

# Struggle ☐ La Lucha PDF - Aug. 17, 2020

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 17, 2020

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END POLICE TERROR! DEFEND BLACK LIVES!

¡REPARACIONES AHORA! 6

**STRUGGLE ★ LA LUCHA**  
for Socialism / por el Socialismo



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

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# Capitalism's debt to people of African descent demands REPARATIONS NOW!

SOCIALIST UNITY PARTY ★ BLACK CAUCUS STATEMENT

This system thrives on hiding the value that workers create, especially when it comes to the amount of wealth created by African slave labor, essential to capitalism's growth.

If this is allowed to continue, it will play into the hands of those who are dead set against reparations for Black people.

Political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal made the point about the need for reparations in an essay quoting the great abolitionist Sojourner Truth, who said: "America owed to my people some of the dividends. ... I shall make them understand that there is a debt to the Negro people, which they can never repay. At least, then, they must make amends."

Likewise, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. explained in his book, "Why We Can't Wait": "No amount of gold could provide an adequate compensation for the exploitation and humiliation of the Negro in America down through the centuries. Not all the wealth of this affluent society could meet the bill. Yet a price can be placed on unpaid wages."

As King said, that amount of value created from the labor of African people, brought here and born here under slavery, can be quantified. Its estimates are enormous, in the trillions of dollars; but that enormity pales in comparison to the combined wealth of those who benefited and still benefit from that labor.

## History

In 1790, about 1.5 million pounds of cotton was produced in the Southern slave states. With the introduction of the cotton gin, production soared to two billion pounds by 1860. Slavery then drove into the Southwest and everywhere it could in order to expand its plantations and garner unprecedented profits.

Karl Marx, who stated, "Labor in the white skin can never free itself as long as labor in the Black skin is branded," also recognized the role slavery played in the development of Europe's wealth when he wrote: "It is slavery that gave the colonies their value; it is the colonies that have created world trade; and it is world trade that is the precondition of large-scale industry. Thus, slavery is an economic category of the greatest importance."

That tremendous wealth coming from slave labor went to finance the railroad industry owned by the Vanderbilts, to create Standard Oil owned by the Rockefellers, and to create U.S. Steel owned by J.P. Morgan. That money went into making the Rockefellers, Morgans and Mellons financial kings, creating the Manhattan Bank, soon to be Chase Manhattan Bank, and Chemical Bank. Slave owners who got rich in the cotton trade started Lehman Brothers investment bank.

Just as the wealth continues to pass on to the descendants of those who benefited from slavery, so to does the systemic harm pass on to the descendants of those slaves.

The second-largest banking group in the U.S. is



Philadelphia, July 4, 2020.

JPMorgan Chase. In 2019, it made over \$44 billion in operating profits on assets of \$2.69 trillion. In June of this year, a study by Chicago newsrooms City Bureau and WBEZ found JPMorgan Chase to have the most racist lending practices against Black neighborhoods of any bank in that city of one million Black people.

U.S. insurance giants Aetna, New York Life and AIG acquired companies that insured slaves as "property." Today, these same insurance firms are pushing doctors and employers to cut health costs while millions of African Americans are without health insurance and disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

Yale and the University of Virginia are among the universities endowed by slave merchants and slave owners. Yet, while the racist "war on drugs"

has sent millions of Black youth to prison, Yale continues policies that allow Black students to make up under 6 percent of its student body.

There is a clear line of oppression that haunts us today, inspired by the lynch laws and Jim Crow, that allows police to murder, frame and terrorize Black people consistently, with the help of both Democratic and Republican politicians. They are responsible for establishing and/or continuing the "war on drugs," the privatized prisons and mass incarceration of Black youth — from Reagan to Clinton to Biden to Trump.

President Trump is, in fact, a white supremacist whose fortunes are a result of passed-down wealth from slavery. Alex Brown and Sons, which merged with the German giant Deutsche Bank in 1999, financed the cotton trade. Deutsche Bank is the Trump empire's biggest creditor.

## The case for reparations

Although monetary reparations in this country and in Europe have been granted to some victims of systemic racism, they have not included people of African descent. This, in spite of the fact that African people, as chattel slaves worldwide, faced the greatest exploitation, attempted genocide and dehumanization, and whose oppression was ini-

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Unemployed Workers Committee says:

## STOP EVICTIONS & UTILITY SHUTOFFS

By Sharon Black

The Peoples Power Assembly is launching an Unemployed Workers Committee to Stop Evictions, Foreclosures and Utility Shutoffs. Its slogan is, *Through solidarity we can protect each other against capitalism and injustice.*

Here is the list of seven things the group plans to do:

**Stop evictions and foreclosures** through mass action, by forming a human shield to physically prevent evictions;

**Advocate for governments and sheriffs' departments to extend no eviction and foreclosure orders** until people are safely back to work and able to pay;

**Hold the big landlords and banks responsible** during this crisis, which includes demanding no rent increases, evictions or foreclosures. Housing fit for human beings;

**Work to ensure unemployment rights and guaranteed income** for all jobless workers;

**Protect unemployed workers, the homeless and also small landlords** who are at the mercy of the big banks, and whose foreclosures will impact their tenants;

**Demand safe working conditions and hazard pay** for all workers to ensure that they do not get sick or spread infection to their families and friends;

**Defend the community from utility shutoffs;** heat, water and light are a right!

Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly organizer Steven Ceci said: "This is a long-term project aimed at uniting workers in the community for our self-defense through solidarity. Our goal is to be able to declare eviction-free and foreclosure-free zones."

