies of apartheid South Africa.



Manolo De Los Santos, co-executive director of The People’s Forum, raised the campaign to donate syringes to Cuba. Although Cuba has developed its own effective vaccines against the coronavirus, the country is short of syringes. All the more reason to stop the blockade.

Monica Cruz from the Party for Socialism and Liberation refuted many of the media lies about Cuba. The TV networks don’t tell their viewers that infant mortality rates

in socialist Cuba are lower than in the capitalist U.S.

Poor and working people in the United States are also hurt by the blockade of Cuba. Two former co-workers of this writer died of meningitis.

Thirty years ago Cuban scientists developed a vaccine against meningitis. But it’s not allowed to be used in the U.S. because of the blockade.

Listen up, Joe Biden: Hands off Cuba! Stop the blockade!

Answering U.S. media lies about Cuba

By Scott Scheffer

In the wake of U.S. sabotage of the Cuban economy and efforts by the CIA's National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to build counter-revolutionary sentiment, the anti-imperialist and socialist movement needs to be strong and united, and not be weakened by the web of lies being spun by U.S. media and politicians.

Many corporate media aligned with the Democratic Party did "fact-checking" to support their own imperialist and disingenuous narrative during the torrent of lies that emanated from the Trump administration on many issues. To many, they seemed momentarily to be the defenders of democracy and truth.

Now the curtain is lifted. There is not a shade of difference between the two capitalist parties in their vicious attacks on — and lies about — Cuba. It is up to working-class activists and Cuba's supporters to do the real fact-checking.

- USA Today, in what passes for journalism, is playing semantics over U.S. trade sanctions by claiming it isn't a total embargo and is not to blame for Cuba's problems.

Fact: The U.S. trade embargo is causing all of the hardship in Cuba.

Six decades ago, as soon as it was clear that Cuba was beginning the process of building socialism, the U.S. imposed sanctions. Initially all but food and medicine were blocked, and at times over the years, food and medicine were also formally included.

Over the decades, adjustments have been made that sometimes brought some relief from the terrible impact of the blockade. But overall, the restrictions have been tightened. The Torricelli Act of 1992, the Helms-Burton Act of 1996, and most recently Donald Trump's addition of 243 additional sanctions, have all been big escalations that added to Cuba's difficulties conducting trade.

When U.S. business journals deny that the embargo is a total blockade, they are only technically right. Yes, Cuba is able to trade on the global market to a limited extent. But even

U.S. allies are punished for doing any business with Cuba, and the effects are even worse than the laws dictate. The sanctions definitely impact the importation of food, medicine and medical supplies, and more.

A 1997 study by the American Association for World Health (AAWH) and a 1996 article in *The Lancet* showed that even though the Torricelli Act "was amended to allow ... food and medicines into the country, ... the act's enforcement significantly restricted the accessibility of both within Cuba."

Trade sanctions as a favored weapon of U.S. imperialism were in a sense outed by Henry Kissinger's call to "make the economy scream" to bring down Chilean President Salvador Allende in the early 1970s. But over a decade earlier, Roy Rubottom, a U.S. State Department official during the Eisenhower administration, issued a memorandum recommending "the denial of money and supplies to Cuba ...to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow the government."

Since then, every U.S. president has tried to make this vile vision a reality — and failed. But the embargo has caused terrible suffering and hardship for 11 million Cuban people.

- The U.S. media has nearly unanimously portrayed the July 2021 riots as "grassroots" and "spontaneous" protests.

Fact: The website for the National Endowment for Democracy, a CIA front, reveals how it spent several million dollars in its latest budget to fund various groups operating inside Cuba — all part of a multi-pronged strategy to try to fracture Cuba's socialist solidarity.

As the effects of the U.S. blockade deepened the hardship of the pandemic, and the shortages of food and medicine in Cuba worsened, a clandestine digital attack from operatives in Miami started to take shape. Twitter bots responded to every post

that expressed anything about the hardships by prodding posters to link up with "SOS Cuba," the chosen CIA vehicle for this latest attempt at regime change.

During the second week of July, Twitter accounts were overwhelmed with messages aimed at turning legitimate dissatisfaction caused by the embargo into counterrevolutionary sentiment and violent demonstrations. The July 11 protests that the media claims took place in 40 places across the island were the result of a methodical — and well-funded — campaign by U.S. intelligence agencies.

- Hyperbolic charges that Cuban people have been detained, tortured and disappeared have permeated the airwaves and print media in the U.S.

Fact: What actually happened in Cuba were arrests in response to violent attacks on Cuban police, acts of arson and vandalism. Detainees were charged and will have trials, and some have already been released. No one in Cuba was "disappeared."

The term 'disappeared' originated in reference to a particular episode in history and became part of anti-imperialist terminology. It refers to Argentina's 1970s "Dirty War," when the brutal U.S.-backed right-wing dictatorship hunted down and abducted 30,000 socialist and progressive activists who were never heard from again. Over the years, evidence made clear that many victims were thrown into the ocean from helicopters.

Peddlers of counterrevolutionary anti-Cuba hatred now want to hijack the term. But since the end of the U.S.-backed Batista government, no one in Cuba has been "disappeared." The only torture that takes place in Cuba is at Guantanamo, the tip of the island illegally held by the U.S. military, where waterboarding and other methods of torture took place in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack on

the World Trade Center, and where some prisoners are still unlawfully detained 20 years later.

