

STRUGGLE ★ LA LUCHA

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We won't go back! Texas & Supreme Court attack on women must be defeated



Statement from Women In Struggle / Mujeres En Lucha and Socialist Unity Party

Women protest against abortion ban at the Texas Capitol in Austin, Sept. 1.

Texas Senate Bill 8, which took effect Sept. 1, bans abortion after six weeks, before many women are even aware that they are pregnant.

Anyone who sues an abortion provider under this law will be awarded a \$10,000 bounty. Texas Right to Life has already set up a “whistleblower” website where people can give anonymous tips about who might be violating the law.

In upholding SB8, the U.S. Supreme Court basically approved the notion that vigilantes can track down women and their “abettors.”

There are no exceptions for rape, incest or diagnoses of fetal anomaly.

Who will be most impacted?

It is Black, Brown and Indigenous women, the poor and youth, those who rely on reproductive rights centers for



health care, including contraception, general checkups and cancer screenings. SB8 will effectively shut down care for transgender people, who will no longer be able to access needed hormone replacement therapy.

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

The same reactionary forces behind

SB8, and those who did nothing to prevent it, care little about children and less about all women, regardless of who they love or their gender identity, including transgender women.

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

Where is the fight to stop forced sterilizations of poor and oppressed women from Puerto Rico to Mississippi, or the fight to make sure that all children — and every person — have free healthcare, or paid maternity leave for working families?

What about the lack of affordable, safe daycare that has forced women

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Hurricane Ida blows away illusions

By Gregory E. Williams

I am from a small town in Louisiana's Tangipahoa Parish, now living in New Orleans. Professionally, I am a cook and am training to be a biological lab technician.

When I first began to understand that Hurricane Ida was going to be bad, I was afraid. But to some extent I had been lulled into complacency by the fact that New Orleans has largely been spared from major hurricane damage for several years. On the other hand, the 2020 season was devastating for the western part of the state, which has still not fully recovered from those shocks.

Mentally, I was still unprepared as Ida made landfall as a category 4 storm near marshy Port Fourchon — the concept of “land” here is tenuous, and partly explains why the storm was able to maintain its strength.

I thought that by going 80 miles north of New Orleans I would be safe. After all, the biggest concern for us is always water. Parts of New Orleans are 8 feet below sea level, and the city now floods during regular rainstorms. I wanted to get out, and thought I would be safe as long as I was away from typical flood zones.

My assumptions were too optimistic. Based on the Saffir-Simpson hurricane wind scale, Ida was a Category 5 when it made landfall, with winds right at 157 mph. Unsurprisingly, when it barreled through northern Tangipahoa Parish, where I was staying with family, the destruction was immense.

The problem here is the trees. Within one acre (43,560 square feet) of where I am writing, I have counted 10 fallen trees. Visually, the rest of the town looks similar. Trees have blocked roads and fallen onto houses. They have ripped down power lines, or else the electrical poles themselves have uprooted — sometimes twisted into splintered segments.

As in New Orleans and other parts of the state, people here are without power. Gasoline and groceries are in short supply.

This has been hard on my family, as one family member fell and broke his hip during the storm, and many of us had to be outside during the worst of it in order to help him. First responders were unable to come until the next day.

Takeaway messages

1. Climate change means that nowhere is completely safe. My plan of travelling 80 miles north was laughable, considering that at least 25 people were killed by the storm in distant New Jersey as of Sept. 4. Eighteen have died in New York.

We cannot behave as if hurricanes are just a Southern problem, or even a coastal problem. This storm crossed a long stretch of the country, far inland.

2. Capitalist society — especially in this period of profound crisis and long-term decline — is completely unable to deal with stress of this, or really any, magnitude. On paper, this is the richest country in the world, but that wealth is hoarded

by a few, while virtually all social and material infrastructure is deteriorating. Because of socialist planning, tiny Cuba is able to deal with storms far better than the U.S.

The whole of Cuban society is mobilized to deal with hurricanes, and the aftermath is about recovery, not greed. Regular preparedness drills are conducted everywhere. The focus is on risk-reduction with an integrated response from local fire departments, health, transportation and other public services.

Before storms occur, Cuban government officials, police and military personnel help people move their belongings to safer locations. The government also guarantees replacement of all lost property. Most impressively, they have a 100-year plan to move towns further inland in response to climate change.

Meanwhile, here, horror story after horror story is emerging in the aftermath of Ida. In New Orleans, the government — city, state and federal — did not provide transportation that would have allowed working-class residents without vehicles to evacuate. This is despite the fact that the city issued mandatory evac-

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Nurses, who worked inside a warehouse where more than 800 nursing home residents were housed amid squalid conditions, say they are haunted by the scenes they witnessed during Hurricane Ida. As seniors called out for help, the air conditioning quit and toilets overflowed. At least four people died.

Crowd cheers removal of racist monument

By Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality

After 131 years of lording it over Richmond, Va., and much of the country, the towering statue of slavery-defending Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee has finally been removed from his perch, to the cheers of a jubilant crowd pumped up by the Black worker who had just cut through the bolts holding the 21-foot statue to its 40-foot base.

The statue itself was cut into its original two pieces, loaded onto a truck and carted off to a state-owned facility for storage. (Fittingly, Richmond used a city sewer facility to accommodate the statues of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, Confederate generals Stonewall Jackson and J.E.B Stewart and Confederate Admiral Matthew Maury.

Despite sad attempts by local and state politicians to claim credit for this victory over a leading symbol of white supremacy, it is important to remember that it was a long, deliberate and growing movement of anti-racist, grassroots activists that finally forced the state of Virginia — which has owned the statue since its unveiling in 1890 — to agree to take it down.

Richmond's Black community has always despised the statues honoring the slavery-defending traitors on Richmond's famed Monument Avenue. Many people have spoken about how they deliberately avoided driving or walking down that high-end real estate boulevard because of the terrible feelings it evoked in them.

But, until very, very recently, Virginia's state government has had no such feelings. Way back in 2007, the state spent \$450,000 to try and clean the statue, in preparation for the wide range of activities marking the 200th anniversary of Lee's birth. On the actual anniversary, Jan. 19, the Virginia State Conference NAACP and the Virginia Defenders held a press conference at the statue to denounce the state's wasting money on a statue that can never be cleansed of its arrogant racism.

In 2015, the Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality led a community campaign to demand the organizers of the prestigious UCI World Championships bicycle race change the race's course from Mon-



Robert E. Lee statue removed in Richmond, Va., Sept. 8.

PHOTO: THE VIRGINIA DEFENDER

ument Avenue. Three of the race's organizing committee co-chairmen responded to media inquiries about the demand. "This is our heritage. This is who we are," said then-and-now-aspiring Gov. Terry McAuliff, a Democrat born in Syracuse, N.Y.

Two of the other three co-chairmen, then-Mayor Dwight Jones (born in Philadelphia) and U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (born in Indianapolis) made similar comments. Not responding to the demand was Thomas F. Farrell II, then the CEO of political powerhouse Dominion Energy, who in 2014 had produced the pro-Confederate movie "Field of Lost Shoes."

The issue of honoring Confederate symbols came to the fore after a Confederate fan and white-supremacist murdered nine African-American churchgoers in Charleston, S.C., on June 17, 2015.

Then came the deadly confrontation between white supremacists and anti-racists in Charlottesville, Va., on Aug. 11 and 12, 2017, centered around the Lee statue in that university town.

Within weeks, neo-Confederate groups began coming to Richmond to "defend" the statues of Lee, Davis, Jackson, Stuart and Maury. And each time they showed up, local anti-racists, including the Defenders, were there to confront them.

Meanwhile, a statewide effort called Monumental Justice, initiated by Charlottesville activists, was demanding a change in the state law that forbade the removal of "war

memorials," as the Confederate statues were officially known.

Then came the horrific police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, an event that proved to be the tipping point in the long-smoldering mass rage over police abuse in the United States. Millions of people took to the streets in massive protests that lasted some 100 days. In Richmond, the movement formulated seven demands, which included taking down the Confederate monuments — which had been gloriously tagged on the second night of the protests during a march of thousands down Monument Avenue.

Later, the statue of Davis was torn down by protesters, along with a statue of Christopher Columbus and a statue dedicated to police officers, both in Byrd Park, named after one of Richmond's earliest slave owners.

After a change that February in the state law allowing the removal of the statues, it was the mass and militant anti-racist protests that finally moved local officials to take down the city-owned statues on Monument Avenue. Lawsuits by pro-Confederates and Monument Avenue property owners and a resulting injunction delaying the removal of Lee were finally rejected just last week by the Virginia Supreme Court.

And so it came to pass that today, Sept. 8, 2021, a Black worker cut through the bolts holding Lee to his pedestal, and the statue finally came down.

It was back in 1890 that "Fighting

Editor" John Mitchell Jr. of the Richmond Planet wrote about the Lee statue going up, clearly explaining that it was meant to announce that the old white oligarchy was firmly back in charge and that Black folks had better accept that, or else.