The Rev. Annie Chambers, a PPA organizer and housing advocate at Douglas Homes Housing Project, stated: "If we can't work, then how can we pay? We are demanding no evictions, foreclosures and utility shutoffs until this crisis is over."

Chambers, along with the Ujima People's Progress Party and the Peoples Power Assembly, distribute free food as part of the Food Is A Right Campaign from Monday to Friday at Douglas Homes in East Baltimore.

Ceci added: "Those most impacted are Black, Latinx and poor workers. In fact, it was the 2008 subprime mortgage scandal in combination with deindustrialization and the loss of union jobs that stripped wealth from Black and Latinx families."

The PPA sees the launch of this mutual aid group as a continuation of its protests against racism and police terror. It invites all groups and individuals to join and pledges to unite with all groups that want to stop evictions and defend workers and the poor.

If you would like to join the Unemployed Workers Committee, please sign up here: [tinyurl.com/y5jnp4](http://tinyurl.com/y5jnp4).

For more information, visit [PeoplesPowerAssembly.org](http://PeoplesPowerAssembly.org) or call (410) 218-4835. Follow on Facebook @PeoplesPowerAssembly or Twitter @BaltoPPA.

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# **Baltimore #SayHerName protest elevates voices of women vets**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 17, 2020

Baltimore — The Peoples Power Assembly and Women In Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha held a rally and march to “Say Her Name” at the Garmatz Federal Courthouse in downtown Baltimore July 30. It coincided with a march in Washington, D.C., for murdered Army Spc. Vanessa Guillén, who was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. The event also highlighted women killed by police, including Breonna Taylor, Sandra Bland, Korryn Gaines and others.

Annetta Johnson, a veteran from Baltimore, led the protest. Earlier, she attended the march for Vanessa Guillén in D.C. Johnson is the founder of Purpose Driven Journeys and has spoken out on the lack of services for women and Black veterans.

Ellen Barkfield, an organizer with the Philip Berrigan Memorial Chapter of Veterans for Peace, also spoke out. Barkfield was also stationed at Fort Hood. She gave a moving account of her own experience of sexual assault and the futility of reporting

it to the U.S. military command.

The protesters pointed out that rape and sexual violence are an intergral part of police and military culture. It is a form of terror used by U.S. imperialism both abroad and inside its own military as a method of genocide and control.

The Rev. Annie Chambers, Peoples Power Assembly organizer, said, "Our fight is right here in the U.S." She emphasized, "We live in a capitalist, racist country, and if we never fight them then it won't change."

The action ended with a march around the courthouse under the watch of an overwhelmingly large presence of Department of Homeland Security agents, which included dogs and a score of white vans lined up close to the protest.



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## **Waupaca, Wis., protest demands equality and builds unity**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
August 17, 2020

Waupaca, Wis., Aug. 9, 2020 — Dozens from across Wisconsin came to defend Black Lives Matter community activists while building a broad based People's United Front to oppose racism and raise other people's demands.

A diverse array of multinational workers, youth and students from Fon du Lac, Oshkosh, Appleton, Neenah, Green Bay, Manitowoc County, Madison, Milwaukee and numerous other cities participated in the "Rally For Equality: Build Unity!" event.

A mass rally took place at a downtown park followed by a strong, disciplined march down Main Street in Waupaca and then returning to the park. During the march armed right-wing goons and police attempted to menace the protesters but the protesters held their ground.

At the event, besides signs in support of Black Lives Matter, many participants raised concrete demands including a moratorium on evictions and foreclosures; money for public education and not cages, cops and war; union jobs not racist union busting; and money for free healthcare not U.S. wars.

Speakers included members of Jonathon Tubby's family. Tubby was a youth murdered by the Green Bay police on October 18, 2018. Other labor and community and Waupaca residents spoke at the main rally before the march.

### **Self-defense is a human right!**

Waupaca is a town of 6,000 people in central Wisconsin, an area known for environmental activities, a massive foundry and other industrial and manufacturing plants such as paper mills. The world renowned University of Wisconsin Stevens Point is an hour from Waupaca.

Over this summer, many courageous community activists have physically defended themselves and their children against racists in Waupaca and other right-wing goons

that have come to the city with the goal of terrorizing the population.