The response to this U.S. attempt to breed chaos and overturn the Cuban people's revolution has also been falsely compared to the racist repression of Black Lives Matter protests in the U.S.

Cuba has accomplished amazing things in spite of six decades of U.S. aggression. From the early days of the Cuban Revolution, it became clear that literacy, health care, international solidarity and elimination of poverty were the priorities of Cuba's leadership and the Cuban people.

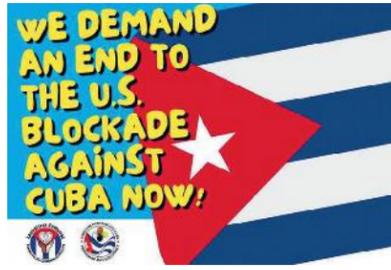
In a blatant and current example of how the U.S. is preventing progress, consider the COVID-19 pandemic. Cuba's five vaccines can help to inoculate not only its own population, but much of Latin America and Africa. That is the stated intent of Cuba's medical and scientific professionals. But the blockade prevents the import of basic materials and medical supplies that are needed to make this mission a reality.

Instead of being able to trade on the world market, Cuba's success may depend on efforts by the organization Global Health Partners. The group has sent six million badly-needed syringes to help Cuba meet its goal and is fundraising to send more. Readers can donate to the campaign by visiting the Syringes for Cuba website.

Further solidarity is needed in the form of street actions, education and all manner of fighting back against Joe Biden's continuation and worsening of the embargo and other forms of counter-revolutionary aggression.

A series of monthly car caravans during 2021 in as many as 50 cities internationally has pushed for an end to the blockade. During July, a group of Cuban Americans opposed to the blockade walked from Miami to Washington, D.C., as a way to publicize their opposition, and were greeted by hundreds of Cuba supporters at the White House on July 25.

All out to defend Cuba and turn back U.S. attacks! 🇨🇺



Response to anti-Cuba attacks by 'socialist' group

The Freedom Socialist Party statement, "FSP demands an end to the U.S. blockade and intervention against Cuba while supporting the right of Cubans to protest for survival needs," is beyond irresponsible. If you need information that proves that what the U.S. is saying about repression occurring in Cuba is false, there is plenty to be had.

The Cuban government has said that there are some who are protesting as a result of the shortages (which are solely due to the U.S. blockade) and have legitimate concerns. The response to the protests of 1,000 people July 11 has been unprecedented in terms of dialogue with the protesters and lack of militarized or judicial response.

Your statement overall, although more sophisticated than the first version (now removed from your website), uses reports that have been contradicted with evidence showing them as outright lies or miss-

ing essential information for proper context — but the choice is made to believe the narrative that fits your conjecture about the Cuban leadership's supposed opportunism, corruption and "top down approach," which so conveniently dovetails with U.S. imperialist propaganda.

Cuba's exemplary achievements against COVID-19 are also ignored. In spite of the lack of resources due to the U.S. blockade, Cuba developed effective treatments to prevent much of the spread of the virus, in addition to coming up with its own vaccines and sending doctors throughout Africa, Latin America and Europe to help those most vulnerable fight the virus. Cuba has carried out this international solidarity and exemplary work to minimize deaths from the virus despite the essential resources — like energy needed for electricity production, drug supplies and other vital resources — that were sacrificed to

do this. This is not even mentioned.

Cuba, a country the same size as Los Angeles County, has had a little over 2,000 deaths from COVID-19, while Los Angeles now has nearly 25,000 — and LA, like the U.S., has far more resources than Cuba since it hasn't been under a crushing blockade for 60 years and derives its wealth from the misery of other nations.

And you ignore the over 100,000 Cubans who came out in support of the socialist government on July 17 — since that also undermines your narrative, which attempts to legitimize the lie that those who are protesting the Cuban government are possibly a majority in Cuba.

Your article spits in the face of the Cuban nurses, doctors, scientists and other health workers who literally sacrifice their lives under unbearable conditions in heroic work against the pandemic. You choose to ignore their labor and the social-

ist government's superior handling of the crisis despite having little to work with. Instead, your statement gives the impression that the Cuban government is to blame for the pandemic's effects on Cuba.

You ignore the articles even from capitalist sources, like the Reuters piece "Fake news muddies online waters during Cuba protests," admitting that many of the videos and photos of mass protests were fake or misattributed. Your organization arrogantly ignores the research of many progressive Cuban Americans, Cuba solidarity activists and organizations that have traveled to Cuba, and the information provided by the National Network On Cuba.

Just because something is claimed, doesn't make allegations against Cuba or Venezuela or Syria or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or any target of U.S. imperialism

Continued on page 11

Haiti and Cuba—two great revolutions

By Stephen Millies

The Haitian and Cuban revolutions are two of the greatest events in world history. Both social upheavals inspired oppressed peoples and terrified their oppressors.

The Haitian Revolution was the only successful slave revolution in history. Every slave master from Texas to Maryland feared enslaved Africans rising up and breaking their chains, like they did in Haiti.

Haiti gave crucial aid to the liberator Simón Bolívar, who defeated Spanish colonialism in much of South America.

Since 1959, Wall Street's nightmare has been all of Latin America becoming "another Cuba." Two thousand Cuban soldiers died fighting alongside their African comrades in defeating the Nazi armies of apartheid South Africa.

The initial assistance to newly independent Angola was called "Operation Carlota." It was named after an enslaved African woman who led a Cuban revolt against Spanish colonial rule. After being captured she was torn apart by horses.

