

Struggle - La Lucha Radio episode 3

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 13, 2019

Struggle - La Lucha news podcast on [RadioJustice.org](https://radiojustice.org)



Episode topics include headlines from Struggle - La Lucha news, memorial to Nipsey Hussle, May Day 2019, People's College of Law, and an ongoing case of police brutality in the Greater Atlanta region. [#Justice4Renardo](#) [#MayDay](#) Originally aired on Radio Justice (RJLA) @ RadioJustice.org



Protests demand justice for farmers killed by police death squads in the Philippines

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A protest outside the Philippine Consulate on New York City's Fifth Avenue on April 10 demanded justice for 14 farmers killed on March 30. The massacre by the Philippine National Police was in Negros Oriental province.

The NYC action was part of a Global Day of Action against this atrocity.

Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte's death squads have killed thousands of peasants, workers and pro-democracy activists. As the Campaign For Human Rights Philippines wrote in their statement:

"More than 60 peasant leaders in Negros alone, 205 from across the country, have already been killed under the Duterte regime. Must those who till the land to feed a

nation be slaughtered in the night like sick cows? Must those who have suffered from long years of neglect and who struggle for land and lasting peace be meted with death like the worst criminals?

["The International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines says no!"](#)

Behind Duterte is U.S. imperialism, which killed at least a million Filipinos in the dirty war following the U.S. invasion in 1898. Trump's secretary of state, Mike Pompeo — a virtual employee of the billionaire Koch brothers — conferred with Duterte in February.

There's a revolution developing in the Philippines. Peasants want the land that they've tilled for generations. Workers are demanding jobs and union rights.

Millions of people in the Philippines want an end to the U.S.-backed Duterte regime. The U.S. labor movement and all progressive people should support this just struggle.



Students and community say no to private police force at Johns Hopkins

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April 13, 2019



Members of Johns Hopkins Students Against Private Police and Hopkins Anti-ICE Coalition sit under a banner on April 4, 2019, in the university president's office building after sitting-in overnight.

Hundreds march: No private police, No ICE contracts and justice for Tyrone West

Baltimore, April 4 — A couple hundred protesters voiced their opposition to a [private armed police force at this city's Johns Hopkins University](#). This outrage was sparked by new legislation that was passed on April 2 in the Maryland Senate 42 to 2 that would allow the private institution to have its own 100-member police force at its academic campuses and main medical campus here. The bill awaits the signature of Gov. Larry Hogan, who has been a strong supporter of a police occupation of the university.

The protesters marched from Wyman Park to the office of the university president in Garland Hall, where about 50 students decided to occupy the administration building. Students and supporters have held fast and strong for over three days.

For many, the issue is about racial profiling. “For me and for every other Black student at Hopkins and for every single Black community member, I want them to come home at night. No, I don’t want them to be terrorized by a police officer,” said Bentley Addison, a student at JHU.

An impressive sight was the solidarity and linking of issues that the students made.



Don't justify war and sanctions

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In March alone, the U.S. State Department listed eight additional sanctions against Venezuela, further adding to the denial of that country's use of assets or its ability to receive international loans. Before the latest measure added on March 19, U.S. sanctions already cost Venezuela \$30 million per day.

Should sanctions be considered an act of war? Since 1990, according to United Nations and nongovernmental organization (NGO) data and well-researched scientific studies, it's estimated that at least 4 million people have died from the U.S. "war on terror" in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan alone. The majority of those deaths didn't come from direct killings, but rather from denial of necessities like clean water, medicine and food.

That denial is caused by U.S. and Western European use of international sanctions — utilizing their control over the United Nations.

U.S.-led U.N. sanctions share some telling similarities. For one, they are racist and

genocidal in nature — disproportionately targeting non-European countries and those least able to endure the denial of basic needs, especially African countries.

The [Consolidated List](#) of individuals and entities subject to sanctions by the U.N. Security Council exposes the fact that, although peoples on the continent of Africa make up 17 percent of the world population, they represent 64 percent of the countries affected by U.N. sanctions.

Meanwhile, in Venezuela, [57 percent of the population](#) are of Indigenous or African ancestry.

Imperialist sanctions are also justified in similar ways. They are supposedly made to rid people of government leaders engaging in corruption, violence and denial of democratic rights. Of course, their sovereignty must go as well.

The bottom line is that sanctions are an integral part of the declared and undeclared wars of U.S. imperialism, passed on from one administration to the next — whether Democratic or Republican. Their purpose is to bring about poverty, illness, starvation and desperation, targeting the people to weaken resistance to economic and military occupation.

Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan: true toll of sanctions

In 2015, Physicians for Social Responsibility published probably the most thorough and scientific report to date on the effects of U.S. war, [“Body Count: Casualty Figures after 10 Years of the ‘War on Terror’ — Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan.”](#)

It states: “This investigation comes to the conclusion that the war has, directly or indirectly, killed around 1 million people in Iraq, 220,000 in Afghanistan and 80,000 in Pakistan, i.e., a total of around 1.3 million. Not included in this figure are further war zones such as Yemen. The figure is approximately 10 times greater than that which the public, experts and decision makers are aware of and propagated by the

media and major NGOs.