Community members in Waupaca who organized Black Lives Matter events were and are being attacked verbally on social media; some having their home addresses published. At one protest, a right-wing goon tried running over protesters. On August 1, 2020 an armed protester on site at a protest to defend participants was tackled by cops and subsequently was locked up in jail over a weekend and has been charged with multiple felonies and other charges.

Meanwhile right-wing racist armed goons such as the 3 Percenters are walking the streets, driving erratically through the city with loud racist music, tearing down Black Lives Matter signs and engaging in other terrorism against progressive activists have gone untouched by police.

Community residents in Waupaca in solidarity with Black Lives Matter, are defending themselves in the city against racist goons by any means necessary with support from many quarters.

### **Fighting back!**

Just days before the August 9 protest, almost 1,000 United Steelworkers at a plant in Wisconsin Rapids (an hour from Waupaca) were given notice that the bosses planned on shutting down a major mill that's been in operation for over 100 years.

In addition to this devastation - in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic - the Waupaca area, as across the state, has been devastated by the unrelenting racist capitalist austerity over the past decade in Wisconsin. Much of what poor and working people wrested in class struggle over the past 100 years in Wisconsin is now gone. Millions of poor and working people in the state have fought union busting, environmental destruction, attacks on women and the LGBTQ community and much more. Wall Street forces - in particular the banks - have wrested billions

in concessions from poor and working people in Wisconsin in the last decade alone through methods such as increased debt service, public sector workers wage and healthcare cuts, the elimination of collective bargaining and Jim Crow right-to-work (for less) laws.

This horrific theft by the capitalists and their vile political servants has come primarily at the expense of a range of public services and public K-12 and higher education. And police across the state in the past decade have murdered dozens of Black, Brown, Indigenous and white workers. And the police of course protect the rich while they engage in plundering poor and working people and destroying the earth.

Organizations, such as the Milwaukee-based Bradley Foundation, fund numerous right-wing organizations in Wisconsin such as the Americans For Prosperity which has an office in Wausau, a short distance northwest of Waupaca. Bradley leaders also have a decades-long alliance with the John Birch Society in Appleton, 40 miles southeast of Waupaca.

Bradley's "capitalism with the gloves off" approach has turned Wisconsin into a model for Jim Crow austerity in many other states and now federally with the Trump administration. A major focus of Bradley is to eviscerate working class bases of organization such as unions, community and student organizations, to ensure billions in debt service to the banks and that corporations can operate with "flexibility" and "freedom" (no unions, minimal or no safety regulations etc.). Bradley also operates fundamentally with a eugenics ideological base so it's no mistake that numerous academic and other studies conclude that people of African descent in Wisconsin have the worst quality of life in the United States. The former Chairperson of Bradley, Michael Grebe, goes back to the Reagan administration, formerly chaired the national Republican Party and chaired Scott Walker's gubernatorial and recall campaigns. Grebe and Bradley for decades have helped

“groom” the likes of Paul Ryan, Reince Priebus, James Sensenbrenner, Robin Vos, Scott Fitzgerald and a host of other political servants of Wall Street. The Board of Bradley is stocked with union busting attorneys, corporate vultures, bankers and also Art Pope of North Carolina who assisted in bringing racist anti-worker “southern methods” to Wisconsin in the last decade in particular.

This has all resulted in a situation where in particular the life choices for working class youth in semi-rural, rural and urban areas of Wisconsin have been curtailed dramatically. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth are of course experiencing even more barbaric and cruel conditions. Instead of free education, union jobs, free childcare and other necessities, right-wing politicians in Wisconsin and their Wall Street masters are responsible for hundreds of thousands of youth facing potential futures of low-wage non-union jobs, jails, drug addiction, sex trafficking, dying for Big Oil in the military, having their peers murdered by cops and other horrific outgrowths of the profits-at-all-costs capitalist system.

In this environment, youth and students and their allies across Wisconsin are becoming leaders in building a better world by organizing protests, developing relationships and more. They refuse to live in a capitalist world of racism, endless wars, police terror, sexism and bigotry. Despite the numerous very serious challenges facing them, participants joining the August 9 rally and march in Waupaca all joined in solidarity with this vision. They continue the hard work of building the necessary unity and solidarity to win a better world for all poor and working people.

Members of the [Coalition](#) to March on the Democratic National Convention (DNC) were also on site to invite participants to an August 17 protest against the DNC in Milwaukee.

*Photo and video coverage of the August 9 Waupaca event (and many other BLM and related events in Wisconsin): <https://www.facebook.com/wibailoutpeople.org/> and*

<https://wibailoutpeople.org/>

Source: [Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement](#)



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# **Baltimore: Peoples Assembly & Organizing Meeting for Prisoners Solidarity, Aug. 22**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
August 17, 2020

<https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2020/08/page/4/>



Saturday, August 22, 2020 at 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM EDT

Calvert Street Park, 22nd & N. Calvert Street, Baltimore, MD 21218

Peoples Power Assembly and the Prisoners Solidarity Committee will be holding an “Peoples Assembly” in a continuing effort to hear from the people and an organizing meeting to discuss next steps. Complaints continue to pour in from Maryland prisoners about inhumane conditions and the life and death threat of COVID.