Referring to the Black workers who actually did the manual labor of erecting the statue, Mitchell wrote, "He put up the Lee Monument, and should the time come, he'll be there to take it down."

And he was.

Yes, it's a symbolic change, but it represents a real shift in the balance of power between the white

supremacists in state government and the growing mass movement against white supremacy. We must now seize this moment to strengthen and expand the ongoing struggles against evictions, gentrification, inadequate schools, poor housing, low-wage jobs — and the obscene military budget that drains our tax coffers of the money needed to address all these problems.

Further, the struggle to take down the Confederate monuments has always run parallel with the now-more-than-20-year struggle to reclaim and properly memorialize Richmond's Shockoe Bottom district, once the epicenter of the U.S. domestic slave trade. That campaign is now at a critical juncture, with the City finally agreeing to the Defenders' community-generated proposal for a Shockoe Bottom Memorial Park, but with questions remaining about how that development will concretely benefit the Black community.

The struggle continues.

Signed:

The Steering Committee of the Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality

Ana Edwards - Chair, Sacred Ground Historical Reclamation Project

Joseph S. H. Rogers - Public Historian

Phil Wilayto - Editor, *The Virginia Defender* Sept. 8, 2021

Source: *The Virginia Defender*

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uation orders for areas outside the levees, and strongly advised other residents to evacuate. Some 35% of Black households do not own an auto, and about 20% of white households don't own autos.

In Independence, La., over 800 nursing home residents from facilities owned by Baton Rouge businessman Bob J. Dean Jr. were thrown into a warehouse. These people were left in their own filth. At least four of them have died. This is all too similar to Hurricane Katrina.

The working class has no stake in this rotten society. Overthrowing capitalist rule is truly a matter of life and death. 📧

An Anthology By Clarence Thomas

Workers and activists document struggles as they happen in news articles, interviews, letters, posters, photos, speeches, and video transcripts.

The author is a third generation retired member of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 in San Francisco and a leading radical African American trade unionist.

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50 years since Attica Rebellion

We salute prisoners' Paris Commune

By Sharon Black

On Sept. 9, 1971, approximately 1,500 prisoners in Cell Block D seized the Attica Correctional Facility in upstate New York, after submitting a 27-point manifesto to the prison administration in an attempt to address the torturous conditions inside the prison.

At the time of the uprising, 2,300 prisoners were sandwiched into a prison built for barely 1,600 people. White supremacy behind the walls was evident everywhere, from how prisoners were housed to brutal work assignments.

Prisoners were allowed one shower per week and one roll of toilet paper a month. They labored for five hours a day and were paid between 20 cents and \$1 for the entire day. For 14 to 16 hours, they were locked in tiny 6-foot by 9-foot cells.

A revolutionary mood

It is critical to understand the broader historical context in which this rebellion took place. How could people who were so beaten down, whose lives hung in the balance at the whim of a guard, take such heroic action?

Outside of the jails and also inside many prisons, a battle was raging for the national liberation of Black, Puerto Rican, Indigenous and Chicxanx people. A new revolutionary mood was sweeping the country to end all kinds of oppression.

Millions of people were protesting the Vietnam War. The women's liberation movement was beginning to blossom. The Stonewall Rebellion

had sparked a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and Two Spirit (LGBTQ2S) liberation movement. Just two years later, the occupation of Wounded Knee by the American Indian Movement (AIM) took place.

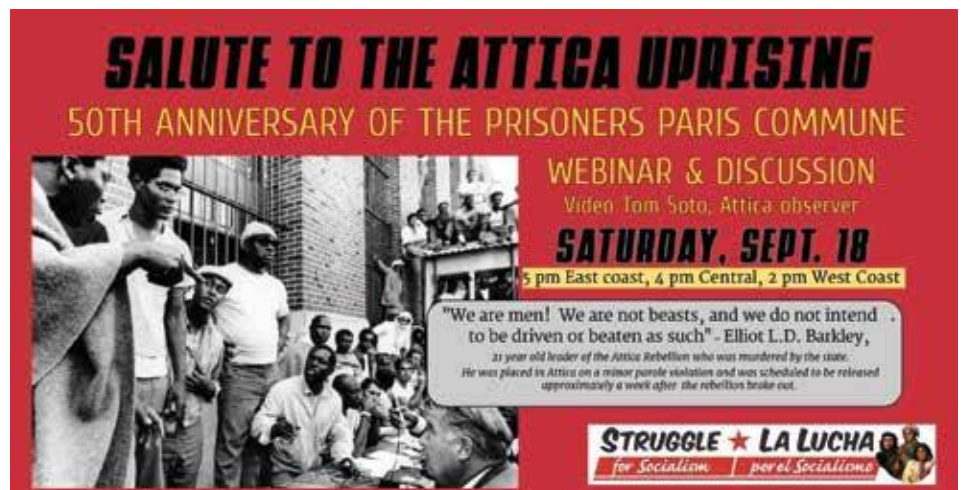
The McKay Commission (New York State Special Commission on Attica) later commented: "With the exception of Indian massacres in the late 19th century, the State Police assault which ended the four-day prison uprising was the bloodiest one-day encounter between Americans since the Civil War."

Organizing behind the walls

Serious organizing was going on inside Attica prior to the rebellion. Many of the groups outside the prison were reflected inside, including the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords, the Nation of Islam and the Five Percenters. Many had study groups. The Attica Liberation Faction developed in this period.

In July 1971, the Attica Liberation Faction presented a list of 27 demands to Commissioner of Corrections Russell Oswald and Gov. Nelson Rockefeller. This list of demands was based on the Folsom Prisoners' Manifesto crafted by Chicxanx prisoner Martin Sousa in support of a November 1970 prisoner strike in California.

Then, on Aug. 21, 1971, Black Panther leader George Jackson was gunned down by racist guards in California's San Quentin prison. Prisoners all across the country, including several hundred in Attica, went on hunger strikes. The assassination of George Jackson became



Join SLL's Attica webinar Sept. 18.

the glue that allowed the Attica prisoners to unite across religions, nationalities and political factions.

The prisoners' Paris Commune

On Sept. 9, Attica prisoners seized the facility. They took corrections officers hostage to ensure that their protest would be heard, since they had received no response to their manifesto from the corrections commissioner or governor.

While the events that took place on Sept. 9 were spontaneous and began as a clash between guards and prisoners, the level of organizing and what became a full-scale uprising were the result of the revolutionary leadership and consciousness that had grown during this period.

What's remarkable is the high degree of organization and discipline of the thousands of prisoners who took part. They elected a central committee, which rotated chairpeople; they organized a 33-person observers' committee, which included not only attorney William Kunstler, Black Panther Bobby Seale, New York State Assemblymember Arthur O. Eve, and representatives of the Young Lords, but also Tom Soto of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee.

Demands were continually being developed. A major one was amnesty for all prisoners.

Countless photos show the rows of tents, preparatory ditches and many of the other measures the prisoners organized. They voted on demands and rationed food and water for survival. During the entire occupation, the 40 hostages were treated humanely.

The concrete demands that developed during the insurrection included all aspects of survival in the prison, including health, food, ending solitary confinement, the right to visitation and a list of labor rights, including the right to a union and an end to exploitation.

The first time the working class took power into its own hands was the insurrection known as the Paris Commune of 1871. The communards canceled rents, recognized women's rights, abolished child labor, took over workplaces and set up their own form of government. The commune served as a historical example to many revolutionary socialists of the potential for a workers' state. It was ultimately put down in blood, but the lessons remain.

A century later, on Sept. 13, 1971, Gov. Rockefeller ordered the storming of Attica prison. With helicopters flying overhead, close to 1,000 state troopers, national guard troops and prison guards fired into the yard, killing 39 people and wounding 85 in what can only be described as a massacre. This took place in just 15 minutes.

Many of those wounded received no medical care. The prisoners had no guns or bullets to defend themselves.

The press screamed that the 10 captive guards who died had their throats slit. But autopsies showed that all 10 had been shot to death by Rockefeller's storm troopers.

What happened in the immediate aftermath of the slaughter is too painful to fully describe. Prisoners were stripped naked, beaten, made to run through gauntlets of guards and brutally tortured. Guards stormed into the yard chanting "white power."

A battle cry for liberation

Nevertheless, the Attica uprising and the massacre stirred prisoners everywhere. It's estimated that 200,000 prisoners protested and held strikes in its aftermath. The number of prison rebellions doubled.

It continues to serve as a beacon today for those fighting against racism and mass incarceration and for workers' rights everywhere. 📌

Watch a special video interview with Tom Soto, Prisoners Solidarity Committee observer at the Attica rebellion: <https://tinyurl.com/f3vaxxvz>

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and parents of all genders out of the workplace?

The importance of Texas

Many reproductive-rights advocates have already pointed out that SB8 and the Supreme Court's ruling will give impetus to similar measures in other states. This is certainly true.

But Texas itself is important.

It is the second-most populous state, after California. Twenty-nine million people are impacted. And SB8 is not the only right-wing bill that has swept the state.

Exactly 666 new reactionary laws went into effect Sept. 1. It is now basically illegal to be homeless, as a statewide ban on homeless encampments precludes any locality from opting out and fines the homeless \$500 (for being homeless).

