

Long live the Paris Commune!

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 20, 2021



Workers defend a barricade in the rue de Charonne during the Paris Commune.

One hundred fifty years ago, poor and working people in Paris took power into their own hands. The Paris Commune was born on March 18, 1871.

Karl Marx — the founder of scientific socialism, also known as communism — wrote that the workers in Paris “had stormed heaven.”

The world’s first working-class government lasted just 72 days before being drowned in blood. At least 30,000 of its supporters were killed by counter-revolutionary

forces.

Yet the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and every socialist revolution that followed were inspired by the workers of Paris. The Bolshevik leader Lenin declared that “we all stand on the shoulders of the Commune.”

One reason revolutionaries raise clenched fists is because captured Communards did so as they were executed by firing squads. The revolutionary anthem “The Internationale” was composed by Eugène Pottier and Pierre De Geyter, who were both supporters of the Commune. The title refers to the First International workers’ party and declares that the international party will unite humanity (“shall be the human race”).

The title of Franz Fanon’s classic work on the African Revolution — “The Wretched of the Earth” — comes from the Internationale’s stirring words: “Arise, ye prisoners of starvation! Arise, ye wretched of the earth!”

The road to the Commune

The Commune arose as a result of France being invaded by German armies in 1870. The French leader at the time — Napoleon III — thought the Franco-Prussian war would prolong his dictatorship.

The so-called Emperor of the French surrendered his armies and was overthrown instead. Napoleon III was a nephew of the original Napoleon, whose armies conquered much of Europe but were driven out of Haiti.

Napoleon III could have been a model for Trump. Both were lying scoundrels and white supremacists. The French dictator killed tens of thousands of people in Algeria and invaded Vietnam.

Victor Hugo — who wrote “Les Misérables” — called the French imposter “Napoleon

the little.” Karl Marx wrote [“The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,”](#) showing how the class struggles in France allowed this faker to seize power. (The “18th Brumaire” refers to the date in the French revolutionary calendar when the original Napoleon seized power in 1799.)

It was the workers of Paris that overthrew King Louis Philippe in the February 1848 revolution. They wanted a social republic with full employment and an end to hunger.

They were betrayed by the capitalists. Thousands of workers were killed when they rose up in June of that year. The wealthy and powerful united in the “party of order” to crush them.

However, the ruling classes were divided, with some wanting a republic while the monarchists supported three different candidates. Louis Bonaparte was able to exploit the divisions to pose as the savior of capitalist society against the poor.

First elected as president, Louis Bonaparte seized power before his term ended in 1852. That’s what Trump wanted to do with his Jan. 6 coup attempt.

The coming to power of Louis Bonaparte, who declared himself Napoleon III, was the last act of the 1848 revolutions that swept through Europe. All were defeated. Karl Marx and his co-worker Frederick Engels fled to Britain.

A long period of reaction set in, like the period following the overthrow of the Soviet Union. Karl Marx dissolved the Communist League.

What turned things around was the U.S. Civil War. While landlords and capitalists supported the Confederacy, every progressive person wanted the slave masters defeated. Thousands immigrated to the United States to join the Union army.

“The Black Jacobins” by C.L.R. James showed how the people of Haiti helped defend

the French Revolution against invasion. In the U.S., the Black troops in the Union army and a Black general strike in the Confederacy proved decisive in overthrowing slavery.

Strikes broke out and workers' organizations were formed across Europe following the North's victory. Helping to promote these struggles was the First International, which was guided by Karl Marx.

A wonderful, heroic legacy

The German armies overran northern France but couldn't capture Paris. The people refused to surrender despite being starved.

Following Napoleon III's downfall, all the Tramps in the French one percent formed a provisional government in Versailles. The former home of "let them eat cake" Marie Antoinette is about 15 miles from Paris.

The Versailles regime's first act was to try to disarm the workers of Paris who had prevented the city's capture. Capitalist leader Adolphe Thiers sought to crush the people who wanted a social republic.

To commit this crime, Thiers tried to seize artillery belonging to the worker-dominated National Guard in the city. Working women in the Montmartre neighborhood seized the cannon instead.

The Commune was declared the same day.

"The real women of Paris showed again at the surface," wrote Marx, "heroic, noble and devoted, like the women of antiquity. Working, thinking, fighting, bleeding Paris — almost forgetful, in its incubation of a new society, of the cannibals at its gates — radiant in the enthusiasm of its historic initiative."