“And this is only a conservative estimate. The total number of deaths in the three countries named above could also be in excess of 2 million, whereas a figure below 1 million is extremely unlikely.”

Other investigations, primarily using U.N. data, complete the analysis from the start of the U.S. war on Iraq in 1991 (the “Persian Gulf War”) and expose the deadly and purposeful effect of sanctions.

Graham Vanbergen, in a September 2015 article published by [Global Research](#) and TruePublica, writes: “Undisputed U.N. figures show that 1.7 million Iraqi civilians died due to the West’s brutal sanctions regime, half of whom were children. ...

“The mass death was seemingly intended. Among items banned by the U.N. sanctions were chemicals and equipment essential for Iraq’s national water treatment system. A secret U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) document discovered by professor Thomas Nagy of the School of Business at George Washington University amounted, he said, to ‘an early blueprint for genocide against the people of Iraq.’”

Citing additional reports from the National Academy of Sciences and data from the U.N. Population Division, Vanbergen concludes: “According to the figures explored here, total deaths from Western intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan since the 1990s — from direct killings and the longer-term impact of war-imposed deprivation — likely constitute around 4 million (2 million in Iraq from 1991-2003, plus 2 million from the ‘war on terror’).”

Zimbabwe: punishing land reform

And the horror of sanctions continues with the Trump administration’s extension of sanctions on Zimbabwe, announced March 4. Why? Because apparently Zimbabwe is

an “unusual and extraordinary threat.” Trump did this despite South African President Cyril Ramaphosa requesting he not extend sanctions and allow the country to recover.

Zimbabwe’s economy has been sabotaged by U.S. and British sanctions since 2001 to punish its government for acknowledging the will of the people to take back land stolen by the minority white population that previously benefited from decades of colonialism and apartheid rule. The Zimbabwean Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA), a bi-partisan bill supported by Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden, attempted to cut off international loans and institute other economic sanctions.

When Zimbabwe, formerly called Rhodesia, achieved its true independence in 1980, this lay the basis for the most democratic form of government up to that point, as witnessed by the redistribution of land, mostly to the poorest sectors, and contributed to the support and popularity of elected President Robert Mugabe.

In a November 2018 article in [African Arguments](#), Tendai Murisa and Shantha Bloemen report: “18 years since the land seizures, the landscape in Zimbabwe has dramatically changed. Instead of 6,000 commercial farmers controlling 70 percent of valuable farmland, there are an estimated 200,000 new small-scale farmers. In 2018, the country experienced its largest tobacco harvest ever. This new reality on the ground is accepted by most Zimbabweans, both white and black.”

It’s also telling that Trump’s extension of ZIDERA includes new provisions, passed by Congress last July, demanding a reversal of the land reform with “reparations” amounting to \$30 billion to be paid to white farmers.

Murisa and Bloemen continue: “As South Africa and Namibia currently debate how to address historical injustices around land, Zimbabwe’s harsh treatment could be seen as a threat for what not to do.

“Adding weight to these suspicions, President Trump tweeted his concerns about South Africa’s land reform process shortly after signing ZIDERA into law. He is reported to have been informed by fringe white farmer lobbies in South Africa, who have growing alliances with white supremacist groups in the U.S.”

Yemen: an embarrassment of war and sanctions

Despite the fact that 18 million people are expected to starve as a result of the U.S.-Saudi war against Yemen, Washington, the European Union and the U.N. continue sanctions against that country.

Supposedly, these measures are meant to stop al-Qaida. However, the arms embargo and asset freeze are directed primarily against the forces that are actually fighting al-Qaida — and also fighting the U.S.-Saudi alliance. The [Associated Press](#) reported on Aug. 6 that al-Qaida, Saudi Arabia and the U.S. have been working together against the Ansar Allah (otherwise known as Houthis).

The horrendous starvation estimates received wide attention that demanded a reaction from U.S. politicians, who designed a deceptive bill lauded as ending U.S. involvement in the war against Yemen. In fact, on April 4, the House of Representatives [passed the bill](#) introduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders that would invoke the War Powers Act.

Unfortunately, and deliberately, one of the bill’s biggest loopholes allows military actions to continue due to the presence of al-Qaida in the area. Since the U.S. and Saudi Arabia are actually working with al-Qaida, it’s business as usual, by design — even if President Trump doesn’t veto the bill.

Venezuela: don’t justify sanctions and war

Today’s version of endless wars started in Iraq. That nightmare of sanctions and war was justified by false U.S. government assertions that Saddam Hussein had

“weapons of mass destruction,” bolstered by the corporate media and even individuals and organizations on the left who, uncritical and unprincipled, would rather go with the State Department narrative to avoid any accusations of siding with dictators or terrorists.

These are similar to the “critical” voices that echo Washington’s attacks against Venezuela’s Bolivarian government regarding “flawed” elections. Never mind that all observers of the elections, from trade union officials to social justice organization leaders, lauded the process.

A recurring argument used by “left” critics and even some so-called socialists, and thus justifying the ire of the U.S., is that opposition candidate Henrique Capriles Radonski was disqualified from running in the 2018 Venezuelan presidential election.