The first part of the meeting will be devoted to testimony from relatives, loved ones and supporters. Please be on time. The second section will not be videoed or live streamed. We will discuss next steps and upcoming protests. There will also be

updates on political prisoners around the country.

This meeting will be OUT DOORS in a park. You must wear a mask. (We will provide masks if you do not have one.) and we will be social distancing. Bring a chair or blanket. We will have chairs, but preference will be to seniors and those who need to sit. The best entrance to use for those using a wheel chair is on 22nd Street and Hunter (a little east of N. Calvert St.)

On [Facebook](#)



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# **Unemployed Workers Committee launched to stop evictions and utility shutoffs**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
August 17, 2020



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3. Hold the big landlords and banks responsible during this crisis, which includes demanding no rent increases, evictions or foreclosures, and housing fit for human beings;
4. Work to ensure unemployment rights and guaranteed income for all jobless workers;
5. Protect unemployed workers, the homeless and also small landlords who are

- at the mercy of the big banks, and whose foreclosures will impact their tenants;
- 6. Demand safe working conditions and hazard pay for all workers to ensure that they do not get sick or spread infection to their families and friends;
- 7. Defend the community from utility shutoffs; heat, water and light are a right!

Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly organizer Steven Ceci said: "This is a long-term project aimed at uniting workers in the community for our self-defense through solidarity. Our goal is to be able to declare eviction-free and foreclosure-free zones."

The Rev. Annie Chambers, a PPA organizer and housing advocate at Douglas Homes Housing Project, stated: "If we can't work, then how can we pay? We are demanding no evictions, foreclosures and utility shut-offs until this crisis is over."

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If you would like to join the Unemployed Workers Committee, please [sign up here](#).

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# Never forget Delbert Africa, soldier for the people

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 17, 2020

Two hundred people marched in Philadelphia on Aug. 8 to protest police terror and honor the memory of Delbert Africa. It was the 42nd anniversary of the police assault on the MOVE house in the city's Powelton Village neighborhood.

Superracist Mayor Frank Rizzo ordered the attack that began in the early morning of Aug. 8, 1978. Hundreds of cops fired thousands of bullets at the house where, inside, there were 12 adults and 11 children.

Tear gas canisters were repeatedly fired while high-pressure hoses poured thousands of gallons of water into the building. Both a bulldozer and a cherry picker were used to break into the building.

Miraculously, none of the 23 members of the MOVE family were killed. But [police may have killed one of their own](#), Officer James Ramp. Reporters at the scene

insisted that shots were fired from a nearby house that wasn't associated with MOVE.

Afterwards, MOVE member Delbert Africa was viciously beaten by police. Political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal described what Delbert endured:

"Immediately four officers surrounded him and savagely beat him, hitting him with the handle of their rifles, crushing his head with a motorcycle helmet and kicking him until he lost consciousness. ... Delbert suffered a jaw fracture and a swollen eye the size of an Easter egg."

This brutality was recorded by TV cameras. Yet, the three officers indicted were acquitted by a judge. Philadelphia Police Commissioner Joseph O'Neill condoned his cops' viciousness by claiming, "Delbert Africa wasn't a man. He was a savage."

Nine members of the MOVE family were framed for the death of James Ramp and sentenced from 30 to 100 years in jail. The judge who sentenced the MOVE 9, Edwin Malmed, later admitted to Mumia Abu-Jamal on a talk show that he had no idea who shot James Ramp.

Merle Africa and Phil Africa died in prison. Chuck Africa, Eddie Africa, Debbie Africa, Delbert Africa, Janet Africa, Janine Africa and Michael Africa were finally released between 2018 and 2020. All of them spent at least 40 years in prison.

Delbert Africa only had a few months to live after he was released on Jan. 18, 2020. The revolutionary died on June 15.

"Had my father received the treatment he needed," Delbert Africa's daughter Yvonne Orr-El said at a news conference, "the healthy, strong, smiling, humorous, sarcastic man that I call my father would still be here today."

**'The power of the people don't stop!'**

Protesters gathered in front of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, whose designers included the Black architect Julian Abele.

Speakers denounced police terror. Mike Africa Jr. reminded everyone of the May 13, 1985, police-FBI-Pentagon bombing of the MOVE house on Osage Avenue in which six adults and five children were killed.

Mike Africa Jr. was born in prison and was taken away from his mom when he was just a week old. His parents, Debbie and Mike Africa of the MOVE 9, were only able to see each other after four decades of being incarcerated.

Fred Burton Jr. told people about his father, Fred Mohammad Burton, who has been in prison for 50 years. The senior Burton was framed for killing a Philadelphia police officer. Prosecutors forced a witness to give lying testimony by threatening to take away her children.