Less than two years after the apartheid invaders were finally defeated at the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola, Nelson Mandela walked out of prison on Feb. 11, 1990.

Cuba and Haiti are neighbors. The distance between them is less than a hundred miles across the Caribbean Windward Passage.

While the Haitian Revolution began in 1791, the Cuban revolutionaries entered Havana in 1959. This historical distance of more than 160 years explains their different outcomes.

No French Revolution without Haiti

The French Revolution was a capitalist revolution. But it was poor people in both France and Haiti who pushed it forward. The storming of the Bastille prison in Paris on July 14, 1789, has never been forgotten.

Over two million poor people are jailed in U.S. Bastilles. These need to be torn down and the prisoners reunited with their families.

In the late 1700s, Haiti was the richest colony in the world. While today Big Oil calls the shots in the United States, it was sugar along with stealing and selling Africans that was central to the rise of European capitalism. Africans were their capital.

It was the profits from their sugar plantations in Haiti, Guadeloupe and Martinique that emboldened French capitalists to challenge King Louis and the rest of the feudal aristocracy. "Nearly all the industries which developed in France during the eighteenth century had their origin in goods or commodities destined either for the coast of Guinea or for America," wrote C.L.R. James in "The Black Jacobins."

Over 60 percent of French overseas trade was with Haiti. Its maritime trade with Haiti employed 24,000 French sailors on 750 ships.

French shipowners and other capitalists grew rich by working Africans to death. The average life expectancy of Africans in Haiti was just 21 years.

These conditions led to Dutty Boukman starting a revolt in August 1791 that burned 1,800 plantations.

Haiti helped shield the French Revolution from foreign invasion.

Haitians defeated a British army trying to conquer Haiti. Because the redcoats were being vanquished in Haiti, they couldn't march on Paris.

The French revolutionaries abolished slavery on Feb. 4, 1794. This act simply confirmed what Haitian people had already won on the ground under the leadership of Toussaint Louverture.

It also reflected the feelings of the French poor. They hated the "aristocracy of the skin," the white slave masters who worked Black people to death. Peasants and other French working people boycotted coffee because it was grown by enslaved Africans.

But beginning in July 1794, the French Revolution was thrown back. Its leaders were sent to the guillotine.

Napoleon kidnapped Toussaint Louverture and let him die in a cold prison cell. The French dictator sent an army to try to restore slavery in Haiti. It was defeated with 24,000 out of 34,000 soldiers having perished.

Haiti against the capitalist world

Jean-Jacques Dessalines declared Haiti's independence on Jan. 1, 1804. But the world capitalist class never forgave Haiti for its revolution. The two centuries of revenge that followed made Haiti poor.

The United States refused to recognize Haiti until after the U.S. Civil War had started, in 1862. The restored Bourbon monarchy in France agreed to diplomatic relations and trade with Haiti in 1825.

The French government did so on the condition that Haiti pay reparations to the defeated slave masters! The last payment on this reverse blood transfusion wasn't made until 1947.

In order to pay off this blood money, Haitians were forced to chop down trees. Floods resulted from the hills becoming bare.

When Haiti's elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide righteously demanded this money back — which with interest amounted to \$21 billion — he was soon overthrown on Feb. 29, 2004.

The United States has continuously intervened in Haiti for more than a century. U.S. Marines invaded the country in 1915 and stayed there until 1934.

A half-million dollars of gold was stolen from Haiti's central bank by U.S. soldiers and given to New York's National City Bank, now named Citibank. A U.S. marine was given the medal of honor for assassinating Haitian resistance leader Charlemagne Peralte.

It was the CIA that helped prop up the dictatorships of "Papa Doc" François Duvalier and his son "Baby Doc" from 1957 to 1986.

Haiti's revolution occurred as capitalism was on the rise. British textile factories, which were the starting point of the industrial revolution, depended on cotton grown by enslaved Africans in the U.S.

By the 1840's, British capitalists invaded China to sell opium. The 1884-85 Berlin conference of European colonialists carved up Africa. Belgian King Leopold killed between 8 and 15 million Africans in Congo for rubber profits.

Black people in the United States played a crucial role in defeating the slave owners' confederacy in the Civil War. After a brief springtime of

freedom, Black people were pushed back by Ku Klux Klan terror that overthrew the Reconstruction governments. Haiti was all alone.

Socialist solidarity with Cuba

In contrast, when the Cuban Revolution triumphed on Jan. 1, 1959—155 years after Haiti declared its independence—there was a constellation of socialist countries that embraced it. The Cuban Revolution came four decades after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

One-third of humanity lived under these peoples' governments stretching from East Germany to Vietnam. Che Guevara was welcomed in both the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

That doesn't mean the Cuban people had it easy. Over 3,000 Cubans were killed by terrorist attacks instigated by the CIA.

George Herbert Walker Bush was CIA director when 73 people were murdered on Cubana de Aviación Flight 455. They were killed on Oct. 6, 1976, by a bomb placed by Bush's pal Luis Posada Carriles. It was revenge for Cuba helping to fight apartheid South Africa and the CIA in Angola.

For 60 years the U.S. has enforced an economic blockade that tries to strangle Cuba. It has cost the country at least \$144 billion or \$13,000 per person.

The bankers were furious that the Cuban people took back their sugar mills, railroads and electric utilities from U.S. financiers. Of the \$12 billion in U.S. foreign investments from Latin America in 1959, \$2 billion were in Cuba. That's worth nine times as much in today's money.