They say that while Capriles was accused of illegally fomenting violence by encouraging a right-wing crowd to storm the Cuban Embassy and threatening diplomats with violence during the 2002 coup attempt against then-President Hugo Chávez, he was “cleared” of all charges.

Actually, there is video evidence showing Capriles — then mayor of Baruta, a wealthy district of Caracas — climbing the walls of the embassy, leading the attack. Capriles tried to force Cuban diplomats to turn over the vice president and other government officials to the crowd. The Cuban diplomats refused, and fortunately, massive demonstrations of the Venezuelan people in support of Chávez ended the U.S.-encouraged coup.

Capriles’ organization had previously received hundreds of thousands of dollars from the U.S.-sponsored National Endowment for Democracy and the International Republican Institute.

So, was he cleared of those charges? No. He did commit those acts. However, he benefited from an amnesty by President Chávez in 2007 for all of those who participated in the coup attempt, which granted him a pardon.

Does that mean the Venezuelan people don't have the right to decide that he may be unqualified to run for president, being a known violent traitor and agent of U.S. imperialism?

The movement to build solidarity with the Venezuelan people, or the people of Zimbabwe, Iran, Yemen, People's Korea, Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan, or anywhere else that the nightmare of U.S. war and sanctions is occurring, will not benefit from repeating the lies of the U.S. State Department to justify its means of mass murder.

What's needed is to expose the truth that facilitates building a united movement to defeat the greatest threat to humanity today: U.S. imperialism!



Socialistas se unen por Venezuela y

lanzan nuevo partido

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Los Ángeles

Durante un fin de semana repleto de eventos en esta extensa metrópolis del sur de California, mucha gente salió a las calles por la Venezuela bolivariana, asistieron a una conferencia informativa sobre el socialismo; y activistas revolucionarixs de todo Estados Unidos lanzaron una nueva organización para unir a lxs trabajadores y oprimidos en la lucha contra el capitalismo: el Partido Socialist Unity.

‘¿De quién son las calles? ¡Nuestras!’

El 16 de marzo fue un día de solidaridad internacional con el pueblo y el gobierno de Venezuela, quienes continúan resistiendo las sanciones económicas, el sabotaje político y las amenazas militares de Washington y sus aliados. Esa mañana, al menos

100 personas se reunieron en el Parque MacArthur en el corazón de un vecindario latinx para exigir “¡Manos Fuera de Venezuela!” Fue una protesta iniciada por Struggle for Socialism - La Lucha por el Socialismo - y patrocinada por una coalición de 17 organizaciones.

Mientras las familias de clase trabajadora entraban al parque o compraban a los muchos vendedores que bordeaban las calles, fueron recibidas por manifestantes que portaban pancartas y carteles brillantes que exigían ¡No guerra contra Venezuela: dinero para empleos, escuelas, atención médica y vivienda! y ¡Presidente Maduro: Te defenderemos!

Se entregaron hojas informativas en español e inglés a lxs transeúntes, describiendo el trabajo que ha realizado Venezuela bolivariana para sacar al pueblo de la pobreza y contrastando al presidente Nicolás Maduro, ex conductor de autobuses y organizador sindical, con el multimillonario supremacista blanco Donald Trump.

En Venezuela, “las masas mismas eligieron democráticamente a su líder,” declaró la Secretaria General de BAYAN USA, Nikole Cababa, en un mitin de apertura. “Pero, lo que es más importante, han optado por oponerse a la intervención de los Estados Unidos.”

Gritando “¡No más sangre por petróleo!” y “¿De quién son las calles? ¡Nuestras! ” lxs manifestantes tomaron los carriles de tránsito alrededor del parque mientras marchaban hacia la oficina del Centro Centroamericano de Recursos (CARECEN-LA) para un breve mitin de cierre.

Lizz Toledo de Atlanta le dijo a Struggle-La Lucha: “Queremos que Maduro y el pueblo de Venezuela sepan que estamos con ellos, y continuaremos luchando aquí, no solo por su sustento sino también por nuestro bienestar, porque tenemos el mismo enemigo.”

‘Reforcemos nuestra clase, no la derribemos’

Posteriormente, lxs organizadores invitaron a lxs manifestantes a asistir a la conferencia titulada “Unidad por el socialismo y la revolución.” Banderas de Venezuela, Cuba, Puerto Rico y Palestina decoraron el área de oradores, junto con la bandera roja de la URSS socialista, la bandera de liberación LGBTQ2S y otras. Voluntarixs sirvieron chili vegetariano casero.

La conferencia, organizada por Struggle-La Lucha, abordó los siguientes tópicos: “Luchando contra el capitalismo global,” “Luchando por el socialismo” y “Solidaridad global.” Zola Fish, orgullosa miembro de la Nación Choctaw de Oklahoma y del Comité de Defensa de Leonard Peltier en San Diego, abrió la conferencia recordando a todxs que se llevaba a cabo en tierras robadas a las naciones originarias. Fish dedicó la reunión a mujeres indígenas y la lucha por mujeres, niñas y personas de dos espíritus asesinadas y desaparecidas (MMIWG2S).