People chanted, "The power of the people don't stop!" as they marched on Spring Garden Street across the Schuylkill River and railroad yards. Drivers passing by honked their horns in support.

Protesters went to the site of the old MOVE house on 33rd Street. It was immediately torn down on orders of Mayor Rizzo in 1978 to destroy evidence that might have exonerated the MOVE 9.

A rally was held in nearby Drexel Park. The entire area is being gentrified by Drexel University, which is named after the business partner of banker J.P. Morgan.

Baba Azid from the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee spoke of the political prisoners still in jail, like Dr. Mutulu Shakur. It was pointed out that the power of the people freed the MOVE 9 and had the statue of Frank Rizzo torn down.

Yvonne Orr-El talked about her father, Delbert Africa, who, before he moved to

Philadelphia, had been a member of the Black Panther Party in Chicago.

MOVE member Pam Africa wound up the rally. She urged people to continue to fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier and all political prisoners.

Delbert Africa's last words, according to Mike Africa Sr., were, "I tried my best to be a good soldier."

Delbert Africa was a soldier for the people.

*SLL photos: Stephen Millies*



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## **'Feds get out': Portland movement fights to put power into the hands of the people**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
August 17, 2020

*Struggle-La Lucha spoke with Cody Urban of the International League of Peoples Struggle (ILPS) about the protests against racist police terror in Portland, Ore., and the violent federal agents dispatched by the Trump administration to terrorize the community.*

**Struggle-La Lucha:** All eyes were on Portland as the fight for justice and the outpouring of rage over the murder of George Floyd by the Minneapolis police exploded there. After more than two months of standing up against brutality and arrests, can you tell us who is involved? What areas of Portland are the protests taking place in?

**Cody Urban:** Protests have been organized and led all over the city and most suburbs — that's been one of the greatest achievements of the mass movement here in Portland. While generally decentralized, the protests have really reached so many people from so many corners of the metro area. The protests that have garnered the most news and have been met with the harshest repression have been centered downtown outside the Justice Center, symbolizing the people's rage at the countless lives taken and immense public theft at the hands of bourgeois "justice."

But while the downtown protests could rightfully be seen as the central focus of confrontations against state forces, it would be remiss not to mention the near-daily rallies in streets, parks, car caravans and many other locations in defense of Black lives and against the increasing attacks on all working and oppressed people. These attacks started increasing long before COVID-19, but it took a moment like now to heighten the class contradiction to a point in which it no longer felt like a choice but a necessity to take to the streets and make our demands heard in one united voice.

People are really coming out from all walks of life to mobilize and show their rage. Many different political tendencies (including socialist, communist, anarchist, liberal democratic and more) encompassing many different issues (human rights, anti-racism, national liberation, women's liberation, LGBTQ2S liberation, etc.) have come

together under the basic unity of ending racist police terror.

One of the greatest things to see is how many youth have risen into the leadership of this mass movement. Organizers as young as high-school age are organizing rallies that hundreds of people of all ages attend. It truly is a “movement moment” of today that I hope lays the foundation of new organizational leadership for tomorrow — younger, newer activists taking action for the first time against an enemy that previously felt insurmountable will be hitting the streets and other public spaces for years to come as they commit to a life of organizing for the long term.

It's these kinds of moments, engendered by the crisis of the crumbling system itself, that will lead the people to one day soon challenge the capitalist system itself.



**SLL:** Can you talk about the role of the federal agents that were sent to Portland?

**CU:** When we talk about the role of federal troops in Portland, I think there are multiple factors for us to consider. First, there is the international situation of U.S. imperialism today. The Trump regime finds itself overstretched in countless wars and occupations overseas, looking for any method to maintain the dwindling public support for this aggression. These actions were the testing grounds for the tactics we're seeing on the streets of the U.S. today.

Next, there is the situation nationally. In one of the most bizarre election years in U.S. history, Trump's narcissism and thirst for dictatorial privileges pushes the regime to do whatever it can do to cover up its mishandling of the COVID-19 health crisis and to divert attention away from the impacts of his white supremacist rants on racist police impunity around the nation. We've seen Trump singling out certain organizations and people's movements as a means to make an example to others, and it seems that Portland is just the latest "example" to be made.

Finally, despite the city of Portland joining the calls of "Feds, Get Out!", federal agents have had a welcome home in Portland for a long time under the Joint Terrorism Task Force. This relationship between Portland Police and the Department of Homeland Security lasted for years. It was only removed through mass mobilization in 2019 after the arrests of numerous activists and members of the Muslim community.

Add to this the countless Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids that this so-called sanctuary city has allowed to brutalize undocumented communities since long before the Trump regime came to power, and the question of federal troops today merely becomes one of quantity, not quality.

The assaults, kidnappings and intimidations at the hands of federal troops in Portland are a horrific escalation of fascist state violence, but they must be seen in

this wider context.