Thiers was a cannibal whose mercenaries slaughtered the Commune's defenders. In the same decade thousands of Black people were murdered by the Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction's bloody overthrow.

While the working people of Paris in 1871 were trying to build a new society, the same year in Los Angeles — then a village of 5,000 — a racist mob lynched at least 17 Chinese people.

In contrast, the military leader of the Commune was the Polish immigrant Jaroslav Dombrowski, who died on the barricades. A thousand Poles fought alongside Parisians.

Most French workers and even many revolutionaries initially supported Napoleon III's reactionary war. They did so because of the memories of the French Revolution defending itself against the feudal armies of Europe.

But the struggle to build a new society helped defeat national hatreds, often called chauvinism, named after the French soldier Nicolas Chauvin. Another Chauvin is the Minneapolis pig that murdered George Floyd.

French workers repudiated the first Napoleon's bloody chauvinist record, which included restoring slavery. On May 16, 1871, they tore down the Vendôme column with its statue of Napoleon.

Meanwhile the German socialist leaders August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht were jailed on treason charges for demanding peace with France. This was internationalism in action.

A record to be proud of

The Commune accomplished so much in its too-short existence.

The existing state power was smashed. No more killer cops!

Elected officials had salaries not exceeding that of a skilled worker and could be immediately recalled by voters.

Closed workplaces were reopened as cooperatives. Nightwork in bakeries was abolished. Education was declared a right.

In its pioneering attempt to create a new society, the Commune made mistakes. It didn't take over the state bank.

Women weren't allowed to vote. That didn't stop women from being the Commune's staunchest defenders. [As Marx wrote](#), "The women of Paris joyfully gave up their lives on the barricades and on the place of execution."

A Women's Union was formed. Louise Michel fought on the barricades and was exiled to New Caledonia, which is still a French colony.

Forty-six years after the Commune, women textile workers in St. Petersburg, Russia, went on strike on International Women's Day and overthrew a tyrant called the tsar.

The Paris Commune lasted 72 days within the shrinking limits of a single city. The Soviet Commune defeated Hitler and lasted 73 years over one-sixth of the earth.

Our class still has China, Cuba, People's Korea, Laos and Vietnam. The peoples of Bolivia, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Zimbabwe will not surrender to U.S. and European banksters.

Palestine and Yemen will be free. Iran will defend itself against the Pentagon.

Long live the Commune!



Bolivia's coup-plotting President Jeanine Añez to face justice

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Jeanine Añez became the leader of Bolivia's coup-born regime in the blink of an eye on November 12, 2019. She proclaimed herself interim president in the course of a few minutes during a very brief congressional session. The self-proclaimed interim president, Añez, thus became the sudden leader of a country that was just starting to experience an unprecedented social upheaval.

"The Bible re-enters the Palace," she said from the balcony of the Quemado Palace, the seat of government in La Paz, brandishing a copy of the four Ancient Gospels. The months that followed that fateful day have a grim sequence: police brutality, massacres, corruption scandals, mismanagement of the pandemic, and protests against the unelected interim president.

Before the military coup against former President Evo Morales in 2019, she was a little-known extreme right-wing senator who, in her spare time, shared racist and fundamentalist comments on social networks. Her efforts to wipe her hateful tweets against Indigenous communities from the face of the internet were of little use. Screenshots of some tweets she posted on this social media went viral a few hours after she usurped power.

"How dare they celebrate Aymara New Year? You Satanists, nobody replaces God!" she wrote referring to the festivity that takes place every June 21 in the indigenous communities of Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, and Peru that marks the beginning of a new agricultural cycle.

That tweet was posted by Añez on June 20, 2013, on the eve of the Aymara celebration. Although she later deleted it, the post can still be viewed on the Wayback Machine, the digital platform that allows web pages to be archived.

There are also screenshots of another post that reads, "I dream of a Bolivia free of satanic Indian rites. The city is not for the Indians; let them go to the Altiplano or the Chaco."

On October 5, 2019, just days before the coup was unleashed, Añez called Morales “a pathetic Native person who is clinging to power.” The tweet was accompanied by an illustration of the former president hugging a chair with the phrase “Last Days” overprinted in yellow letters.

Was this tweet a warning?

The racist message against President Evo set off all the alarms about whether Añez’s assumption to the presidency of Bolivia was meticulously planned by her ahead of time, and precisely when the conspiracy to seize power began.