John Parker de Struggle-La Lucha marcó la pauta. Al revisar la actual crisis económica capitalista global y las guerras imperialistas, Parker declaró: “No puedes llamarte socialista si ayudas a habilitar la guerra de los Estados Unidos. Si te llamas socialista, significa que estás luchando para acabar con el capitalismo, un sistema que se beneficia de la miseria y la guerra.

“Muchas de nuestras diferentes organizaciones se enfrentan a ataques por el estado,” continuó Parker, “y por instituciones y universidades estatales que intentan encontrar todo tipo de formas de negar la ciencia del socialismo y la clase que lo llevará a buen término. Intentan quitar la cuestión de clase de todas las demás preguntas y hacernos culpar a los demás, no a nuestro enemigo de clase.

“Destruir la unidad de nuestra clase trabajadora es un peligro para toda nuestra clase. Debemos reforzar nuestra clase, no derribarla. Debemos educar, no eliminar, a nuestra familia del pueblo trabajador.

“No toleramos la misoginia ni el fanatismo anti-LGBTQ2S, no toleramos el racismo y no toleramos ninguna ideología que enfrenta a un sector de nuestra clase contra otro,” concluyó Parker. “Ninguna opresión debe ser enfrentada contra otra por el beneficio del oportunismo sin principios.”

“No se necesita una invitación a la revolución”

Otrxs oradores abordaron la lucha por los derechos de lxs migrantes y las caravanas de refugiadxs centroamericanos en la frontera, las huelgas magisteriales en Los Ángeles y otras partes del país, la lucha contra el terror policial y en solidaridad con lxs prisioneros, la lucha contra la destrucción del medio ambiente por parte del capitalismo y otros temas.

Gloria Verdieu de San Diego ofreció una charla inspiradora sobre la vida y la lucha del prisionero político Mumia Abu-Jamal. Otro sandieguino, Benjamín Prado de Unión del Barrio, habló sobre el trabajo de esta organización que representa a la comunidad chicano-mexicana en California: “Nuestra lucha es organizar a nuestro pueblo, recuperar nuestra tierra y construir una sociedad socialista en sostenibilidad con la Madre Tierra.”

La revolucionaria puertorriqueña Berta Joubert-Ceci describió la toma de control de la economía de la nación isleña por parte de una junta de control financiero impuesta por Estados Unidos como un “experimento de laboratorio [para] un nuevo tipo de dictadura y modelo económico.” Hablando por teleconferencia, Mahtowin Munroe de United American Indians de Nueva Inglaterra habló sobre la importancia de las luchas indígenas y la descolonización en la lucha por el socialismo. El activista laboral Andre Powell enfatizó la importancia de tener una comprensión marxista de la lucha de lesbianas, gays, bisexuales, transgéneros, queer y dos espíritus.

Jesús Rodríguez, editor de la Tribuna del Orinoco y ex diplomático venezolano, habló brevemente por internet desde Caracas. El reciente ataque de Estados Unidos a la

red eléctrica de Venezuela es comparable solo en gravedad al sabotaje del petróleo de 2002-2003, dijo. Lamentablemente, la presentación de Rodríguez se vio interrumpida por problemas de conexión derivados del sabotaje eléctrico.

Cheryl LaBash, de Struggle-La Lucha, describió que la clave del avance de los 60 años de resistencia de Cuba al imperialismo estadounidense es la unidad. Cuba se esfuerza por construir la unidad socialista entre lxs trabajadores, como lo demuestran las recientes discusiones en todo el país que condujeron a la votación sobre la adopción de su nueva constitución. Otrxs oradores hablaron sobre la solidaridad con el magisterio brasileño, Filipinas, China socialista, Corea Popular, Vietnam, y la lucha antifascista en Ucrania y Donbass.

La conferencia recibió varios saludos internacionales de organizaciones obreras y antiimperialistas desde Brasil hasta Alemania, Rusia y las repúblicas de Donbass.

Las maravillosas actuaciones culturales fueron un punto culminante, incluyendo a lxs poetas Irene Sánchez y Matt Sedillo, y el poeta y baterista de Conga Julio Rodríguez quien interpretó “Invitación a la revolución”: “No necesitamos una invitación a la revolución.” Todxs son bienvenidos a trabajar por una solución.”

Lxs asistentes a la conferencia votaron por unanimidad enviar un mensaje de solidaridad a la exiliada palestina Rasmeah Odeh, cuya libertad para viajar y hablar en eventos políticos ha sido atacada por el gobierno alemán bajo la presión de Estados Unidos e Israel.

El evento concluyó con una presentación y discusión especial liderada por Clarence Thomas, líder jubilado del International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) y cofundador del movimiento Million Worker March, quien habló sobre sus experiencias en la lucha de la clase trabajadora, desde la huelga de 1968-1969 en el San Francisco State College dirigida por estudiantes negros, al boicot de la ILWU contra el apartheid de Sudáfrica.

“La naturaleza de una huelga es como una pequeña revolución,” dijo Thomas. “Lxs trabajadores están obligados a desarrollar estrategias y tácticas. Las huelgas, como las revoluciones, pueden llevar a derrotas y reveses. También pueden conducir a tremendas victorias.”