As Fidel Castro said after the CIA's attempted invasion at Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs): "This is what they cannot forgive: the fact that we are here right under their very noses. And that we have carried out a socialist revolution right under the nose of the United States!"

After 80 percent of Cuban doctors left the country, the socialist republic of Czechoslovakia helped train a new generation of physicians for Cuba.

The thousands of Cuban doctors who save lives around the world are also a legacy of the labor donated by Slovak, Czech, Hungarian and Roma workers. So are the 300,000 people in Central America who had their sight saved or restored by Cuban health workers in "Operation Miracle."

The Soviet Union went to the brink of nuclear war in October 1962 to defend Cuba during the "missile crisis." Vital economic assistance was given by the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Just the fact that these socialist countries conducted fair and equitable trade with Cuba served as a counterweight to the U.S. economic blockade.

Cuba's solidarity with the world

It's been 30 years since the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe were overthrown. This immense tragedy is a greater defeat than Reconstruction's overthrow in the U.S. and more dangerous than Hitler's crushing of the German working class.

Cuba lost two-thirds of its trade. So how has Cuba survived?

Fidel Castro told the Cuban peo-

ple that an economic storm had arrived. The historical leader of the Cuban Revolution called it a "special period."

The Cuban people endured shortages, but because of socialist economic planning not a single school or hospital was closed. Funding was continued on medical research.

While there are 111,000 homeless school children in New York City—the capital of capitalism—there are no homeless children in Cuba.

The Cuban people have never forgotten the aid given to their revolution by the Soviet people. Thousands of Ukrainian children who were victims of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster have been treated free of charge in Cuban hospitals.

Towards the end of the initial special period in 1999, Cuba opened the Latin American School of Medicine. Tens of thousands of doctors from around the world have been trained there for free.

Among them are hundreds of doctors who are helping poor people in the United States. The Cuban people are continuing this aid despite new economic sanctions imposed by Trump and continued by Biden.

The courage of Cuba and Haiti

The Cuban Revolution is the continuation of centuries of struggle. Cuba's economy, like Haiti's, was based on sugar. Revolts of enslaved Africans broke out, including the 1825 uprising in Matanzas and Carlota's rebellion in 1844.

Hundreds of thousands of Cubans died during two liberation wars from 1868 to 1878 and 1895 to 1898. It was only because of these sacrifices that Spain was forced to abolish slavery in 1886.

Cuba's national hero, José Martí, died in battle on May 19, 1895. May 19 is also the birthday of Ho Chi Minh and Malcolm X.

Just on the brink of Cuba's victory, the U.S. declared war on Spain. Wall Street turned Cuba into a virtual colony.

The U.S. Navy seized part of Guantánamo. Hundreds of detainees have been tortured there since 2001 while the U.S. State Department and corporate media claim the Cuban government violates human rights.

Twenty thousand Cubans were murdered by the U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista in the 1950s. Cuban revolutionaries, led by Fidel Castro, overthrew Batista in a guerrilla war.

The Cuban Revolution has been able to march forward since 1959 despite being just 90 miles from the United States. The first reason is the courage of the Cuban people and the leadership of Cuba's Communist Party.

Cuba was also helped by the rising struggles of Black people in the United States. Even the Pentagon brass worried that if they invaded Cuba, Black troops might rebel.

The solidarity of socialist Cuba includes giving asylum to Assata Shakur and many other Black revolutionaries. Malcolm X met with Fidel Castro in 1960 at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem.

Haiti deserves reparations and a new revolution. Both Haiti and Cuba have done so much for workers and oppressed peoples around the world. U.S. hands off Haiti and Cuba! 🇵🇸

Working class perspective China's tech regulations

By Gregory E. Williams

Bourgeois pundits are alarmed by the Chinese government's latest regulatory changes. A Wall Street Journal headline is typical: "China's corporate crackdown is just getting started. Signs point to more tumult ahead."

The apocalyptic language may be warranted for certain wealthy investors. But what might these changes mean for the deeply intertwined working classes of China and the U.S.?

There's no indication of a radical change in direction in the official pronouncements, which say that the Communist Party of China (CPC) is leading the country's development and won't allow the billionaires to control the economy. The state can intervene to address problems like inequality and to prevent the economic chaos tolerated by capitalist leaders.

Recent changes are understandable if the socialist foundations of the economy remain intact. Socialist transition is still underway, though threatened from all sides.

Furthermore, China is integrated into the global capitalist economy, the crises of which are themselves exerting pressure on Chinese leaders to shore up the basic socialist framework. That's how China rebounded from the 2007-2009 financial crisis and how it's tackling COVID-19.

Because U.S. and Chinese workers are on the same side of the global class barricades, in mortal combat with the capitalist class, we must oppose Washington's maneuvers to destroy China's socialist system. If the country's socialist foundations are undermined further, this will strengthen the hand of capitalists (particularly in the U.S.), and hurt the workers' struggle everywhere; consider, for example, China's critical partnerships with sanctioned coun-

tries like Iran and Cuba.

Insights from a capitalist

Ray Dalio chairs the world's largest hedge fund, Bridgewater Associates, and has operated in China for 36 years. His view is guarded and sober. He said: "The [Chinese] state runs capitalism to serve the interests of most people and [...] policymakers won't let the sensitivities of those in the capital markets and rich capitalists stand in the way of doing what they believe is best for the most people of the country. Rather, those in the capital markets and capitalists have to understand their subordinate places in the system or they will suffer the consequences of their mistakes. For example, they need to not mistake their having riches for having power for determining how things will go."