According to Cuban analysts Rosa Miriam Elizalde and Pedro Santander, this was a coup that “combined known modalities -military pronouncements and repression- with new ones, especially in the technological-communicational dimension. The aim was to generate a supposed consensus against Morales’ government, aligned with the interests of the right-wing in the region.”

Añez went from having 8,000 to have nearly 150,000 followers just days before she self-proclaimed herself president. Over 40,000 of those followers were fake profiles recently created and had barely one or two follow-ups.

Most of these accounts were created before November 10, the day the military demanded President Morales’ resignation and a violent crackdown took place in Senkata and Sacaba cities, in which 20 people were killed and another 700 citizens were injured.

“It is not revenge, it is justice”

With the swearing-in of President Luis Arce on October 20, 2020, one year after the coup, Bolivia resumed the path of democracy. Prosecuting those responsible for the massacres, the social unrest, and the country’s unprecedented economic crisis that followed the 2019 elections are priorities for the new government.

Today, Añez is in preventive detention to ensure she will not escape. She is scheduled for four trials for the crimes of conspiracy, terrorism, and sedition. The coup ministers who accompanied her are also facing jail or have fled to Brazil, Colombia, or the U.S. trying to evade justice.

Argentine women's rights defender Cecilia Sola knew this day would come. The feminist, who watched in horror as extremists beat, humiliated, and dragged Morales supporters through the streets with the consent of the Añez regime, wrote to the former "interim president":

"Don't be afraid, Jeanine/ They will not beat you/ They will not shave your head until your scalp bleeds, with your hands tied behind your back/ They will not drag you through the streets, after throwing red paint on you, for the scorn and amusement of your enemies/ Those Indigenous women that you despised and persecuted would not allow it.

You were detained and imprisoned with no human rights infringed upon/ You were taken to a women's prison, with access to legal defense, and before the world's eyes/ You have denied being an Indigenous woman and you have declared yourself Aryan, blonde, and superior to those people whom you sent to hunt, but you must not be afraid./ They, we, are not like you."

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano - English](#)



The Atlanta murders and the capitalist state

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The Socialist Unity Party/Partido por el Socialismo Unido and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper condemn in the strongest possible terms the racist, sexist, fascist shootings in the Atlanta area that targeted mainly Asian women, but also Asian and Latinx men.

We express warm solidarity and class love to the families, friends and communities of the victims of this despicable attack: Delaina Ashley Yuan, Xiajie Yan, Daoyou Feng, Paul Andre Michels, and four others whose names have not been released at the time of writing. It is known that six of the eight people killed were women of Asian descent. A ninth victim, Elcias Hernandez-Ortiz, is in the hospital fighting for his life.

The killer, a 21-year-old white man named Robert Long, claims that his rampage was rooted in a “sex addiction,” and that he attacked three spas in order to “eliminate a

temptation.” Georgia police officials are backing this as an excuse for mass murder. But to many, it’s clear that this violence is rooted in both patriarchal subjugation of women and, in particular, the racist fetishization of immigrant women.

It is crucial to understand the role of the state not just in these particular killings, but also the monstrous string of racist, fascist killings leading up to this. These include the murder perpetrated by, to name only a few: Dylann Roof, who murdered nine Black attendees at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C.; Robert Bowers, who murdered eleven Jewish attendees of the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh; Derek Chauvin, who murdered George Floyd in Minneapolis; Darren Wilson, who murdered Michael Brown Jr. in Ferguson, Mo., and; Jonathan Mattingly, Brett Hankison and Myles Cosgrove, who murdered Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Ky.

Like many of these racist murderers, Robert Long was apprehended and detained by police without incident. Police took Dylann Roof for a cheeseburger after he murdered nine innocent Black people. In contrast, the Black victims of police violence George Floyd, Michael Brown and Breonna Taylor were unarmed and not charged with anything.

The murders in Atlanta must be seen in the context of former President Donald Trump’s viciously racist anti-immigrant bile, in both words and policy, as well as his constant attempts to blame the COVID-19 pandemic on the Chinese government. President Joe Biden has continued this anti-China sentiment by escalating the Cold War-style provocations against China, which has also contributed to a rise in attacks on Asian Americans and Asian immigrants. According to a [report by Stop AAPI Hate](#), nearly 3,800 racist incidents against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have been documented since last March.