Se funda el Partido Socialist Unity

El 17 de marzo, trabajadorxs de muchas partes de los EUA, incluidos negrxs, latinoamericanxs, asiáticxs y del Pacífico, indígenas, mujeres, géneros oprimidos y trabajadores LGBTQ2S, se reunieron para fundar una nueva organización en la lucha contra el capitalismo: el Partido Socialist Unity.

Juntos, el grupo ya publica un periódico quincenal, un sitio web y enlaces de noticias diarias más una transmisión de radio mensual. Encuentre archivos y más información en Struggle-La-Lucha.org. Síguenos en Facebook y Twitter. Si le gusta lo que estamos haciendo, por favor envíe una donación.



Donetsk Communist Party secretary: 'Donbass exists in a state of neither war nor peace'

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 13, 2019

In February 2014, a U.S.-backed coup overthrew the elected government of Ukraine and installed a far-right regime representing Western imperialist interests, local oligarchs and neo-Nazis. The new government launched a war against the rebellious Donbass mining region in mid-April 2014, which to date has cost at least 13,000 lives. People in Donbass declared independence, creating the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics (DPR and LPR).

As part of a series of interviews marking five years of the anti-fascist struggle in Ukraine and Donbass, Struggle-La Lucha spoke with Stanislav Retinsky, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Donetsk People's Republic (KPDPR) and an editor of the party's publication, [Forward](#).

Struggle-La Lucha: It's been five years since the beginning of Ukraine's war against Donbass. What role did the communists of Donetsk play in the early days of the anti-fascist resistance and the independence struggle?

Stanislav Retinsky: The communists did a lot to create the Donetsk People's Republic. For example, Boris Litvinov, who was then the first secretary of the Kirovsky District Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, and now the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Donetsk People's Republic, authored the Act and Declaration of Independence of the DPR. Anatoly Khmeleva, the first secretary of the Slavyansk City Committee of the Communist

Party of Ukraine, and now the second secretary of the Central Committee of the KPDP, took part in the battles for Slavyansk.

Election commissions were created with the active participation of the communists, thanks to the presence of party organizations throughout the Donbass region, facilitating the referendum held on May 11, 2014 [when the vast majority of voters supported independence from Ukraine – SLL]. More than 20 of the 98 deputies in the first Supreme Council of the DPR were communists.

Today a significant part of our work is aimed at international recognition of the DPR. This can be achieved, in particular, through the establishment of international party relations. And the Communist Party has made significant strides in this direction. In addition to the United States, we were able to establish contacts with communists in more than 15 countries of the European Union, Latin America (Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua), Asia (Vietnam, India, North Korea) and, of course, the former USSR.

Throughout these five years, the Communist Party has worked in difficult conditions, but today its position has deteriorated markedly. The revocation of the registration certificate issued by the Central Election Committee in 2014 means the KPDP is prohibited from appearing on the ballot. The Communists of the Donetsk People's Republic intend to seek the repeal of the CEC decision in court.

SLL: I understand you've recently written a book. What's it about?

SR: The book is called "Donbass in the World Confrontation: A Class Approach." It presents a Marxist viewpoint on the conflict in the Donbass. Contrary to the well-established view that this is a struggle for the interests of the "Russian world," I give a different interpretation of what is happening.

In my opinion, the Donbass is part of the anti-imperialist front (at least until the death of the first head of the DPR, Alexander Zakharchenko), along with Syria,

Venezuela and other regions. Ultimately, they are all resisting U.S. imperialism. The book not only describes the situation in the Donbass, but on the basis of this, explains the tactics of the Communist Party, which were developed taking into account the experience of previous generations of communists.

The work itself is [dedicated to Vsevolod Petrovsky](#) — a communist who died in the battle for the liberation of Debaltsevo in February 2015.

SLL: Last year, there were big changes in the leadership of the Donbass republics. The Minsk negotiations stalled long ago. Ukraine has concentrated large forces near the combat zone, but so far there hasn't been a new military offensive. How do you assess the political and military situation today?

SR: For the last four years, since the signing of the second Minsk agreements in February 2015, the Donetsk People's Republic has been in a state of "neither war nor peace." In other words, there is no full-scale war on the territory of Donbass, but shelling by the Armed Forces of Ukraine continues to this day.

To properly assess the current political situation in the republic, we must remember that politics is a concentrated expression of economics. After the death of the first head of the DPR, Alexander Zakharchenko, significant changes took place.

The driving force in the confrontation in the Donbass was the petty bourgeoisie, which sought to win the market from big capital. Alexander Zakharchenko, who also came from the petty-bourgeois strata, led this movement. But to win back the market from the Ukrainian oligarchs, it was necessary to challenge the imperialist group that was behind them. Consequently, the first head of the DPR, whether he wanted to or not, was forced to lead an anti-imperialist struggle.

For a while, it was possible in the DPR to realize the petty-bourgeois ideal of preserving market relations, only without oligarchy. But without moving forward —

that is, without moving towards socialism — a return to the exploitation of the working people by big capital is inevitable.