He's offering advice to concerned investors. But more to the point, his observation lines up with what the CPC says it's doing, that is, trying to build a more prosperous and equal society.

Social problems prompt policy changes

The foundations of socialism were laid in the Mao period, through various development campaigns—based on politically conscious mass mobilization—and consolidated by the Cultural Revolution. Since 1981, Chinese socialism has brought 853 million people out of poverty. Nevertheless, integration into the global capitalist economy has generated social problems such as rising inequality, jeopardizing all revolutionary gains. Workers' struggles have prompted the new regulations, particularly in three important areas:



Meituan delivery drivers in Beijing.

Gig economy

Globally, the gig economy has emerged as a model for corporations seeking to avoid unions and paying for benefits. As elsewhere, Chinese workers have been impacted.

In March, the CPC-affiliated All-China Federation of Trade Unions proposed new protections for the country's 200 million gig workers, while announcing a gig worker unionization drive.

In July, the State Administration for Market Regulation and other administrative departments announced new rules for food delivery app companies like Meituan and Alibaba's Ele.me., requiring the platforms to provide insurance, guarantee riders' income above minimum pay and relax delivery deadlines.

Private tutoring

New regulations on the \$120 billion private tutoring industry can be seen in a similar light. Now, all organizations offering tutoring on the core school curriculum must register as nonprofits. New licenses will not be issued. In 2016, more than 75% of students ages 6-18 were receiving these services. The regulations are meant to help financially burdened families, while lowering student stress by prohibiting tutoring on weekends and school holidays.

From crypto to state-run e-currency

The Communist Party of China decided decades ago to allow some capitalism to function as a stimulus to its economic development. But the party's control over the basic underpinnings of the economy including the financial banking system has allowed development to proceed for the most part in a planned socialist way. Crucially, state control of finance is also a pillar of China's sovereignty, to be contrasted, for example, with the subordinate status of Greece, which the EU forced to accept devastating austerity measures.

But, again, there are tremendous pressures on China to privatize its financial system. This comes from its own bourgeoisie as well as from without.

The rise of cryptocurrencies has undermined state control, promoting dangerous speculation, tax evasion and money laundering. The National Internet Finance Association of China, the China Banking Association and the Payment and Clearing Association of China, issued a joint statement, saying cryptocurrencies are "seriously infringing on the safety of people's property and disrupting the normal economic and financial order." Hence the new rules prohibiting banks and payment firms from offering cryptocurrency services. The Ministry of Public Security has also increased efforts to stop money laundering.

Meanwhile, China is leading the way in digital currency. The Central Bank launched the electronic yuan in four cities as part of a pilot program in 2020. The electronic Yuan is legal tender, with the same standing as paper money. Since 2020, testing has expanded in many areas, the hope being that the electronic currency will give the government better control over the financial system. [E]

Weather & capitalism

Continued from page 1

All told, the fires have burned 1.3 million acres — an area larger than Los Angeles, New York City and Chicago combined. The smoke has journeyed cross-country to the East Coast, prompting air quality warnings along the northern part of the Eastern Seaboard and as far inland as central Virginia.

In addition to California, Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, the heatwaves hit Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho.

Heat deadly for agricultural workers

Thirty-eight-year-old Sebastián Francisco Pérez from Guatemala was working at an Oregon tree farm on June 26 when he collapsed and died from the heat. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 53 agricultural workers died from heat nationwide in 2019, but this was the first in Oregon directly attributable to heat.

Only four states have laws in place to protect farmworkers. Oregon became the third after the death of Sebastián. Washington State quickly followed with some emergency measures. Some other states merely have "guidelines."

Irene Ruiz, an environmental justice organizer from Boise, Idaho, messaged Struggle-La Lucha about the heightened danger to agricultural workers during heatwaves. "Guidelines are not enough. These are the people who put food on our tables and are the most affected and in danger of extreme heat."

Imperialism and global warming

Recent decades have seen extreme weather events become more frequent and much more severe than previous periods. Experts point to that quickening pace and increasing severity as caused directly by global warming, even though they usually avoid blaming global warming for specific weather events.

The opposing narrative, motivated by energy profiteers, is that the warming of the atmosphere during this period is a natural cycle, that it has happened before over the millennia, and that it will pass.

But a scientific paper published in the journal *Nature* on July 28 referenced two large, decades-long studies of the Earth's "energy balance" — the amount of the sun's energy entering Earth's atmosphere compared to the amount of energy reflected back out into space. Both

studies confirm that greenhouse gases are keeping the sun's energy trapped in our atmosphere.

The paper asserts that there is less than a 1% chance that the rise in global temperatures and all of its frightening consequences are a natural occurrence.

Greenhouse gases began to heat the atmosphere with the dawn of industrial capitalism in the latter part of the 19th century. That much is readily admitted in the capitalist press these days. What isn't written about enough is the role of imperialist domination in this crisis for humanity.

The machinery of war is the greatest consumer of oil, and like a dog chasing its tail, pollutes the world while fighting to control oil markets. If the U.S. military machine were to be ranked in the list of countries that indicates how much they contribute to pollutants that heat the atmosphere, the list would show it ahead of 46 countries.