**SLL:** The mayor of Portland and the governor of Oregon opposed the presence of Trump's federal agents. Mayor Ted Wheeler has said the city will "reimagine" police accountability and redirect funds from the police bureau. How do you think the movement might respond to concretize and extend any gains that come about as a result of the uprising?

**CU:** Regardless of what happened in the fight against the federal occupation of Portland, lasting change needs to be struggled for. That means that the city of Portland needs to take an honest look at what led to this situation to begin with. The federal troops took advantage of a genuine peoples' uprising against the impunity of the Portland police as their excuse to enter our city. This grievance with the city

government still exists.

I do believe that this is a moment to push for winnable change at the city level, change that the city can be held accountable to. Demands to halt the funneling of army-grade equipment to the police, an end the city's contracts with human rights-violating companies like G4S and to stop the open collusion with white supremacists can all be used as rallying cries to ensure our organizations are stronger than they were before this moment began.

In short, what's needed is a true mass movement that is rooted 100 percent in working and oppressed communities, that has the strength and will to fight to take power away from the bourgeois state and put it into the hands of the people.



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## **A. Philip Randolph wanted a \$16.88 minimum wage**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 17, 2020

The anniversary of the Aug. 28, 1963, March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom is

approaching. The historic event is best remembered for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.

What the capitalist media will almost never mention are the [10 demands of the march.](#)

"A massive federal program" was demanded to train and hire all unemployed workers "on meaningful and dignified jobs at decent wages." With 30 million people currently out of work, this 57-year-old demand is even more needed today.

Another demand was for a "national minimum wage" of at least \$2 per hour.

Two dollars an hour back in 1963 is equal to \$16.88 per hour in July 2020, according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator](#). That's a little bit over \$35,000 per year, if an employee is able to work 40 hours per week for an entire year.

The current federal minimum wage is just \$7.25 per hour, although some state and local minimum wages are higher.

Winning a \$16.88 minimum wage would bring a better life to tens of millions of workers and their families.

The 13.5 million "food preparation and serving" workers earned an average wage of just \$12.82 per hour in 2019. The 209,000 laundry workers were paid an even more miserable \$12.22.

Six-and-a-half million "health care support" workers got just \$14.91 per hour. The 6.2 million "laborers and material movers" made \$14.70. The 4.4 million "building and grounds cleaning and maintenance" and 3.3 million "personal care" workers received \$15.03 per hour, [according to the BLS](#).

## **From Pullman to Walmart**

Fighting hardest for these demands at the 1963 march was A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Already 74 years old, Randolph was a key organizer of the march along with Bayard Rustin.

Amtrak has taken advantage of the coronavirus to cut service. Beginning in October, it wants to run its few long-distance trains just three days a week. Even before the pandemic, there were only 13 Amtrak trains with sleeping cars.

There were no jet planes in 1928. Every night, 100,000 people traveled in sleeping cars owned by the Pullman company.

Pullman passengers were overwhelmingly middle and upper class. Fares in a sleeper were much higher than traveling in a coach.

Eighteen thousand workers, virtually all of whom were Black, made the beds and were at the beck and call of passengers. Porters were expected to shine their shoes overnight.

Working more than 90 hours per week, the [monthly wage of porters](#) was \$67.50, or just \$810 per year. In the same period, steelworkers, who didn't have a union either, were making an average \$1,600 annually.

Yet hiring discrimination against African Americans was so intense that being a Pullman porter was a prestigious job within the Black community. Many were college graduates. In one railroad wreck, the body of a porter was identified by his Phi Beta Kappa key from Amherst College.

For decades, the Pullman Company was the largest private employer of Black labor in the United States. With the Great Migration of African Americans to the North, United States Steel overtook Pullman in the number of Black workers it employed.

The steel trust was succeeded by General Motors as the largest employer of African

Americans, with Ford and Chrysler close behind. All these workers won union wages and benefits.

It's a big step backwards that the largest employer of Black workers today is Walmart. Its 1.5 million U.S. workers are paid miserably low wages because none of them have a union contract.

### **Pullman porters were freedom fighters**

1925. Philip Randolph helped found the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters on May 8, 1925. It sought to organize Pullman porters into a union.

The powerful Pullman Company, which also made passenger, freight and subway cars, crushed the BSCP's organizing drive. Many pro-union employees were fired.

Black workers persevered. On Aug. 25, 1937, BSCP members forced Pullman to sign a union contract that included a big wage increase and reduced the work week by 40 percent.

The Black-led BSCP played a vanguard role in the freedom struggle. A. Philip Randolph started the [March On Washington movement](#) in 1941 to demand an end to segregation in the armed forces and discrimination in employment.

With tens of thousands rallying in St. Louis, Chicago and New York, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was compelled to sign Executive Order 8802, which established the Fair Employment Practices Committee.