Now Sergey Kurchenko [a rising oligarch known as the “Gas King of Ukraine” – SLL] is trying to establish control over the market won from Rinat Akhmetov, the oligarch who formerly dominated the Donbass. He made repeated attempts to take control over the export of coal and metal from the DPR. Alexander Zakharchenko tried, at least, to limit these aspirations.

Today, by all appearances, the position of Sergey Kurchenko in the Donbass is noticeably stronger, and consequently, we can speak about the end of the period of anti-imperialist struggle.

SLL: Where does that leave the workers’ and left movements in the DPR?

SR: One of the main problems of all the communist parties of the former Soviet Union is the lack of a strong connection with the proletariat. Donbass is no exception.

The last time the local working class manifested itself politically as an independent force was in the late 1980s-early 1990s, when it opposed the Soviet government. Then, the local miners held mass rallies, speaking essentially for a change in property relations. And anti-Soviet views are still quite common among the workers.

Nevertheless, since the beginning of 2014, the Donetsk communists have been carrying out propaganda and organizational work in the proletarian milieu.

The DPR communists took part in organizing the largest demonstration of miners, which took place in Donetsk on May 28, 2014. About a thousand miners marched in protest against Ukraine’s “anti-terrorist operation” in the Donbass. This happened two days after the bombing of the city by Kiev’s fighter planes.

The fighting significantly increased the danger of an emergency situation in the mines and factories. A shell hitting a utility substation means inevitable death for the miners, so they took to the streets in protest.

In November 2015, in Khartsyzsk, with the participation of the local city committee of the Communist Party, a rally of workers of the pipe plant was held, opposing the closure of the enterprise, which at that time belonged to Rinat Akhmetov.

The chairperson of the Union of Transport Workers is the second secretary of the Communist Party, Anatoly Khmeleva. Under his leadership, the union has been able to repeatedly defend the interests of the drivers.

SLL: How does the economic blockade imposed by Ukraine and the Western powers affect the workers?

SR: Despite the fact that several dozen truces were signed in Minsk within the framework of the Contact Group, the Ukrainian side continues to bombard the territory of the republics. Of course, this has a negative effect on the local economy.

Because of the blockade and the incessant shelling by Kiev, many enterprises either stand idle or operate at a low capacity. All this affects the people's standard of living. In the DPR, you can find a job, but it is usually low paid. Social benefits are at the same low level — they are several times lower than in Russia. At the same time, food prices in Donetsk are about the same as in Moscow.

However, in the DPR humanitarian aid is given to those in need, tariffs for utilities have not increased, and the price of public transportation remains low.

In early 2017, the economic blockade of Donbass sharpened greatly. Today, almost nothing passes from Ukraine to Donbass or from Donbass to Ukraine. Nevertheless, the products of the DPR and the LPR, in particular coal, are supplied to foreign markets. Raw materials from the republics reach European countries through the

Russian ports in the Rostov region. Donbass coal is better and cheaper than North American, African or Australian.

SLL: What assistance can the international solidarity movement provide? How can workers and leftists in the U.S. help people in the Donbass republics?

SR: It's very important for the people's republics of Donbass that there is an alternative point of view presented at the international level. To do this, it's necessary to regularly hold various activities in support of the DPR and the LPR, report on the situation in the Donbass, and provide humanitarian assistance to children, the elderly and people with disabilities.

Only by joint efforts can we resist world imperialism, which must be answered with proletarian internationalism. And we, the communists of the DPR, are glad that a movement for solidarity with Donbass exists in the U.S. Thank you, comrades!



Washington, D.C., protesters say,

‘No to NATO! Hands off Venezuela!’

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 13, 2019

On a sunny and clear spring day, over 500 anti-war activists gathered at Lafayette Square in Washington, D.C., on March 30 to say “No to NATO!”

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a military alliance founded in the wake of World War II and dominated by the U.S. military. It was established to push back people’s movements and threaten socialist countries in Europe. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, it has extended its poisonous reach much further.

The United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) called the demonstration to protest NATO’s past and continued aggression against countries throughout the world. The protest was held just before the foreign ministers of NATO member countries gathered in Washington to mark the 70th anniversary of the alliance’s founding.

Outrageously, the NATO powers held this “celebration” on April 4 — the 51st anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a fierce critic of U.S. wars.

People from many organizations and multiple contingents were in attendance. A delegation from Baltimore represented Struggle for Socialism/La Lucha por Socialismo, Youth Against War & Racism and others. They demonstrated not only against NATO, but also against the danger of U.S. military intervention in Venezuela.

The demonstration this year held particular weight because of the increased aggressive measures that the U.S. and its allies have taken against the democratically elected government of President Nicolás Maduro. Colombia, a close U.S. ally, recently became the first Latin American member of NATO. Many fear that NATO could be used to launch a military campaign against the Bolivarian Republic

of Venezuela.

This would not be the first time that NATO took such an action. In 1999, NATO led a bombing campaign against the legitimate government of Serbia. The military alliance took similar action against Libya in 2011, at the urging of then-President Barack Obama. Both of these campaigns only served to destroy the infrastructure and institutions of those countries. To this day, neither has fully recovered.