Teachers are now forbidden to tell the truth about slavery. A new law provides funding for the so-called "1836 Project" that is set against the 1619 Project and projects a "patriotic education" about Texas's racist "war of independence" from Mexico.

Cities with over 250,000 people

will be punished for defunding police budgets, effectively giving the green light to police murders of Black, Brown and poor people.

And what about the basic right to vote that is still being denied to Black and Brown people?

Don't mourn — organize and hit the streets!

Women in Argentina and all over Latin America, in Ireland, Poland and so many other countries, have shown the way by taking to the streets in the millions, forcing change.

We need a "green bandana" movement in the U.S. like the one in Latin America. We must organize to stop every reactionary, racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and anti-working class attack.

From capitalist climate change to racist police terror, from imperialist war to attacks on workers' rights — we cannot wait for or depend on the Democratic Party. What is needed is in-your-face, independent action to push the clock forward.

We need car caravans, people's blockades and resistance to defend clinics. It's time to march on Texas and the Supreme Court!

We will not go back!

Healthcare and childcare, maternity leave, food, work and shelter, along with the basic ability to control one's body — all of these are basic human rights.

Black and Brown women must be guaranteed the right to walk out of their houses without fear that police will shoot them down, or murder their children or loved ones in the street. Trans and queer women must have the right to exist without fear of violence and bigotry.

Im/migrant women, children and families need to be released from cages. So must the many women rotting behind bars in the colossal U.S. prison system.

Indigenous women and communities must be guaranteed the right to their land and an end to violence and murder.

Our children have the right to live on a planet that is not destroyed by capitalist climate change, imperialist war, occupation and sanctions.

We pledge ourselves to this fight so that all women and all workers, at home and abroad, can finally be free from capitalist and imperialist misery.

Women and oppressed genders unite and fight back! We have nothing to lose but our chains! 📌

Happy Labor Day — now drop dead

By Stephen Millies

At least 7.5 million workers will lose all their unemployment benefits on Sept. 6. Another 3 million workers will lose part of their income. That's how the capitalist government celebrates Labor Day.

Two million workers in California will be thrown off a cliff. So will 1.2 million in New York State and nearly a half-million in Pennsylvania.

What are jobless workers and their loved ones to do? Counting family members, 20 million or more people will be endangered.

Hunger will increase and so will people losing their homes. Food banks are bracing for an upsurge of need.

The cut-off on Labor Day comes after the U.S. Supreme Court declared the ban on evictions and foreclosures to be illegal. What should be illegal are rent-gouging landlords and banksters stealing homes.

Hardest hit will be Black and Latinx workers. The official unemploy-

ment rate for Black workers is 9.2 percent.

Ending the benefits comes after the capitalist economy added only 235,000 jobs in August instead of the predicted 720,000.

That gives the lie to the claim that unemployment benefits are an incentive for people not to work. Even Forbes magazine — the self-described “capitalist tool” — admits that isn't true.

The jobs aren't there. There are six million fewer people employed than last spring.

Yet President Biden sent an Aug. 19 letter to members of Congress that it was “appropriate” for the federal unemployment benefits to expire.

Who elected you, Joe? Is it “appropriate” for children and their parents to go hungry?

What's needed is a fightback. That's what the Unemployed Workers Union is doing in Maryland. It helped stop Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan from cutting unemployment benefits in July.



Unemployed Workers Union protest in Baltimore.

SLL PHOTO

We need to increase the volume. If Congress doesn't act to restore these absolutely necessary benefits, the labor movement should march on Washington, D.C., and the state capitals.

As Frederick Douglass said: “Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.”

Jobs or income now! Don't starve — fight! 📢

Never forget the Hamlet fire: Capitalist greed killed 25 workers

By Stephen Millies

Twenty-five workers were killed on Sept. 3, 1991, when a fire broke out at the Imperial Foods chicken plant in Hamlet, N.C. Workers choked to death from heavy black smoke after a deep-fat fryer ignited. Eighteen of the dead were women.

Another 54 workers were injured. Forty-nine children were orphaned.

Disability benefits for survivors were pitiful. The payments were just two-thirds of their average pay, which was around \$5 per hour.

None of the workers had to die. The processing plant had neither an operating sprinkler system nor an evacuation plan.

Bodies were found next to doors with footprints from workers trying to escape. The doors were ordered locked by the plant's owner, Emmett J. Rowe.

The chicken nugget capitalist did so because he thought workers, many of whom were Black, would steal chickens. White and Black workers died together because of Rowe's racism.

In its 11 years of operation, the plant never had a safety inspection. Rowe didn't even register the plant with the state.

Even if he had, the workers might not have seen an inspector. Like half the states, North Carolina is allowed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to run its own inspection program. North Carolina has 10.5 million people but less than a hundred safety inspectors.

OSHA isn't any better staffed. It currently has just 1,850 inspectors in the United States. That's one inspector for every 82,513 employed workers.



Defunding trigger-happy, club-swinging, chokehold-using police is denounced by both Trump and Biden. OSHA has been defunded since the day it was established 50 years ago.

Yet dead chickens at the Hamlet plant were inspected every day by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. One USDA inspector even approved locking a door — a violation of federal and state laws — to supposedly keep out flies.

Nobody wants filthy food, but shouldn't human lives be given as much consideration as chicken parts? Despite a 1994 agreement to report dangerous conditions to OSHA, there's no record that the USDA has ever done so, according to “The Assembly” digital magazine.

Rich man's justice

It was only because of a community mobilization that Rowe was given any jail time at all. Playing key roles were the Black Workers for Justice in North Carolina and Brenda Stokely, former president of AFSCME Local 1707 in New York City.

Serial murderer Rowe was sentenced to 19 years, 11 months in prison. He served almost four years. That's less than two months for every worker he murdered.

Compare that to Alvin Kinnard's sentence. Before being released in 2019, the Black man spent nearly 36 years in Alabama prisons for allegedly robbing \$50 from a bakery.

Emmett Rowe began his criminal career up North. He opened Imperial Foods in Moosic, Pa. — near Scranton — in 1973.

The plant had two fires, injuring several workers, including one critically. It was sued for polluting water.

Just as northern textile mills went south in the 1920s so the companies could pay lower wages, so did Emmett Rowe.

Besides his Hamlet factory, Rowe bought the Haverpride Foods plant in Tarrant, Ala., in 1988. He closed it in 1990 without giving the employees 60 days notice, as required by federal law.

More than \$250,000 in severance pay was ordered to be paid to 115 workers by a federal judge. Rowe never paid a penny.

Rowe's co-conspirators in these crimes were the fast-food outfits that bought his chicken fillets and nuggets. They rip off millions of workers, and not just at their drive-throughs.

Wendy's CEO Todd Penegor is pulling in \$7,213,774 this year. Meanwhile the farmworkers who pick the tomatoes for Wendy's hamburgers are ill-treated and miserably paid.

Job cuts kill

Hamlet was an important junction on the old Seaboard Air Line railroad, now part of the CSX system. (The term “air line” referred to the railroad's claim of a straight route.) Two Amtrak trains a day stop there.

Trains coming south from Virginia could go to four different direc-

tions from Seaboard's Hamlet hub. These included lines to Florida, Alabama and Georgia.

The line to Atlanta and Birmingham went through Monroe, N.C., where Mabel and Robert Williams organized armed self-defense against the Ku Klux Klan. They faced phony kidnapping charges but were able to escape to the socialist countries of Cuba and the People's Republic of China.

Last year hundreds of workers tested positive for the coronavirus at Tyson's poultry plant in Monroe. At least one worker died of it.

The company forced workers to come in even if they were sick. Tyson's management should be put in jail, too.

Hamlet still has a large railroad yard. Why didn't some of the workers at Emmett Rowe's deathtrap try to get a job there?

While railroads are more profitable than ever, the number of railroad workers has shrunk from 1.5 million in 1947 to around 143,000 today. That's over 1.3 million jobs destroyed — a 90 percent drop.

What made these job cuts more heartbreaking was that Black and women workers were finally being hired in many railroad jobs.

This took decades of struggle. Charles Hamilton Houston, who mentored Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, repeatedly went to the U.S. Supreme Court to fight discrimination on the railroads.

Instead of union railroad jobs, International Tie Disposal wants to build a plant next to CSX's Hamlet yard to dispose of old railroad ties. The facility will emit harmful air emissions near a poor community. That's called toxic racism.

Never forget the workers in Hamlet who died because of greed. Capitalism kills. 📢

In Puerto Rico, the people's struggle continues

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

While the dictatorship of the Fiscal Control Board (“la Junta”) imposed by the U.S. Congress and its lackeys in the local government do everything to destroy Puerto Rico as a nation and sink us into poverty and despair, the people continue to organize and fight on many fronts.

It is already clear that the administration of Governor Pedro Pierluisi will not favor the people at all. Both he and his sister Caridad, whom he took to reside in La Fortaleza to help him govern without being elected by the people, have as a priority to privatize any publicly-owned agency that remains.