It was BSCP member E.D. Nixon who, while going between Montgomery, Ala., and Chicago three times a week as a Pullman porter, was the main organizer of the Montgomery bus boycott. In his book, "Stride Towards Freedom," Dr. King praised E.D. Nixon, who was a close friend of Rosa Parks.

A. Philip Randolph also fought against racism within the labor movement. AFL-CIO President George Meany didn't like that.

Meany's home union — Plumbers Local 1 in New York City — didn't have a single Black or Latinx apprentice at the time. [Meany viciously attacked Randolph](#) at the labor federation's 1959 convention.

Steelworker Ted Dostal, a founding member of Workers World Party, motivated the Youngstown, Ohio, Labor Council to pass a resolution condemning Meany's racist tirade.

It was a shameful chapter in labor history when George Meany and the AFL-CIO refused to support the 1963 March for Jobs and Freedom, although many unions, like the United Auto Workers, did so.

It's just as rotten today to allow police organizations to belong to the AFL-CIO.

### **We need a \$20 minimum wage**

Back in 1963, A. Philip Randolph demanded a minimum wage of at least \$2 per hour. Today, we need a minimum wage of at least \$20 per hour.

Food prices are starting to go through the roof. Landlords are not reducing rents.

Workers are more productive than ever. But almost all the gains have gone to the rich.

[According to the Economic Policy Institute](#), labor productivity increased by 69.3 percent between 1979 and 2018. Hourly wages have gone up just 11.6 percent.

The result is that the [400 richest scoundrels](#) in the U.S. have as much wealth as the poorest 64 percent of U.S. households. In the capital of capitalism, [114,000 schoolchildren](#) in New York City are homeless.

Demanding a \$20 minimum wage is no more impossible than winning Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid. “In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold” is how the last stanza of labor’s anthem “Solidarity Forever” begins.

Let’s use that power to win \$20 per hour and to abolish the police!



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## **Bolivian movements and trade unions propose to hold elections on October 11**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 17, 2020

On August 12, Bolivian social movements and trade unions, which have been mobilizing against postponement of general elections for the past ten days, issued an official statement and proposed to hold elections on October 11.

The main organizers of [the national strike and the nationwide road blockades](#), the Bolivian Workers’ Center (COB) and the Pact of Unity (a national alliance of social

movements and grassroots organizations), said that they are ready to lift blockades and end the indefinite general strike if the Supreme Electoral Court (TSE) sets October 11 as the new date for elections, guaranteeing that it is definitive and approved by law. They also demanded that all the seven members of the TSE, which is under the direct control of the coup-installed government, participate in the dialogue meeting and gave the electoral body a 24-hour deadline to respond.

The same day, Bolivia's Senate also approved a law calling to hold the country's general elections no later than October 18. The law will now go to the Chamber of Deputies for its approval. Once it is approved by the deputies, it will pass to the defacto president, Jeanine Áñez, for its constitutional promulgation.

Former president Evo Morales's party, the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), holds the two-thirds majority in both chambers of Bolivia's parliament, the Plurinational Legislative Assembly, and has expressed its willingness to approve the law.

Áñez's government, which usurped power following the civic-military coup against Morales in November 2019, has [postponed the elections three times since March this year](#), citing the health risk due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Since August 3, hundreds of thousands of Bolivians have been mobilizing and maintaining road blockades in all the nine departments of Bolivia to demand [the restoration of democracy, free and fair elections and Áñez's resignation](#). More than 140 major highways, roads and streets have been blocked by protesters across Bolivia. The number of road blockades and organizations and unions joining the national strike are increasing with each passing day.

In recent days, several massive protests were also carried out in the capital, La Paz, and the neighboring city, El Alto, against the regime. Today, on August 13, a massive march will be held in La Paz. The protesters from different parts of the department

will march to the seat of government or the presidential palace.

Meanwhile, the de-facto government has adopted [the strategy of criminalizing the social protests, politically persecuting the social leaders, and threatening the protesters](#). It has accused the protesters for blocking the passage of ambulances and vehicles transporting medical supplies. Trumped up charges of genocide and terrorism were even pressed against Morales, who is currently exiled in Argentina, MAS presidential candidates, Luis Arce and David Choquehuanca, as well as the secretary general of COB, Juan Carlos Huarachi. The far-right has also mobilized violent right-wing extremists groups to attack the protesters.

Bolivian social movement leaders have denounced that the coup regime leaders have been explicitly promoting acts of violence against the protesters and participating in the violation of human rights of the protesters. The defense minister, Fernando Lopez, expressed support for the armed paramilitary group, *Unión Juvenil Cruceña* (UJC), which has been attacking pro-democracy protesters. Meanwhile, the health minister, René Sahonero, called on the doctors to deny medical attention to the protesters. Bolivian citizens denounced Sahonero's call as a violation of the human right to public and universal health.