Because of this ominous history, anti-war activists gave passionate speeches all afternoon. The crowd chanted “Hands off Venezuela!” and “No to Nato now!” and then marched from Lafayette Park into the heart of downtown Washington.

The march specifically targeted the headquarters of institutions that have served to levy economic warfare and military attacks against the people of other countries, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Organization of American States, and the Department of Customs and Border Enforcement. Venezuela, Cuba, Syria, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Iran and Zimbabwe are just some of the countries that have been targeted.

This demonstration sent a clear message that the people will not tolerate continued violence against the rest of the world at the hands of the United States and its allies in NATO.



Defending socialist achievements in Asia

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 13, 2019

Talk given by Stephen Millies at the “Unity for Socialism and Revolution” conference in Los Angeles on March 16.

Seventy years ago — on Oct. 1, 1949 — Mao Zedong declared “China has stood up!”

The People’s Republic of China was born. A quarter of humanity had liberated itself from imperialist enslavement.

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 had opened the door to oppressed people. The socialist revolutions in East Asia — China, Korea, Vietnam and Laos — smashed through it.

This year also marks a very different and cruel anniversary. Thirty years ago, the wave of counterrevolutions began, terrible setbacks that overthrew the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and ultimately the Soviet Union.

This immense tragedy was a greater defeat for workers and oppressed people everywhere than Hitler's triumph over the German working class. The Ethiopian Revolution and the socialist government in South Yemen were swept away as well.

We still have five countries building socialism: the People's Republic of China, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba and Laos.

Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution has also declared independence from Wall Street. It's defeating the CIA's sabotage of its electrical system.

Over 1.5 billion people live in these countries. Those who are not willing to defend these revolutions against the Pentagon will be incapable of forging new victories.

Unity needed against the oppressor

More than ever, we need unity against the oppressor. Unity like the People's Republic of China offering to help rebuild Venezuela's electrical grid. Like the unity of Cuban medical volunteers helping people and saving lives in Venezuela and dozens of other countries.

We need the unity symbolized by Comrade Kim Jong Un traveling by train from socialist Korea through the People's Republic of China to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Trump had to meet Comrade Kim Jong Un in Hanoi, where U.S. planes had dropped napalm bombs. The U.S. empire killed millions of people but was ultimately defeated by the Vietnamese and Laotian people.

The happiest day in my life was when a Vietnamese tank broke down the gate of the U.S. Embassy in what is now Ho Chi Minh City.

A revolution is growing in the Philippines. Never forget that Jim Crow Yankee imperialism massacred a least a million Filipino people over a century ago. At the same time, over a hundred Black people were lynched every year in the U.S.

We look forward to the victory of the Filipino Revolution and send greetings to our Comrade Jose Maria Sison.

Even before 1776, U.S. merchants and shipowners in ports like Marblehead and Salem dreamed of the vast markets in China and the rest of Asia.

President Franklin Roosevelt got the U.S. ruling class to enter World War II with the promise of taking over China. That's what the so-called American Century was all about.

Wall Street barbarously dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They incinerated hundreds of thousands of Japanese working people and Korean slave laborers, as well as children.

But they weren't able to stop the Chinese Revolution. The slogan of the McCarthyite anti-communist witch hunt was, "Who lost China?"

They lost China to the Chinese people, led by their communist party. The answer of the capitalist class was to start the Korean War less than nine months later.

Millions of Korean people were killed by the U.S. war machine. One massacre after another was conducted by U.S. officers.

But Gen. Douglas MacArthur was humiliatingly driven back by the Korean people and their Chinese allies. Among those who gave their lives was Mao Anying, a son of Mao Zedong.

The Pentagon never got over its defeats at the hands of Asian people. A few days

ago, a CIA-organized gang brazenly attacked the embassy of People's Korea in Spain.

It was the CIA that organized a coup in Indonesia 50 years ago that killed over a million people, including hundreds of thousands of members of the communist party — the PKI.

Capitalism still predominant

Many changes have occurred in China and Vietnam. All the countries building socialism have been forced to deal with the capitalist world market.

Even Lenin and the Bolsheviks were forced to do so during the period of the New Economic Program. That's because capitalism is still the world's predominant mode of production.

Good communists and good revolutionaries can disagree on the class character of China. But all of us will fight in unity any U.S. attacks on the People's Republic of China.

Despite many backward steps, we don't believe a counterrevolution has triumphed in China.

Foreign capital and hundreds of Chinese billionaires exploit millions of Chinese workers. The rich in China may have all the limousines, but they don't control the People's Liberation Army.

It's because the 90-million-member strong Chinese Communist Party controls the commanding heights of the economy that industrial production has doubled in the last decade.

Even Forbes magazine admitted that Chinese wages have risen to match that of

many European countries.

Chinese mills poured over 900 million tons of steel last year, almost 11 times the U.S. total. And Chinese auto plants made over 28 million vehicles.

China has built more miles of high-speed rail than the rest of the world combined. The real green new deal is being carried out in China.

Meanwhile, the capitalist U.S., Western Europe and Japan have stagnated. Workers in all the developed capitalist countries have endured more and more austerity.