But in their arrogance, they do not count on the fact that the people are already tired of the abuse due to poor

health services, energy, education, housing, public safety, etc., in addition to the terrible increase in the cost of living and basic food items.

There are struggles everywhere, including entire communities against telecommunications antennas, against construction in land-based maritime zones, for the defense of education, by trade unions. But now the most urgent is the fight against the terrible energy privatization company Luma because there is already a lot of indig-

nation over the incessant blackouts across the country.

There are several demonstrations scheduled in the coming days against both Luma and the Fiscal Control Board.

The fight is uphill, but progress continues. Down with Luma and the dictatorship of the Junta and its government lackeys! 📌



From Puerto Rico for RADIO CLARIN of Colombia, this is Berta Joubert-Ceci.

Los Angeles protest: Peru's will must be respected!

By Jefferson Azevedo

On August 26, Peru Libre — the Free Peru national political party — organized a demonstration in the Koreatown neighborhood of Los Angeles. A group formed by people from Peru, other South American countries, Mexico and the U.S. gathered in front of the Peruvian Consulate to show support for the government of newly-elected President Pedro Castillo.

They demanded an end to the war that has been waged against Castillo by the Peruvian Congress and military, which are acting under the influence of the U.S., Canada, and the oligarchs and transnational corporations that control their governments. “The U.S. government has no business in Peru,” declared Lazaro Aguero, a Peru Libre Party member. “You don’t have the right to put military bases in Peru. Peruvians are the ones who must solve their problems, not you. We don’t want your bases and that’s not what the Peruvian people need. You should stay away from the political issues of Peru.”

This war was going on even before the presidential elections that pitted Pedro Castillo, an Indigenous school teacher and union organizer, against Keiko Fujimori, the daughter of former right-wing dictator Alberto Fujimori. Maneuvering by Fujimori and the Peruvian elite blocked Castillo from being officially declared president for more than a month after his decisive victory in June’s runoff election.

Peru Libre is a socialist party that has massive support from the people, especially impoverished rural and Indigenous Peruvians. As usual, when it comes to parties that put the interests of the people ahead of the interests of corporations, the right wing wants to destroy it. Old tools of imperialism like defamation and lies through the capitalist-owned media are being used to achieve this goal.

Peru’s Congress is another body working to destabilize the Castillo presidency. Everything that Castillo and his party try to do, like forming a cabinet with the people they want, is being denied, as seen in the forced resignation of Foreign Affairs

Minister Hector Bejar.

Bejar, a former member of the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación) in the 1960s, rejected the Washington-dominated Lima Group and sought a new approach to relations with Venezuela and Nicaragua. That was too much for Western imperialism — so he had to go.

The oligarchs might have forced Hector Bejar to resign with pressure from the right-wing sectors. But he will remain in the war by continuing to assist and advise Castillo’s government.

Destabilization campaign

The destabilization campaign is ongoing. It is urgent that independent, internationalist media go to Peru and show the rest of the world that the people of Peru support Castillo’s government in its fight against powerful enemies who have the congress, the media and the military on their side.

The local media, to the surprise of no one, is on the side of the reactionary forces — especially after Castillo cut the slush fund by previous governments given to the media to pay them off for their support.

The media have always been supportive of former Peruvian governments and spoke in their favor. But with Pedro Castillo, they act completely differently. During the presidential runoff, Fujimori had the support of all the corporate media. Afterward, dissatisfied with the results, they helped in her attempt to steal the elections by falsely claiming she had won.

The people didn’t remain idle. Through massive mobilizations and demonstrations, they were able to deter the attempted coup. Social media was the only reliable way that Peru Libre and President Castillo had to counter the lies spread by the mainstream media and counter-balance its partiality.

As for the other prong of imperialist-controlled sabotage, the Peruvian military brass, many of them are afraid that they will go to jail as punishment for crimes committed during Alberto Fujimori’s presidency, as President Castillo promised to bring justice to their victims. There-



Los Angeles, Aug. 26.

SLL PHOTO: JEFFERSON AZEVEDO

fore they have another reason to want regime change.

Taxing big business

President Castillo is also demanding that foreign corporations pay over 20 years of back taxes or they will not be allowed to operate in the country. Before, these transnationals (the mining sector being one of the biggest) were tax-exempt with the excuse that they were “bringing jobs to the country.” The truth is, they brought few jobs and took vast amounts of the nation’s wealth, leaving the poor, and especially Indigenous people, destitute of the most basic necessities of life.

It’s no coincidence that the right-wing-controlled Congress just voted to allow more U.S. military bases in Peru.

The current constitution was written during Fujimori’s presidency and, like in any other capitalist

country, devised to support the interests of the bosses and landlords instead of the people. The Peruvian Congress can impeach the president at any time, even without serious charges against the sitting official. In late 2020, Peru had three presidents in the space of a week.

Speakers at the Aug. 26 protest explained that the people are demanding a new constitution. Signatures are being collected everywhere, even here in the U.S., for a referendum on a new constitution to be created by an elected popular assembly. This is something of the utmost importance to the future of Peru.

As in Bolivia, Venezuela and all Latin America, the reactionary forces do not accept Indigenous and working-class people in power. A democratic Peru must be defended at any cost and President Castillo must be respected because the people chose him. 📌

‘Woke’ imperialism, women’s liberation and Afghanistan

By Sharon Black

There is no greater hypocrisy than the deceitful lies of imperialist propaganda. One of the most damaging, since it rests on 20 years of destructive war and occupation, is that the U.S. war on Afghanistan was about liberating Afghan women.

U.S. imperialist involvement — a euphemism for war and terror — actually began 42 years ago, when the CIA’s Operation Cyclone launched in 1979 under Jimmy Carter’s presidency. It continues today in the form of sanctions and even bombings, as witnessed by the recent drone strike that killed at least 10 people, seven of them children, as young as two years old.

The real fight for women’s rights

U.S. terror and intrigue began following the 1978 Saur Revolution that brought the socialist and progressive People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) to power, decisively toppling the old Kingdom of Afghanistan.

The April Revolution, led mostly by young women and men of Kabul, ushered in major changes that included women’s rights in education and participation in government. Debts owed to cruel feudal landlords were abolished. Women were trained as teachers and books were published in all of the Indigenous and minority languages.

Brigades of women spread out across the country to teach and provide medical services, similar to the Cuban Revolution’s “literacy brigades” of mostly young women that went into the countryside and mountains to teach the poor.

The marriage age was raised from 8 years to 16. Maternity leave with a three-month’s salary was established. By the end of the 1980s, half of the health and education workers in Afghanistan were women.

The story of Afghanistan’s women and their struggle for liberation is remarkable. But it’s seldom told in the capitalist West, whose propaganda is filled with distortions and bitter lies.

First woman vice president

Dr. Anahita Ratebzad was an Afghan socialist, a founding member of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan and a member of the Revolutionary Council. She was



Afghanistan’s socialist Vice President Anahita Ratebzad, standing at right, speaks with a group of activists. Ratebzad said, “Privileges which women, by right, must have are equal education, job security, health services and free time to rear a healthy generation.”

also the first woman vice president of Afghanistan from 1980 to 1985 — decades before the United States could boast about the election of Kamala Harris.

In the 1960s, she founded the Democratic Organization of Afghan Women (DOAW), and in 1965, Ratebzad and other Afghan women organized the first International Women’s Day March in Kabul. Earlier in 1963, Dr. Ratebzad graduated as a medical doctor.

There is vast documentation that the imperialist bourgeoisie knew full well that the Soviet Union had not planned, let alone carried out, the April Revolution.

It was Afghans led by the PDPA that requested assistance from the Soviet Union, whose borders bounded with Afghanistan, to help in the growing civil war promulgated by reactionary and corrupt warlords bent on overturning the new government.

What is not well understood is that the U.S. was deeply involved in the Afghan civil war, not on the side of the new government, but on the side of the reactionaries who were bent on the destruction of the progressive gains, which foremost included women’s rights.

In 1979, the CIA began arming and financing the Afghan “mujahideen” — murderous warlords — and later conspired with both Osama Bin Laden and the Taliban. The CIA operation, dubbed “Operation Cyclone,” was the longest and most expensive in U.S. history. It continued after the

Soviet army withdrew in 1989.

Later, the CIA ran death squads that terrorized Afghan villagers and murdered children.

U.S. war and occupation

In 1992 the Afghan warlords, backed by the U.S., finally succeeded in overthrowing the PDPA government. At the time, Western governments celebrated this as a “victory against Soviet tyranny.” In 1996 the Taliban movement, a product of infighting among the warlord factions, seized control of the country. Socialist leaders who had been held under house arrest were executed.

In 2001, the Taliban made a convenient first target for the U.S. “war on terror” after the 9/11 attacks. In two decades of U.S. war and occupation since then, only a tiny percentage of women and girls were able to advance themselves, inadvertently becoming show pieces for Western NGOs and the media. But the vast majority of Afghan women have remained in the worst possible conditions.