The shootings must also be seen as a continuation of centuries of U.S. imperialist aggression in Asian countries. In the pursuit of profit, Washington perpetrated some

of the most gruesome acts of inhumanity in history — bombing northern Korea flat, dropping two atom bombs on Japan, pillaging Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and committing genocide in the Philippines, only to name a few. Similar to its operations in Latin America, U.S. involvement creates refugees and forced migration. Often, migrants and refugees seek a better life in the United States only to be met with racist violence and exploitation.

In this context, it is impossible to deny the complicity of the capitalist state in racist vigilante killings. As we saw in Trump’s attempted coup on Jan. 6 in Washington, D.C., cops and fascists go hand in hand. Capt. Jay Baker, the Cherokee County sheriff’s spokesman, made this abundantly clear when he claimed killer Long was just having “a really bad day.” Baker had previously made social media posts blaming “CHY-NA” for the coronavirus pandemic.

The only answer to this is working class unity, proletarian internationalism, and the struggle for socialism.



Biden continues the U.S. conflict with China through the Quad

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On March 12, the heads of government of four countries, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, and the United States President Joe Biden, [met](#) for a virtual meeting of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, better known as the Quad. Modi's opening [remarks](#) illustrate the emptiness of the public agenda; he called the Quad "a force for global good" with no details beyond a list of areas of collaboration ("vaccines, climate change and emerging technologies"). There was no direct [mention](#) of China during the meeting.

In the details relating to the launching of "an ambitious new joint partnership that is going to boost vaccine manufacturing," a more disturbing agenda reveals itself: the vaccines are meant for Southeast Asia, which is a core area of U.S. contest against China, and the "emerging technologies" refers to the U.S. desire to substitute products from its own high-tech firms and supplant the attractiveness of the Chinese high-tech industry. The goal of the Quad is to deepen the military and economic pressure against China.

The Quad was created in the aftermath of the tsunami of 2004 and then deepened by President Obama as central to his "[pivot to Asia](#)." But it did not take off until the U.S. administration of Donald Trump began to rely upon this grouping to tighten pressure on China. It is for that reason that in late 2020, Trump [gave](#) the heads of government of Australia (Morrison), Japan (Shinzo Abe, the former prime minister of the country) and India (Modi) the highest U.S. military decoration, the Legion of Merit. These three partners are key players in the U.S. government's pressure

campaign against China.

U.S. Primacy in the Region

In early January 2021, the U.S. government declassified a 2018 [document](#) prepared for the Trump administration. This document is called “U.S. Strategic Framework for the Indo-Pacific.” The text clearly states that the U.S. objective in Asia is to “[m]aintain U.S. primacy in the region.” The idea of “primacy” has a long [history](#) in U.S. foreign policy, going back to the early days after World War II. The United States government, in a series of documents, stated that it would seek to be the leading power in the world, and it would shape the creation of global institutions to benefit the United States above all else. This is the meaning of the word “primacy.”

The drafters of the 2018 policy from the U.S. National Security Council [noted](#) that the “threat” from China was not from its military. Rather, the United States worried about Chinese developments in “cutting-edge technologies, including artificial intelligence and bio-genetics.” The U.S. government’s objective, according to the [document](#) , was to “[m]aintain American industry’s innovation edge vis-à-vis China,” which does not mean only to enhance U.S. industry, but also to prevent China from getting access to technology and finance. The war in the Pacific promoted by the U.S. is not irrational. As this document further points out, “Loss of U.S. preeminence in the Indo-Pacific would weaken our ability to achieve U.S. interests globally.”

President Joe Biden’s administration, which inherits this document, will not set it aside. All [signs](#) show that Biden will continue to push the general line that the U.S. must undermine Chinese scientific and technological development; this goal will be achieved not by the encouragement of U.S. industry but by military threats and by the attempted use of U.S. alliances to exclude Chinese firms from doing business in

other countries.

At the Quad [discussions](#), the governments formed a Critical and Emerging Technology Working Group. The point of this group is for the four countries to collaborate on telecommunications and on tech standards. This working group is tasked with convening “dialogues on critical technology supply chains,” which is a direct reference to the attempt to shut out China from any technology or raw materials that would have dual civilian and military usage. It has also been set up to “[e]ncourage cooperation on telecommunications deployment, diversification of equipment suppliers, and future telecommunications.” The use of the word “diversification” is a direct reference to the U.S. [attempt](#) to cut out Chinese firms such as Huawei and ZTE from supplanting Western telecommunications companies, which have less sophisticated 5G tools that are also far too expensive.