The capitalist media want us to blame China for this poverty. But it was GM that shut down nine of its 10 plants in Flint — not China.

China's impressive Belt and Road Initiative has given countries made poor by centuries of colonial enslavement an alternative to the robbers at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

For 20 years, Zimbabwe has been under attack for taking back land that rightfully belongs to Africans. But China's trade and aid is helping Zimbabwe fight the credit and currency blockade imposed by the U.S. and Britain.

The threat of a new war in Asia is real. The U.S. rules the Pacific Ocean and views it like it's Lake Michigan. Hundreds of nuclear missiles are aimed at China and Korea.

Our job in the belly of the beast is to stop this war drive. U.S out of Asia!



April 6 in Los Angeles: Protest IHOP's Racism & Police Terror - Justice for Renardo!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 13, 2019



JUSTICE for Renardo Lewis!

ABOLISH RACIST POLICE

PeoplesPowerAssembly.org

☎ 404.458.1931



Saturday, April 6, 2019 at 2:00 PM

5655 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles

[Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice - L.A.](#) and [Humanity First Coalition](#)

Call (323) 306-6240 for more information.

[#justice4renardo](#)

On March 31st Renardo and Lubreeze Lewis decided to get take-out at the local International House of Pancakes (IHOP) restaurant in Marietta, GA.

After waiting 30 minutes, then being told that their food was not being prepared, the couple's inquiry about why this happened was met with a very rude response from the IHOP staff and manager, who were white.

Fortunately a video taken by a member of our Atlanta chapter of the Peoples Power Assembly shows the entire incident, which became a racist life-threatening

nightmare for the couple when one of the staff called the police simply because Ms. Lewis asked for the number of the corporate office of IHOP. Mr. Lewis was subsequently kicked, punched and tazed simply for objecting to his wife being yelled at.

Renardo Lewis is being illegally held with no bond set and was told he'd be in jail for one month to await trial. He is being charged with two felony counts of obstruction and assault on a police officer, in addition to other made-up charges to justify police terrorism. He remains in prison for doing nothing.

Lizz Toledo, of the Peoples Power Assembly and who took the video, is working with the family in Marietta and there will be a demonstration at the IHOP in Marietta, GA while we are holding a solidarity demonstration here on Saturday at 2 pm at the IHOP located at 5655 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles.

Please show your solidarity with the Lewis family and tell the police that this racism will not be tolerated and to release Renardo Lewis and drop the charges now!

Full background:

On March 31st Renardo and Lubreeze Lewis decided to get take-out at the local International House of Pancakes (IHOP) restaurant in Marietta, GA.

After waiting 30 minutes, then being told that their food was not being prepared, the couple's inquiry about why this happened was met with a very rude response from the IHOP staff and manager, who were white.

Fortunately a video shows the entire incident that became a racist life-threatening nightmare for the Lewis' when one of the staff called the police simply because Ms. Lewis asked for the number of the corporate office of IHOP. Mr. Lewis was subsequently kicked, punched and tazed simply for objecting to his wife being yelled at.

Two police officers, a man and a woman, responding to the call entered the restaurant.

The male officer escalated the situation by yelling at Mr. Lewis to shut up, without any provocation. Mr. Lewis, who is Black, asked the officer not to yell at him and to treat him like a man.

Three more cops then entered the restaurant. Mr. Lewis and his wife were not allowed to leave, although they were not under arrest. One of the cops who had just arrived asked Mr. Lewis for identification. As he was pulling his ID out of his wallet, he was pushed against a window by three officers.

The first racist cop who'd come in screaming joined his fascist pals to restrain Mr. Lewis. This first cop tased Mr. Lewis five times and punched him several times, breaking his tooth and injuring his head.

Three of these officers came in without asking any questions and assaulted this African-American man. They pushed his wife and witnesses who decided to video tape the incident and were desperately trying to keep Ms. Lewis from also being tazed, punched and kicked by the cops.

As can be seen in the video, at no time did Mr. Lewis threaten or touch any of the officers, their tasers or guns.

Since then, the Marietta Police Department posted multiple lies on their Facebook page to cover their racist response. However, the video says it all.

Abolish the racist police! Boycott IHOP!

You can watch the video here:



April 6 in Marietta, Ga.: Protest IHOP's Racism & Police Terror - Justice for Renardo!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 13, 2019



JUSTICE for Renardo Lewis!

ABOLISH RACIST POLICE

PeoplesPowerAssembly.org

☎ 404.458.1931



Saturday, April 6, 2019 at 5:00 PM

179 Cobb Pkwy SE, Marietta, GA

Hosted by [Peoples Power Assembly- Atlanta](#)

Call (404) 458-1931 for more information.

Event on [Facebook](#)

[#justice4renardo](#)

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charged with two felony counts of obstruction and assault on a police officer, in addition to other made-up charges to justify police terrorism. He remains in prison for doing nothing.

There will be a demonstration this Saturday at 5 pm at this IHOP located at 179 Parkway SE Marietta, GA 30060. Please show your solidarity with the Lewis family and tell the police that this racism will not be tolerated and to release Renardo Lewis and drop the charges now!

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