Business Insider, certainly not a revolutionary source, documents Afghanistan among the 25 poorest countries. Afghanistan is listed as the 7th poorest, with a gross domes-

tic product of \$499.44 per person, just ahead of war torn Yemen. It was more likely that an Afghan woman or girl would be blown up by a landmine or starve to death than have the opportunity to go to school.

Wherever imperialism goes, it creates misery and backwardness, stunting and distorting the development of the colonized, occupied and even the neocolonial world.

Class roots of women’s oppression

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, advanced a materialist conception of history. Included was the thesis that the development of private property during the period of prehistory led to the first division among humans — the overthrow of matrilineal society and the consequent oppression of women.

While they rested that conclusion on anthropological studies that were available in the 19th century, their conclusions have now been more fully documented. (See Engels’ “The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State” and Bob McCubbin’s “The Social Evolution of Humanity.”)

The materialist view of history explained that the development of society was based on changes in the mode of production from slavery (referring to the slavery of antiquity), feudalism and capitalism to socialism and what lies in the future, communism.

It is the struggle of classes that drives this process forward.

Marx and the thinkers that followed him did not view this process as stagnant and linear but rather one that was rupture, chaotic and revolutionary. Sometimes different modes of production existed side by side for a period of time before contradictions gave way to change.

The role of religion and culture is a product of the dominant economic system. Ideas do not abstractly exist somewhere in the stratosphere; they are deeply connected to all human

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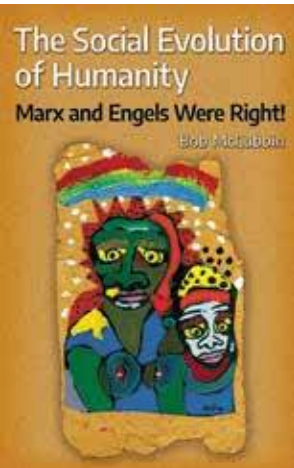


In 1992, three years after the Soviet army withdrew, the PDPA forces continued to resist. Contrast this with the rapid collapse of the U.S. puppet Karzai-Ghani government in Kabul.

Paperback or Kindle At: tinyurl.com/vwarcv7

The Social Evolution of Humanity

Marx and Engels were right! Bob McCubbin



This study of the evolution of humanity focuses on human social/sexual relations and, in particular, the changing social status of women. It offers a selection of scientific evidence that updates and augments the viewpoint expressed in Frederick Engels’ masterful work, ‘Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.’

McCubbin is the author of ‘Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View.’ First published in 1976, during the first flush of the modern LGBTQ2S movement, McCubbin’s unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of when, where, why and how LGBTQ2S oppression developed.

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society. That includes the ideology of patriarchy.

The modern-day women's liberation movement in the United States is not exempted. It emerged and was influenced by the great struggles against imperialism, including the Vietnamese liberation struggle, and domestically, the Black liberation movement.

Dorothy Ballan explains in the pamphlet "Feminism and Marxism" how the development of the birth control pill, which gave women some modicum of control over their bodies, buttressed the movement.

Socialist revolutions

The Russian Revolution of 1917, which established the Soviet Union, was the very first revolution that shook off both the chains of capitalism and feudal relations, and others followed.

In 1949, the Chinese Revolution threw off the shackles of feudalism. Chinese women, who "hold up half the sky," participated in bringing about a new China that abolished child brothels, concubinage and arranged marriages in the revolutionary Marriage Law of 1950. Foot binding, a cruel process of mutilating girls and a product of feudal China, was banished.

What the revolutionary socialist women and men of Afghanistan were able to accomplish from 1978-1992, prior to their revolution's destruction and losses, was nothing short of heroic.

The grinding poverty and the existence of feudal conditions mitigated against everything they were trying to accomplish. Yet they fought.

Their struggle took place in the shadows, both literally in proximity and figuratively, of the great Bolshevik Revolution that brought innumerable gains to women and all of the Soviet people. The Soviet revolution could not have helped but raise the expectations of the Afghan people.

Ironically, it was the retreat of the Soviet leadership during this period, leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union, that would also figure negatively into the equation.

While today it is the oppressor's history that dominates our capitalist culture with slanders and self-righteous criticism, none of it can change the heroic character of those women and men who fought for genuine social change.

Reparations needed for Afghan people

At present the Afghan people are suffering from staggering inflation. It's not just burqas rising in price, as the media snidely reports, but food and many other necessities. The New York Federal Reserve and other banks are blocking Afghanistan's nearly \$9.5 billion in assets.

U.S. imperialism and its banker rulers owe reparations to the people of Afghanistan who have suffered pillage, death and destruction for the last four decades.

Our role as women in the Western capitalist world is to end imperialist war, occupation and sanctions — the only sure route to the liberation of women worldwide. Regardless of twists and turns, self-determination for the people of Afghanistan will ultimately bring progress.

U.S. out of Afghanistan — reparations now! ☐



Aftermath of U.S. drone strike in Kabul that killed 10 people, including 7 children, on Aug. 30.

No end in sight to U.S. war crimes in Afghanistan

By Scott Scheffer

On Aug. 26, a suicide bomb was detonated at the airport in Kabul amid the chaos of the U.S. troop withdrawal. Two hundred people were killed, including 13 U.S. soldiers. Reporters paid tribute to the U.S. troops that died, but barely mentioned the deaths of up to 170 Afghan people in the same attack.

Then, ostensibly in response to the attack that ISIS-K took credit for, the Biden White House ordered two successive drone strikes. The second U.S. drone strike killed 10 people, most of them children. None of them were terrorists.

The dismissal of Afghan deaths typifies and speaks volumes about the character and the true goals of the 20-year war.

The deaths of innocents shouldn't come as a surprise. The war was justified by lies about elevating the lives of the Afghan people, or promoting the rights and safety of women and girls.

Inching closer to the truth, speaking at the Virginia Military Institute in 2002, President George W. Bush reversed his campaign assertions that he was against "nation-building," an imperialist euphemism for installing a government that would be compliant to the needs of U.S. imperialism. "After 9/11, I changed my mind," he said.

But "nation-building" or protecting the rights of Afghan women and girls could never have been achieved and could not have been the goal of the warmakers as they bombed and shot and shredded any hope of peace or progress for the Afghan people.

The remainder of the war — even after the 2011 capture and execution of Osama Bin Laden — was just continuous widespread destruction and mass murder being meted out by the U.S. military and all its paid mercenaries.

U.S. troops open fire at airport

On Sept. 1, Wang Wenbin, a spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, called for a full investigation of U.S. war crimes during the 20-year war and occupation. He referred to the accounts of survivors of the Aug. 26 bombing at the Kabul airport who said that U.S. troops opened fire on the crowd after the blast.

A Xinhua article quotes a military officer saying only 20 of 100 bodies examined were killed by the bomb, confirming reports that U.S. troops opened fire in the chaos. The article gives more detail raising serious doubts about how the horrible event was reported by the Pentagon and U.S. media.

Wang also referred to other massacres by the U.S. and NATO forces.

The history of the war is checkered with reports of U.S. massacres. There was a wedding banquet bombed in 2002, killing dozens and injuring at least 100. In 2008, a U.S. aircraft bombed a village in Herat, killing 100 — including 50 children and 19 women.

In March 2012, a U.S. Army staff sergeant was arrested for going house to house murdering 16 people. Members of Afghanistan's pro-U.S. National Assembly alleged that up to 20 U.S. soldiers had been involved. Exercising U.S. extraterritoriality, the Pentagon was in charge of the trial, and it was handled as the act of one individual.

Afghanistan is the most "droned" country in the world. Since 2015, there have been 13,072 confirmed U.S. drone strikes that have killed up to 10,076 people and injured up to 1,769, according to the British-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism.

Another whistleblower jailed

In March of this year, former Air Force intelligence officer Daniel Hales was sentenced to four years in prison for leaking U.S. military documents which revealed that during a 4-year stretch, 90% of deaths from drone strikes in Afghanistan were of people who were not the intended targets.

The papers were leaked in 2013, meaning that Pentagon and White House officials have known that drone strikes are mass murder and continued using them in Afghanistan for at least eight more years.

The war had transitioned into mainly drone strikes in later years. But combined with bombs from piloted aircraft and thousands of special forces raids aided by friendly



On Sept. 11, the New York Times admitted: "U.S. officials said a Reaper drone followed a car for hours and then fired based on evidence it was carrying explosives. But in-depth video analysis and interviews at the site cast doubt on that account."

forces on the ground or nearby, more than 70,000 Afghan civilians and an equal number of armed combatants perished.

A center for the detention and torture of Afghan "terror suspects" — similar to Abu Ghraib in Iraq — functioned throughout the war at Bagram Air Force Base. As the U.S. withdrawal commenced, that center was burned and destroyed by its functionaries.

Although the "boots on the ground" phase of the imperialist effort has been defeated, every indication is that the imperialist drive to destroy any resistance in Afghanistan will continue.

Given the possibility of China, Russia and/or Iran helping to rebuild Afghanistan, the U.S. has frozen \$9.5 billion of Afghanistan's money, held by the U.S. Federal Reserve and International Monetary Fund.