Estimates of the cost of stopping global warming vary from \$300 billion to Forbes Magazine's price tag of \$50 trillion. Underdevelopment and poverty have been imposed on much of the world by imperialist military force and economic leverage for more than a century. The stolen wealth is now concentrated in the hands of the tiny group of billionaires that have profited immensely

— as a class — from the control of oil markets. That stolen wealth is key to mitigating climate change.

The world is being told to put its faith in international agreements to solve the crisis. The Paris Climate Agreement is supposed to oblige each participating country to limit greenhouse gases and commit rich nations — and in some cases private corporations — to help fund efforts by poor nations with \$100 billion per year in grants, loans and other forms of financing, to help them switch to clean energy.

That agreement still shifts the blame to the poorest countries, when in fact 20 industrialized countries are responsible for 78% of greenhouse gases.

Historically, no country has put more carbon dioxide into the air than the imperialist U.S. empire. The ultimate goal of the Paris Agreement is to limit greenhouse gases to a 2% increase per year, and "if possible" to 1.5% per year. As of today, the rich countries haven't come up with the first \$100 billion that was due in 2018.

Capitalism is a roadblock on the path to mitigating this huge crisis for humankind. It will take a global environmental movement that is revolutionary — conscious of the need to eradicate imperialism — to stop the crisis of global warming and climate change. [E]

U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan doesn't mean peace

By Scott Scheffer

In April, President Joe Biden announced that the U.S. war in Afghanistan would finally end after 20 years of horrible imperialist destruction. Initially the idea was that the troops would pack up shop by Sept. 11, 2021 – the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 World Trade Center attack. The pace of the withdrawal was faster than anticipated, and by July 2 U.S. military personnel had put the bases at Bagram, Kandahar, Helmand and others in the rearview mirror.

The war stands out as an example of the destruction and waste wrought during the imperialist stage of U.S. capitalism. The official number of deaths of U.S. soldiers is 2,300, and by some estimates about 6,000 private contractors (mercenaries) died. With the advances in field medicine, battlefield deaths are less frequent now. But the death toll is only part of the story.

What it doesn't reveal are the untold numbers of young people used as pawns in an imperialist war, who in previous times would have died, but now survive and return home as amputees, trauma survivors or otherwise injured for life.

Trillions of dollars were spent that should have been used to alleviate poverty, fight disease, build housing, bolster health care and provide education. U.S. defense contractors reaped the usual billions in profits.

The most terrible toll, however, was borne by the people of Afghanistan. Various sources project the number of deaths between 70,000 and 150,000.

During the occupation and war, poverty increased dramatically. The

most recent assessment by the Bor-gen Project said that 90% of Afghans struggle to survive. There are very high rates of impaired childhood growth, anemia and wasting. More than 2 million Afghani children have to work to support their families, and 58% of families are unable to afford adequate food.

Afghanistan was already one of the poorest nations before the Pentagon invasion, but these grim facts illuminate the rapid further deterioration caused directly by the U.S. occupation and war.

Destruction began long before invasion

Twenty years is how long there were U.S. troops in Afghanistan, but the destruction actually goes back more than 40 years.

For a short time, there was hope that there could be a better direction for Afghanistan. In April 1978, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, a socialist party, came to power. The PDPA reflected a growing fervor for socialism among young people in Kabul and other semi-urban areas.

The Saur Revolution began when the entire party leadership was jailed by the old government. Soldiers mutinied and broke the jailed leaders out, the old U.S.-leaning government was overthrown, and hopes for a new era emerged.

Afghanistan was largely feudal and run by powerful landlords. Among many progressive measures, the PDPA carried out a massive land reform program that wiped out debts of agricultural workers and began to redistribute land. The socialist government began literacy programs for everyone and made mandatory public education available for women.

Anahita Ratebzaad, a Marxist-Leninist leader and member of the PDPA government's Revolutionary Council, famously wrote an editorial in the Kabul Times just after the formation of the socialist government, saying: "Privileges which women, by right, must have, are equal education, job security, health services and free time ... Educating and enlightening women is now the subject of close government attention."

In response to the progressive changes underway in 1978, the CIA embarked on what would eventually become its largest operation to date. Dubbed "Operation Cyclone," the U.S. agency gathered up, armed and funded an opposition movement.

The spy group recruited from among the Afghan landlords, and from countries near and far, to build a reactionary, anti-communist insurgency. President Jimmy Carter's administration gave the green light and funding to the CIA for this destructive project in July 1978 – just 3 months after the formation of the PDPA's socialist government.

Soon, young people, teachers and women who were taking part in the progressive transition were being gunned down in the streets. The socialist government was under siege.

Media spread lie of 'Soviet invasion'

Although the Western media has manipulated the timeline to say that the U.S. intervened after a "Soviet



U.S. troops detain a civilian in Afghanistan. In 2019, Washington squashed an International Criminal Court investigation of U.S. war crimes.

invasion," it was actually only after the mayhem of the CIA's Operation Cyclone took root that the PDPA government asked the neighboring Soviet Union for military assistance.

The Soviet Union sent troops and equipment. In response, the Carter administration went full-court-press in terms of propaganda, boycotting the 1980 Olympics in Moscow, giving incensed speeches, and sending National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski to the Khyber Pass for an infamous publicity stunt, pointing towards Afghanistan with a rifle in his hand.

It was Brzezinski who was the architect of the notion of using Afghanistan as a way of forcing the USSR into responding and becoming bogged down in a war. The continuous escalation by the U.S. over the years included providing shoulder-fired anti-aircraft Stinger missiles, enabling individuals to shoot down Soviet aircraft and helicopters on their own.