Source: [Peoples Dispatch](#)



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# **Condemn assassination of Philippines peasant leader Randall Echanis**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
August 17, 2020

# JUSTICE FOR RANDALL “KA RANDY” ECHANIS!



*Following is a statement from the Socialist Unity Party:*

We of the Socialist Unity Party and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper in the United States are shocked and appalled by the cruel and cowardly murder of Randall “Ka Randy” Echanis, chair of the Anakpawis Party-List in the Philippines, along with a neighbor who came to his assistance. We condemn his assassination as a crime against all who labor, against all those who are exploited and oppressed, in the Philippines and all over the world.

We hold the murderous Duterte regime, its Davao death squads and the Philippine military responsible for this monstrous deed. Its backers and funders in the Trump regime and Pentagon are also guilty.

We condemn the seizure of his body and mistreatment of his family and friends by the Quezon City Police and demand the body be released to his family now.

Randy Echanis devoted most of his 72 years of life to the people, especially to the peasants, farmworkers and tillers in the Philippines. He worked and sacrificed for decades in their cause, most recently as national chairperson of the Anakpawis Party-List and deputy secretary general of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, the Peasant Movement of the Philippines.

He also served as a political consultant for the National Democratic Front of the Philippines during the peace talks with the Philippines government, focusing on the urgent need of the peasant masses for real agrarian reform. He helped craft the Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill, which aimed to break up the big landlord monopolies and give land to the landless.

Randy was murdered — stabbed and shot to death — during a raid of his own home, despite his being ill and undergoing medical treatment. Later that night, 10 police forcibly took Randy's body from the funeral home where he was laid and took him to another. Early the next morning, the Philippine National Police arrested Pao Colabres, a paralegal, who was guarding Randy's body during a vigil.

It is painfully evident that state forces, led by the U.S.-backed President Rodrigo Duterte, are responsible for the murder of Ka Randy. It is also evident that what Ka Randy represented and fought for — land for the landless, the breakup of the land monopolies — challenges the interests of Duterte and the Philippine state, a government by and for the big landlords, compradors and imperialist monopolies.

Today in the U.S., millions are rising up against police terror and murder, which especially targets the Black community. We see the struggle against state terror as the same here and in the Philippines. The bloody hand that murdered Ka Randy and so many activists in the Philippines is no different than the hand that murdered George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain and so many others in the U.S. It is the hand that murdered Fred Hampton and Martin Luther King Jr.

The state terrorists in the Philippines carried out this murder in a way calculated to horrify and terrify the people of the Philippines, to silence their cries for peace and justice. It will not work. Such crimes have never stopped the people's struggle for justice and freedom. It will not save the criminal regime of Rodrigo Duterte or the system he represents from its ultimate downfall.

Struggle-La Lucha and the Socialist Unity Party send our deepest condolences and solidarity to Randy's partner, Erlinda Lacaba-Echanis, and to all of his family, friends and comrades. We continue to support the struggle to topple the tyrant Duterte and win liberation for the Filipino people.

Justice for Ka Randy! Justice for the workers and peasants of the Philippines! Down with the criminal Duterte regime!

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## **Condemnation of the murder of Randall Echanis**

By Jose Maria Sison

Chief political consultant, National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP)

August 10 — In the strongest terms, I condemn the murder of Randall (Randy)

Echanis and his neighbor, who were unarmed. Randall was a peaceful social activist. He was a mild-mannered man of 72 years. He had a consistent modest personality with a high level of education and intellect. He had long dedicated himself to his social advocacy and had made tremendous sacrifices for many decades.

He was outstanding as an advocate of genuine land reform, rural development and national industrialization. He was the national chairperson of the Anakpawis Party-List and deputy secretary general of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas. He was a leading consultant of the NDFP on agrarian reform and member of the NDFP Reciprocal Working Committee on Social and Economic Reforms. He played a key role in the drafting of documents on agrarian reform and rural development and the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms.

Even after the termination of the peace negotiations by Duterte, Randall was supposed to enjoy the protection of the safety and immunity provisions of the JASIG (Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantee) just like all the other negotiators, consultants and staff of the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) and NDFP in the peace negotiations. Duterte and his gang of butchers are truly monstrous for murdering the unarmed Randall and his neighbor.

It is widely known that Department of Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año has been boasting to his staff and other people that he has mapped out the locations of all social activists through the local governments and neighborhoods and that he can wipe them out any time. This boasting of Año is taken seriously by all the social activists that he threatens to kill.

With the murder of Randall and his neighbor, the Duterte gang of butchers has aroused the indignation and just wrath of the peasant masses and the entire Filipino people. All social activists have no choice but to intensify in every necessary way their struggle against the tyrant, traitor, butcher and plunderer Duterte.

The murder of Randall and his neighbor will have far-reaching consequences towards the intensification of the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation against the evil Duterte regime and the unjust ruling system of big compradors, landlords and corrupt officials who are servile to foreign monopoly capitalism.

Source: [National Democratic Front of the Philippines](https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2020/08/page/4/)