Another \$13 billion is held in international accounts in euros and British pounds and subject to the "long reach of American sanctions and influence," according to the Aug. 18 New York Times. Access to another \$12 billion in aid that had been agreed on by 60 countries is also now blocked.

On Aug. 31, in Biden's speech about the withdrawal, he asserted — as his administration has in the recent past — the right of the U.S. to continue using drones to wage war in Afghanistan. He said, "We have what's called Over The Horizon [OTH] capabilities, which means we can strike terrorists and targets without American boots on the ground, or very few if needed."

The people of Afghanistan will find a way to regroup and rebuild. Abolishing the Pentagon, the CIA and all the U.S. agencies of death and destruction has to be the mission of the anti-imperialist movement. ☐

How Reagan's war drive exploited a tragedy: The real story of Korean Air Lines Flight 007

By Stephen Millies

Thirty-eight years ago, 269 people were killed when Korean Air Lines flight 007 was shot down over the Soviet Union on Sept. 1, 1983.

President Ronald Reagan called it “an act of barbarism.” U.S. cops kill as many people every three months.

Less than five years later, the U.S. Navy blew up Iran Air flight 655 on July 3, 1988, killing 290 people. Reagan's vice president, George H.W. Bush, declared a month afterwards, “I will never apologize for the United States — I don't care what the facts are.”

The Korean airliner flew as far as 365 miles off course to go over sensitive Soviet military bases at night. Monitoring Soviet communications, the National Security Agency later admitted the socialist country's air defense personnel thought the jet was a U.S. RC-135 spy plane, a Boeing military plane that's identical to the Boeing 707 commercial aircraft.

The Iranian airliner, on the other hand, was on its expected course when it was shot down in broad daylight, 7,600 miles from the U.S., by a missile fired by the USS Vincennes. Both tragedies were used by the military-industrial complex to get what it wanted.

After its airliner was shot down, Iran was compelled to end the Iran-Iraq war on poor terms. Using the “divide and conquer” tactic, both the Carter and Reagan administrations promoted this bloody war that killed hundreds of thousands of people. Now it was time to end it, with both Iran and Iraq severely weakened.

The shutdown of the Korean airliner unleashed a tidal wave of hate against the Soviet Union. Corporate media acted as cheerleaders. Reagan used the 269 deaths to push through huge increases in the Pentagon budget.

A crucial part of this war drive was deploying Pershing II medium range nuclear missiles in West Germany in November 1983. These mass murder weapons — that could hit Soviet soil in eight minutes — were installed despite millions of people having demonstrated against them.

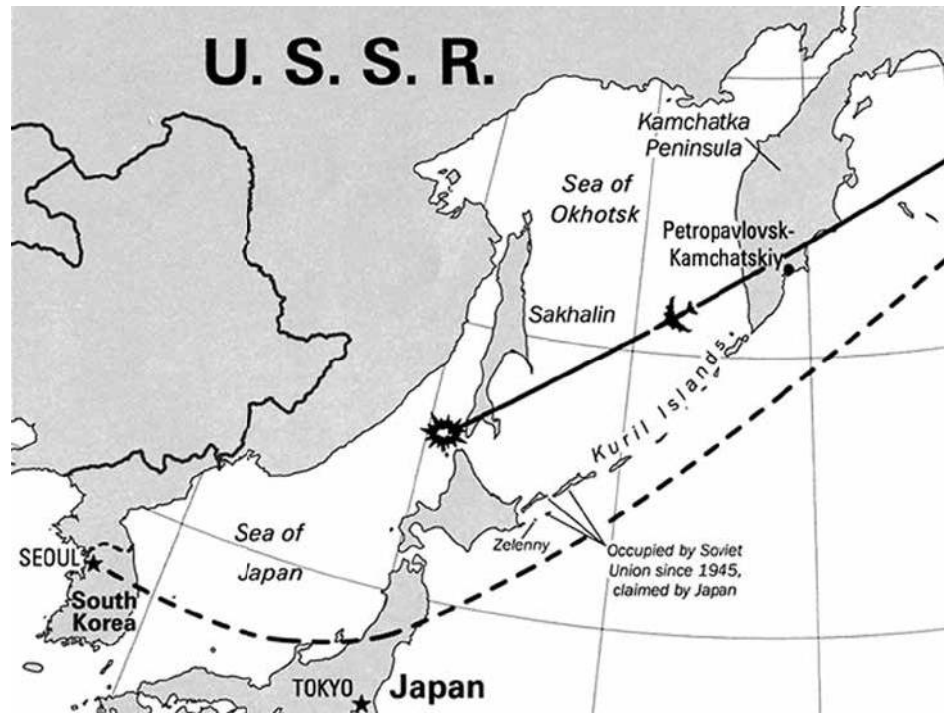
War propaganda at the U.N.

Pumping up the anti-communist campaign was a Hollywood spectacular at the United Nations Security Council, courtesy of the U.S. Information Agency. Its director was Reagan's buddy Charles Wick, co-producer of “Snow White and the Three Stooges.”

Five TV screens were set up in the council chamber to show the video. The MC was U.S. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick.

She had dismissed the murder and rape of four churchwomen in El Salvador by the oligarchy's National Guard. “The nuns were not just nuns,” Kirkpatrick said. “The nuns were also political activists.”

Thirteen years later the video's producer, Alvin Snyder, admitted that “the video was powerful, effective and wrong.” It featured alleged comments of Soviet pilots, many of



This map produced by the CIA shows how wildly off course Flight 007 flew on Sept. 1, 1983.

which were mistranslated.

Adding to the right-wing uproar was the death on flight 007 of John Birch Society leader and Congress member Larry McDonald. The fascist had nominated Nazi war criminal Rudolf Hess for a Nobel Peace Prize.

The Birchers claimed that flight 007 was actually captured by a secret Soviet weapon with McDonald and the other passengers being held captive. Interestingly, other Congress members — including Ku Klux Klan Senator Jesse Helms — flew on KAL flight 015, which followed flight 007 and kept on the correct flight path.

All the while, the Reagan regime was conducting a massive cover-up that rivaled Watergate. Key radar tapes were destroyed. Gag orders were issued to silence witnesses.

By law, the National Transportation Safety Board was supposed to investigate the shutdown. It was illegally ordered instead to turn over its evidence to the State Department, which sat on it.

Deliberately off course

One of few voices to question the White House story about flight 007 was British journalist R.W. Johnson. His book “Shutdown” was published in 1986 and is worth reading today.

Johnson described the tremendous odds against the Korean airliner having accidentally flown so far from its designated flight path. He quotes retired Canadian Major-General Richard Rohmer: “Did the [Korean] 747's crew know the aircraft was off course? ... Yes, they knew exactly where they were ...”

Here's some of the reasons “Shutdown” gives for disbelieving that flight 007 flew 250 miles over Soviet territory by “mistake”:

- *The Boeing 747 was equipped with the Inertial Navigation System. The INS has three computers so it can continue to function even if two of the computers crash. Over a five-year period there was only one INS error per every 20,000 flights, most likely caused by programming errors.

- It's hard to believe that such an error was made by the captain of flight 007, Chun Byung-in. The experienced pilot was known as a “human computer.”
- Chun wasn't alone on the 747 flight deck. Even if the INS and the autopilot were uncoupled, the crew would have had to ignore the amber warning light. They also would have had to fail to notice the reading on the magnetic compass.
- Standard procedure would be for the plane's weather radar to be in its ground-mapping model. This would have clearly shown the Soviet Union's rocky Kamchatka peninsula that the plane flew over.
- Captain Chun repeatedly gave false positions of his location. He flew almost directly over the Soviet bases of Petropavlovsk and Korsakov. Chun turned to go over the Soviet Union's Sakhalin Island.
- In order to make evasive maneuvers, including increasing the speed, Captain Chun took 10,000 pounds more fuel than he put on the flight release sheet.
- Retired Trans World Airlines pilot and navigator Robert Allardyce along with his associate James Gollin listened to the last words of flight 007's First Officer Son Dong-Hui. It was first broadcast on ABC's “20/20” program. They heard: “For South Korean Director ... repeating instructions. Hold your bogey (or ‘bogies’) north (or ‘course’) ... repeat conditions. Gonna be a bloodbath ... you bet.”

As R.W. Johnson pointed out, both “director” and “bogey” are military, not civilian, aviation terms. He wrote that First Officer Son “was in touch with the mission director of what could only have been a surveillance mission.”

Using passengers as bait

Flight 007 wasn't the first Korean Air Lines plane to go over Soviet territory by “mistake.” On April 20, 1978, KAL flight 902 flew over the

Soviet base at Murmansk before it was forced to land by a Soviet fighter. One passenger was killed.

South Korea is a virtual colony of Wall Street and its military-industrial complex. In the middle of Seoul is a U.S. military base. That's like British or German troops occupying New York City's Central Park.

The CIA uses South Korea to spy on the socialist Democratic People's Republic of Korea and, at that time, the Soviet Union. KAL flight 007 was used as bait to “light up” every Soviet radar in the region, as well as to listen to radio communications.