Unlike the imperialist military and defense contractors that push for war and thrive from the destruction and tragedy, the socialist USSR took measure of the awful consequences and withdrew.

Out of the reactionary army that the CIA cobbled together, distinct groups emerged, including the Taliban and Al Qaeda. The emergence of the Islamic States or ISIS can also be traced to that period in Afghanistan. ISIS is portrayed as an enemy of the U.S., but aided U.S. military aims in trying to destroy Syria. In a classic example of "blowback," it was Al Qaeda that took responsibility for the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the Pentagon and World Trade Center.

The 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan was justified by blaming the Taliban, who had seized the government in Kabul by that time, for providing a staging ground for the attack by Al Qaeda, and for "protecting" Osama Bin Laden afterward. After driving the Taliban from power, the U.S. aided Hamid Karzai, a known CIA asset, in becoming the interim head of the government, and later, president.

Devastation drags on

U.S. troops were in Afghanistan in diminishing numbers after the capture and execution of Osama Bin Laden during the Obama administration. By the time of Biden's announcement, they numbered only 2,500. But even with a smaller troop

deployment, the occupation and destruction dragged on.

Exact numbers of private mercenaries are harder to come by. We now know that after Obama's 2009 "surge" of an additional 33,000 troops, the number of U.S. soldiers started to go down, but they were often quietly replaced by mercenaries.

In early 2017, the new Trump administration dropped the largest non-nuclear bomb, called the "Mother Of All Bombs" (MOAB), in a mountainous area of eastern Afghanistan. The claim was that it was meant for an Islamic State target and that 36 ISIS fighters were killed. More likely, Trump was demonstrating his "warmaker chops" to the Pentagon after having campaigned as a politician who favored less use of the U.S. military.

We also know now that a false and overly-optimistic view of the ability of the U.S. to "win" in Afghanistan was peddled by administration and military figures for years, under both Republicans and Democrats, in a repeat of what was revealed by the Pentagon Papers about the Vietnam War. The lies justified prolonging the war and caused an unknown number of deaths, injuries and destruction.

Upon Biden's announcement of a complete withdrawal, critics cried that without the continued presence of contractors, the Afghan military would lose its ability to maintain an air force. They objected that more than 18,000 Afghan interpreters who had worked for the U.S. would be in danger – presumably because the U.S. war and occupation and anyone who collaborated is hated by the people of Afghanistan. Pro-Pentagon think tanks warned that Kabul would fall to a resurgent Taliban.

The Biden administration has pledged to fund Afghanistan's government so it can directly pay for more private mercenaries. The U.S. has also offered to pay contractors to maintain Afghan aircraft from Qatar, and has openly pledged that if Kabul is under threat of a Taliban takeover, the U.S. will once again use airstrikes and drones to prop up the shaky, reactionary government.

This U.S. withdrawal should not be mistaken for peace. Imperialist war is in the DNA of capitalism. The four decades of horror suffered by the people of Afghanistan should never be forgotten, even as our anti-imperialist efforts turn toward defending Cuba and Haiti from the dangers of U.S. intervention. [📄](#)

Response to anti-Cuba attacks

Continued from page 8

necessarily true — you have to dig deeper and you especially shouldn't encourage the primary and immediate justifications for military action against Cuba. That's what this statement and your first on this crisis are doing, no question about it.

The evidence does not justify your opinions. As Marxists, as social scientists, we have to use evidence, not just go with the waves of imperialist propaganda that may seem easier to swim with.

This is not to say that the Freedom Socialist Party has not done important work in other areas of the struggle. It has and that is understood. That's why this stand is so disappointing. Regretfully, since this position was made publicly and assists the furthering of U.S. war using sanctions and regime change tactics, it must be publicly addressed.

The fact remains that supporting the false ideological justifications for imperialist intervention in Cuba plays a reactionary, not progressive, role.

John Parker
Socialist Unity Party
Los Angeles [📄](#)

Termina paro del Frente Amplio de Camioneros



Desde Puerto Rico para RADIO CLARIN de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci.



El Frente Amplio de Camioneros anuncia huelga.

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Luego de dos días de detención de labores, el Frente Amplio de Camioneros que agrupa camioneros individuales y organizados, suspendió el paro indefinido que habían decretado tras haber llegado a un acuerdo con el gobierno de PR en el que se defenderá el reglamento para aumentar las tarifas de acarreo.

¿Cuál es la importancia? Primero, No solo porque es justo lo que exigen, dado que las tarifas de acarreo no se revisan desde el 2005 y como resultado, el sueldo de un camionero es de un mísero \$12 la hora, sin ningún beneficio incluyendo un retiro digno. Y recordemos la importancia del sistema de transporte en

una isla donde más del 85% de lo que consumimos es importado.

Segundo, Porque expone la intromisión criminal de una Junta de Control Fiscal impuesta por el congreso de EUA que pretende aplicar las medidas neoliberales en todos los niveles de la vida puertorriqueña. A pesar de que los camioneros no son un ente público y por ende, no tienen que ver con los planes fiscales del gobierno a los cuales la Junta supuestamente supervisa, esa Junta rechaza el reglamento sobre las tarifas.

El cese del paro, sin embargo, no significa el fin de la lucha. Ya el Frente ha sostenido que el paro volvería si el gobierno cede ante la Junta y no se pone en efecto el reglamento y el aumento tarifario. [📌](#)

Soberanía deportiva en PR

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Hace unos días la atleta Jasmín Camacho-Quinn ganó una medalla de oro para PR en los 100 metros con valla en las olimpiadas de Tokio.