Collecting info for the Pentagon were at least two RC-135 spy planes; another spy plane, the Orion P-3C; the USS Observation Island, operating the Cobra Judy radar; and the 1982-41c spy satellite. The U.S. also had a series of ground radar stations. Meanwhile the space shuttle Challenger was circling the earth.

Ernest Volkman, editor of “Defense Science,” described the results: “As a result of the KAL incident, United States intelligence received a bonanza the likes of which they have never received in their lives. Reason: because of the tragic incident it managed to turn on just about every single Soviet electromagnetic transmission over a period of about four hours and an area of approximately 7,000 square miles, and I mean everything. ... Now, admittedly, that's a cynical statement, but we're talking about a very cynical business here.”

More good news from the 269 dead passengers and crew was a boom in “defense” stocks, including Lockheed.

Risking nuclear war

The Reagan administration was possibly the most adventurist in U.S. history. It wanted to put MX nuclear missiles on Japanese bullet trains.

Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger wrote that Secretary of State Alexander Haig wanted “to invade Cuba and, one way or another, put an end to the Castro regime.”

Reagan worshipper Peter Schweizer bragged how U.S. bombers would fly to the edge of Soviet air space before peeling off at the last minute. Every time Soviet fighters were forced to scramble. Pretending to launch a nuclear first strike must have been great fun!

This was the most dangerous time of the Cold War since the Cuban missile crisis. A Soviet diplomat told Brian Becker — now the ANSWER Coalition's national director — that the KAL 007 crisis reminded him of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Many on the far right claimed that accused JFK assassin and patsy Lee Harvey Oswald was a Soviet and/or Cuban agent.

Starting on Nov. 7, 1983 — the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution — U.S. and other NATO forces staged the Able Archer '83 exercise, which included a simulated nuclear attack. Soviet Defense Minister Dmitry Ustinov warned that NATO's exercises “are becoming increas-

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ingly difficult to distinguish from a real deployment.”

Meanwhile U.S. naval exercises were staged in the northern Pacific near Soviet waters. These included the Fleetex '83 exercise and a simulated amphibious assault on Okinawa. This was seen as preparation for invading Soviet territories like the Kuril Islands, Sakhalin or Kamchatka.

The same year racist Reagan invaded the Black Caribbean island of Grenada while U.S. Marines landed in Lebanon. The CIA continued the Contra war in Nicaragua that cost 50,000 lives and was paid for by starting the crack epidemic.

Billions were spent to overthrow a progressive government in Afghanistan. Reagan did everything he could to prop up the apartheid regime in South Africa that was keeping Nelson Mandela in jail.

Gambling with 269 lives

Like Trump, the Reaganites wanted to ditch arms-control treaties. Part of this campaign was leaking to journalists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak that a huge radar was being built at Krasnoyarsk in Siberia. In their July 27, 1983, newspaper column, they claimed the facility would violate the anti-ballistic missile treaty.

What was needed to whip up this allegation was finding out if there was a radar gap on the Soviet Union's Pacific border. Hence the flight of KAL 007 over a string of Soviet military bases, forcing its military to turn on every radar.

U.S. electronic platforms jammed as many Soviets radars as they could. This allowed flight 007 to get clean across Kamchatka.

Soviet fighters were sent to stop the intruder. Flight 007's pilot Chun Byung-in ignored warnings that included tracer shells shot by Soviet pilot Vassily Kasmin.

Chun instead staged diversionary tactics like a military aircraft would. (Chun was a former Korean Air Force pilot.) These tricks included reporting that he was climbing when he was actually descending.

Kasmin was finally given an order to fire missiles at the intruder. The Soviets had no idea that it was a commercial airliner.

R.W. Johnson believes that National Security Advisor "Judge" Bill Clark and CIA director William Casey were responsible for sending flight 007 into Soviet airspace.

If worse came to worse, flight 007 might be forced to land on Soviet territory, like KAL flight 902 did in 1978. But 007 pilot Chun Byung-in tried to escape instead. Two hundred sixty-nine people were killed.

Clark looked for an exit. When the Secretary of Interior James Watt was forced to resign after making bigoted remarks, Clark slipped into the job. Within a year he was back at his California ranch.

The sad tale of flight 007 should be remembered for the deadly risks taken by the U.S. military-industrial complex. Poor and working people shouldn't believe White House lies about the Soviet Union 38 years ago or the People's Republic of China today. ☐

Unless otherwise noted, the source is "Shootdown: Flight 007 and the American Connection" by R.W. Johnson.

Vietnam resists Washington's anti-China campaign

By Gregory E. Williams

Vietnam and China fought an unfortunate border war in February and March of 1979, egged on by U.S. imperialist interference in the region. Nevertheless, relations between the two countries have steadily improved, based on a shared interest in peaceful socialist construction, resulting in deepening political and economic cooperation.

Currently, maritime disputes are the biggest threat to this long-lasting peace. Controversies have arisen around commercial fishing, oil exploration and other activities in the waters that China calls the South Sea, and Vietnam calls the East Sea. There are competing claims about control of various small islands.

One-third of the world's trade passes through these waters. But the situation must also be understood in the context of U.S. military provocations; for example, this year, Washington has deployed a Navy strike group headed by the USS Theodore Roosevelt in the sea.

Despite ongoing disputes, both the Chinese and Vietnamese governments have firmly maintained that they will resolve all issues through dialogue and recourse to maritime law.

On April 26, a high-level meeting was held between Vietnamese and Chinese officials in Hanoi. In attendance were Vietnamese President Nguyễn Xuân Phúc, Communist Party of Vietnam General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng and China's National Defense Minister Wei Fenghe. The leaders pledged to strengthen bilateral ties and military cooperation.

In Xinhua News' paraphrase, President Phúc said that "Vietnam will stay on guard against and firmly resist any schemes to undermine Vietnam-China relations, and will never follow other countries in opposing China."

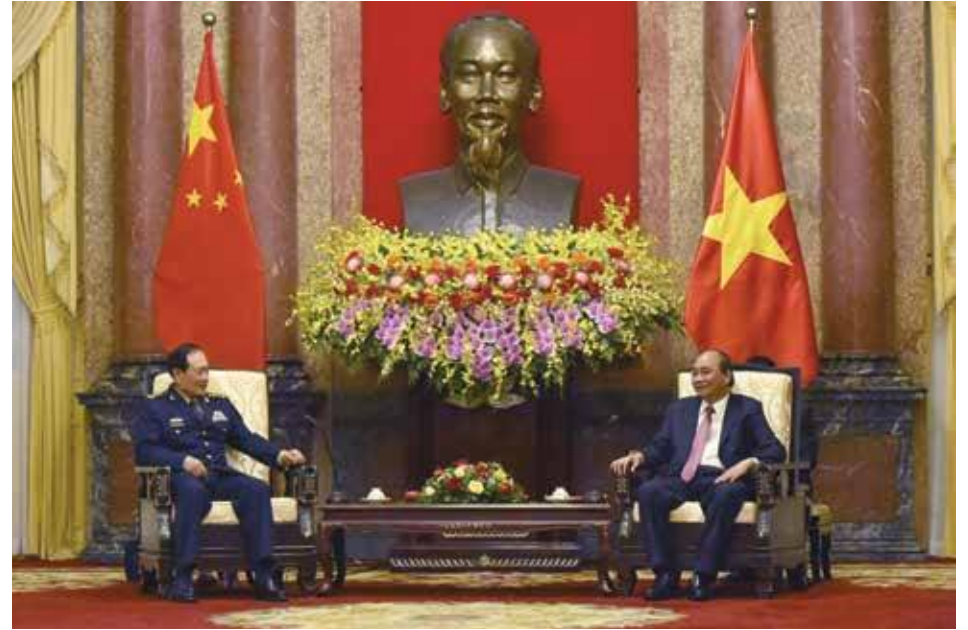


PHOTO: JIANG SHENGXIONG / XINHUA

Vietnamese President Nguyễn Xuân Phúc (R) meets with visiting Chinese National Defense Minister Wei Fenghe (L) in Hanoi on April 26.

Further, they stressed that they must resist pressures from outside the region to interfere in the maritime disputes.

This is not an abstract concern. U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris arrived in Hanoi on Aug. 24. The thrust of her visit was to try to convince the Vietnamese government to become part of an anti-China alliance.

During the trip she said, "We need to find ways to pressure and raise the pressure, frankly, on Beijing to abide by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and to challenge its bullying and excessive maritime claims." Harris's appeal to the U.N. is rich, considering that Washington has consistently flaunted the U.N.'s resolutions demanding an end to sanctions against Cuba and other unilateral imperialist bullying.

The Biden administration's approach to the region is a continuation of Trump-era policies, as well as Obama's "pivot to Asia." The 2018 declassified report, "U.S. Strategic Framework for the Indo-Pacific,"

lays out the overall strategy and goals. The first bullet point reads, "How to maintain U.S. strategic primacy in the Indo-Pacific region and promote a liberal economic order while preventing China from establishing new, illiberal spheres of influence, and cultivating areas of cooperation to promote regional peace and prosperity?"