Se preguntarán cómo siendo una colonia de los EUA, PR tiene su propio Comité Olímpico.

Las olimpiadas y la política siempre van unidas y la existencia de este Comité expone las contradicciones de una colonia donde aunque haya fuerzas que quieran convertirnos en un estado del imperio, la identidad cultural y nacional reflejada deportivamente es mucho más fuerte.

El origen de nuestra participación

olímpica data del 1948 en un contexto sociopolítico muy complejo. En ese entonces, una delegación boricua viajó a Londres para reclamar – y lograr – un puesto para PR en esas olimpiadas.

La victoria de Jasmín en estos días de tanta angustia, motivó también controversias que exponen el prejuicio que padecen algunas personas en este país sobre quien es verdaderamente boricua. La atleta nació en EU, hija de una boricua y un afroamericano, pero la diáspora boricua en EU, ya nacieran o migrado allá, es vista por algunos con recelo. Lo curioso es que la mayor parte de los puertorriqueños, más de 5

Jasmín Camacho-Quinn

millones, viven allá, mientras que en PR solo hay 3.2 millones.

Pero lo interesante del caso es que aunque no nació en PR y ni siquiera habla español, Jasmín se siente tan puertorriqueña que rechazó representar a EU para poder llevar el triunfo a PR. Y como dijo Albizu Campos, “La nación la representan quienes la afirman, no quienes la niegan”. [📌](#)



Desde Puerto Rico para RADIO CLARIN de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci

Long Live Revolutionary George Jackson!

Continued from page 1

jail. Jackson accepted the deal and agreed to confess and was thrown into the penitentiary, sentenced to one year to life. He would spend eleven years in jail; ten at Soledad Prison, seven in solitary confinement, aka Max Row.

Jackson writes about his prison experience in “Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters.” In a letter to the editor he wrote, “I met Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Engels, and Mao when I entered prison and they redeemed me.”

The introduction to “Soledad Brother” states: “Instead of succumbing to the dehumanization of prison existence, he transformed himself into the leading theoretician of the prison movement and a brilliant writer.”

Jackson was murdered by a tower guard inside San Quentin Prison during an alleged escape attempt. “No Black person will ever believe that George Jackson died the way they tell us he did,” wrote James Baldwin.

Jackson was a legendary figure throughout the prison system. He was a member of the Black Panther Party-People’s Revolutionary Army, in charge of prison recruiting. And he was doing the most important thing that one can ever do, that is,

“live life as a revolutionary example,” because that cannot be killed.

Huey P. Newton said, “George Jackson was my hero. He set a standard for prisoners, political prisoners, for people. He was a strong man, without fear, determined, full of love, strength, and dedication to the people’s cause. He lived a life that we must praise.”

The first Black August event

A large and passionate following had grown around Jackson’s prison writings. On the day of his Revolutionary Memorial Service, 200 Black Panthers in full uniform were inside St. Augustine’s Church in West Oakland, Calif., while 8,000 people listened outside. They were perched on rooftops, hanging from telephone poles and filling the streets. When George Jackson’s body was brought out, the people raised their fists in the air, chanting, “Long Live George Jackson.” This was the first Black August event.

Mumia Abu-Jamal wrote in August 2010: “The real deal is that the name George Jackson is not known to millions of young people in this country. His thoughts, his passions, his brilliance, his insights, his martyrdom in the struggle for Black people. All of this is largely unknown. This in spite

of the fact that his books ‘Blood In My Eye’ and ‘Soledad Brother’ have sold more than half a million copies.

“The French writer and playwright Jean Genet called Jackson’s books ‘weapons in combat in the Black Freedom Struggle’ and that they remain. For why else, after 40 years after their publication are they banned from joints from coast to coast because it speaks to their continuing power to awaken, to inspire, to educate and to light a fire. So young people, my message is read George Jackson learn and pass it on. Don’t let his life, light, and sacrifice be forgotten.”

Black August 2021

Today, August 2021, young people are organizing Black August readings, learning about our fallen Heroes and Sheroes and studying history from an African perspective. They are embracing socialism, and other alternatives to capitalism while facing much resistance from the State. They are well aware of the consequences of following the path of truth and justice, but they are determined to move forward.

Huey P. Newton, George and Jonathan Jackson, James Baldwin and a

host of Black Revolutionaries will be proud to learn of the resurgence in the fight to free all prisoners, Political Prisoners, and Prisoners of Conscience; to abolish the prison-industrial complex; to abolish the police. This movement goes beyond August, February, or June. This is a continuing struggle to educate ourselves throughout the year to better understand what we are fighting for.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, organizers are using virtual platforms to discuss where we are and what strategies we can use to win our freedom. These recorded discussions address the issues that are relevant to oppressed people around the world and are set up to reach millions.

“Soledad Brother” was released in the fall of 1970, and was dedicated to George Jackson’s younger brother, Jonathan Peter Jackson. “Blood in My Eye” was completed in August 1971, about a week before Jackson was murdered by San Quentin prison guards. The most recent edition of “Soledad Brother” came out in 1994, with a forward by Jonathan Jackson, Jr., who is George Jackson’s nephew and Jonathan Jackson’s son. [📌](#)

‘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.

Online at <https://tinyurl.com/vn3qvn5>

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