The "peace and prosperity" bit is the most outrageous part. If they were serious about that, they would end their occupation of South Korea, stop providing weapons to the Duterte regime in the Philippines, etc. The generals in Washington would likely love to have a military base in Vietnam, but as part of its revolutionary sovereign policy, Vietnam does not allow foreign bases on its soil.

But the important thing here is that, despite considerable trade and diplomatic relations between Washington and Hanoi, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is not on board with the U.S.-led anti-China coalition. ☐

Palestinian prisoners resist as Freedom Tunnel heroes seized

By Samidoun

In the early hours of Saturday, Sept. 11, occupation forces seized Mohammed Ardah and Zakaria Zubaidi, over five days after they liberated themselves from Gilboa Prison. Earlier that day, they seized Mahmoud Ardah and Yaqoub Qadri. Two liberated prisoners remain free, insisting on their freedom despite an ongoing manhunt by all levels of the Israeli occupation forces. Given the record of the Israeli occupation, we have every reason to believe that the four seized members of the Freedom Brigade will be subjected to severe torture and abuse in an attempt to garner information on the whereabouts of their liberated brothers.

The four are currently being held in the Jalameh interrogation center and are being denied access to their lawyers. Palestinian lawyer Khaled Mahajneh told Quds News that "the

occupation intelligence is hiding all information about the prisoners who were arrested, and the court has imposed until now an order to prevent the four prisoners from meeting with their defense lawyers...We have not been able to obtain information about the prisoners' conditions, nor about their health, physical or psychological state." All of the Palestinian resistance organizations have issued stern warnings to the Israeli occupation against harming the four heroes of the Freedom Tunnel, while human rights organizations emphasized that the occupation holds full responsibility for their lives.

Western imperialist governments are part and parcel of the ongoing attacks against Palestinian prisoners and the colonization of Palestine. From the over \$3.8 billion annually in weaponry provided by the U.S. to the Israeli regime, to the ongoing



economic, political and diplomatic support provided by the European Union, Canada, Britain and others, all of these states are directly involved in the ongoing crimes perpetuated against the Palestinian people. Everywhere in the world, we can and must act now to stand with the heroes of the Freedom Tunnel and all Palestinian prisoners struggling for justice, and for the liberation of Palestine!

For updates and actions, visit samidoun.net.

En Puerto Rico, sigue la lucha del pueblo

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Mientras la dictadura de la Junta de Control Fiscal impuesta por el congreso de EUA y sus lacayos en el gobierno local hacen todo por destruirnos como país y hundirnos en la pobreza y la desesperación, el pueblo sigue adelante organizándose y luchando en varios frentes.

Ya está claro que la administración del achichinle gobernador Pedro Pierluisi en nada va a favorecer al pueblo. Tanto él como su hermana Caridad, a quien llevó a residir en La Fortaleza para ayudarlo a gobernar sin haber sido elegida por el pueblo, tienen como prioridad privatizar cualquier agencia que queda del pueblo.

Pero en su arrogancia, no cuentan con que el pueblo ya está cansado del abuso por los malos servicios de

salud, energía, educación, vivienda, seguridad pública, etc, además del terrible aumento en el costo de vida y la canasta básica.

Hay luchas por todos lados, entre ellas, comunidades enteras contra las antenas de telecomunicaciones, contra la construcción en zonas marítimo terrestres, en pro de la defensa de la educación, sindicatos, pero ahora la más urgente es la lucha contra la terrible privatizadora de energía Luma porque ya hay mucha indignación por los incesantes apagones por todo el país.

Hay varias manifestaciones pautadas para estos días tanto en contra de Luma como contra la Junta de Control Fiscal.

La lucha es cuesta arriba, pero se sigue avanzando. ¡Fuera Luma y la dictadura de la Junta y sus lacayos en el gobierno!



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

Las remesas que no llegan en Cuba

Por Rosa Miriam Elizalde

Con el dinero que gana limpiando casas en la mañana y una oficina en la noche, Virgen Elena Pupo, migrante cubana de 47 años, ha logrado sacar adelante a su familia en Washington DC, pero no ha podido ayudar a sus padres en Holguín, separada de ellos por más de 2 mil kilómetros. A la ciudad del noroeste de Cuba, golpeada en estos días con el incremento de casos de Covid-19, no llegan ni vuelos ni remesas de Estados Unidos por las políticas de Donald Trump que ha mantenido Joe Biden.

Una semana antes de las elecciones en Estados Unidos, el 27 de octubre de 2020, Trump emitió su última medida contra la isla. Incluyó entonces en la Lista Restringida de Cuba a la empresa financiera cubana Fincimex, contraparte de Western Union, con el pretexto ridículo de que pertenece a la corporación empresarial cubana Gaesa.

La medida cortó de golpe los canales para remesas, y los ancianos padres de Virgen Elena, en medio de la epidemia, no han podido recibir ninguna ayuda.

Este lunes, Fincimex anunció en un comunicado retrasos en las entregas de remesas que llegan a Cuba por terceros países, debido a la dificultad de encontrar instituciones financieras que autoricen las operaciones. La inclusión de esta empresa en la lista de entidades restringidas por el Departamento del Tesoro estadounidense, "sigue generando en

el sector bancario internacional temores a aceptar operaciones dirigidas a la entidad y tendencias a limitar su alcance".

Es una situación contra toda lógica. Las remesas han salido al rescate de las familias castigadas por el coronavirus en todo el mundo. Según el Banco Mundial, el envío de dinero de los emigrados a sus familiares superó en 2020 la suma de la inversión extranjera directa (259 mil millones de dólares) y la ayuda oficial al desarrollo (179 mil millones) de los países en desarrollo. Por ejemplo, en los primeros seis meses de 2021, las remesas tuvieron un crecimiento histórico en México, como dio cuenta recientemente La Jornada. Alcanzaron 23 mil 681 millones de dólares, 22.4% más que igual periodo del año anterior.

"Mientras el Covid-19 sigue devastando a las familias de todo el mundo, las remesas siguen siendo un salvavidas fundamental para los más pobres y vulnerables", comentó a propósito Michal Rutkowski, director mundial de Protección Social y Empleo del Banco Mundial. Esto pasa en México y en todas partes. Los envíos regulares que hacen los migrantes latinoamericanos pobres a sus familias se han convertido en vitales para muchas de las economías de la región. Generalmente son los trabajadores pobres quienes mandan hasta ocho veces por año sumas pequeñas sacándolas de donde no tienen. Han sido el segundo ingreso de México durante años y cerca o más



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de 20% del producto interno bruto de Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala y otros países. Protegen a millones de personas. ¿Por qué lo hacen, por qué tanto sacrificio? Las encuestas dicen que la explicación de este gran gesto solidario de enorme impacto macroeconómico está ante todo en la familia. Lo hacen por inspiración moral, por lealtad a sus padres, hermanos, hijos y sobrinos.

En un estudio realizado en 2006 sobre las remesas y su impronta en la familia cubana, el investigador Edel Fresneda Camacho reconocía que esta ayuda no se destina a la inversión productiva. "Constituye una fuente importante de ingresos para las familias receptoras, de su capacidad de consumo y ahorro e implican un mejoramiento en las condiciones de vida", que en el caso de Cuba incluye la posibilidad de invertir en un pequeño negocio particular.

Él y otros investigadores han dado cuenta de los escarceos manipuladores de Washington en este frente. En los años 90, durante la crisis conocida en Cuba como el Periodo Especial, Estados Unidos reforzó el cerco económico. Bill Clinton prohibió de agosto de 1994 a 1998 las remesas excepto bajo condiciones estrictamente humanitarias: enfermedad o en casos de personas con permiso oficial de inmigración. Bush impuso restricciones aún más crueles, al permitir sólo visitas a la isla, una vez



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cada tres años, si se trataba de familiares muy cercanos –los tíos y primos no eran considerados "familia"–.

Aun así, la remesa se las ingenió para continuar llegando a la isla. Hasta ahora. Sin oficinas de Western Union, sin posibilidad de envíos por DHL, con bancos bajo intimidación y vuelos suspendidos a todas las provincias –salvo los muy limitados a La Habana–, a Virgen Elena sólo le queda esperar que sus ancianos padres resistan la pandemia. Y ruega cada día para que el sentido común tome posesión en la Casa Blanca, ubicada a sólo dos cuadras de la oficina que ella limpia en las noches con la terca voluntad de seguir sacando a flote a sus seres queridos.

Este artículo fue producido para Globetrotter y publicado primero en La Jornada. Rosa Miriam Elizalde es una periodista cubana, fundadora de Cubadebate. Es vicepresidenta de la Unión de Periodistas de Cuba (UPEC) y de la Federación Latinoamericana de Periodistas (FELAP). Es autora y coautora de varios libros, incluyendo Jineteros en la Habana y Chávez Nuestro. Por su destacada labor, ha sido merecedora en varias ocasiones del Premio Nacional de Periodismo Juan Gualberto Gómez. Es columnista semanal de La Jornada, México.

Fuente: Globetrotter



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