Be prepared to fight

Behind all this rhetoric on vaccines, climate change, and technology lies an even uglier story. On March 9, Navy Admiral Philip Davidson, who heads the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, [appeared](#) before the Senate Armed Services Committee. His statement before the committee was based on a [report](#) on the Indo-Pacific Command’s Pacific Deterrence Initiative. That report asked the U.S. Congress to double its outlay to \$4.68 billion for 2022 (\$22.69 billion for 2023 to 2027). Admiral Davidson [said](#) that this money was essential because the U.S. “absolutely must be prepared to fight and win should competition turn to conflict.” He further said that the trade war could easily accelerate into war sooner than 2050.

A week before Davidson made these remarks, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken gave a wide-ranging [speech](#) about the Biden administration’s priorities. He listed the names of several countries that present the U.S. with “serious challenges, including Russia, Iran, North Korea.” “But the challenge posed by China is different,” he said.

“China is the only country with the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to seriously challenge the stable and open international system,” Blinken said, referring to the world order set up to the advantage of the North Atlantic countries. He was very explicit about who benefits from this system, saying that the system’s rules and values “make the world work the way we want it to, because it ultimately serves the interests and reflects the values of the American people.”

China threatens this, so Blinken said, the U.S. must “engage China from a position of strength.” This is the real purpose of the Quad, not to advance solutions to the great challenges of our time (the pandemic, climate change, war, hunger), but to pressure China to cease its technological advance. If China does not surrender, the U.S.—with the Quad in tow—is prepared to go to war.

This article was produced by [Globetrotter](#). Vijay Prashad is an Indian historian, editor and journalist. He is a writing fellow and chief correspondent at Globetrotter. He is the chief editor of [LeftWord Books](#) and the director of [Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research](#). He is a senior non-resident fellow at [Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies](#), Renmin University of China. He has written more than 20 books, including [The Darker Nations](#) and [The Poorer Nations](#). His latest book is [Washington Bullets](#), with an introduction by Evo Morales Ayma.



Mumia Abu-Jamal's health emergency: The only treatment is freedom

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An interview with physician consultant Dr. Ricardo Alvarez

March 18 Health Update from Noelle Hanrahan, Prison Radio:

Mumia Abu-Jamal's health still remains a deep concern. He was hospitalized with congestive heart failure and Covid 19 for four days recently. He was returned to the infirmary at SCI Mahanoy, and he has spoken to his family reaching them by phone, for limited 15min calls. He noted yesterday, Wed, 3-17-21 that he was having additional tests done in the SCI Mahanoy Infirmary and expected to be sent to general population in the next few days.

He has not had access to consult directly with his personal physician Dr. Ricardo Alvarez or his medical legal team, Bret Grote (ALC) and Robert Boyle, or his criminal legal team (Sam Spital NAACP LDF, and Judith Ritter). A meeting is expected to occur soon, between Mumia and his legal team.

He has also while in the infirmary not had access to his email account. As limited as that was, it was a lifeline. The worldwide movement is embracing this struggle to secure adequate health care for Mumia Abu-Jamal, at the same time it demands that justice be done in his criminal case before the Philadelphia PA courts...

Mumia Abu-Jamal's Health Emergency: An interview with physician consultant Dr. Ricardo Alvarez

By The Jamal Journal

Mumia Abu-Jamal, the internationally renowned journalist, Pennsylvania inmate, and former Black Panther widely considered to be a political prisoner, is now experiencing a health emergency.

In this interview, Abu-Jamal's physician consultant, Dr. Ricardo Alvarez explains each of the four primary ailments that Abu-Jamal is currently suffering from: COVID-19, congestive heart failure, liver cirrhosis, and a worsening of the severe debilitating chronic skin condition.

On Feb. 27, Mumia Abu-Jamal telephoned Pam Africa (coordinator of the uncompromising International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal) to report his COVID symptoms, telling her that his breathing felt "like an elephant sitting on his lungs." Pam and supporters immediately began [an action campaign to telephone Pennsylvania Secretary of Corrections John Wetzel, Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner, and Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf.](#)

The phone calls succeeded by having Abu-Jamal taken to an outside hospital where

he received four days of treatment, including the removal of fluid from his lungs. However, [a Mobilization4Mumia press release](#) explains that “during this treatment, his legs and arms were inhumanely shackled to the hospital bed, creating additional and unnecessary suffering—impacting open and bloody wounds from his unrelenting skin ailment.” The shackling was so unpleasant that Abu-Jamal is now afraid to go back to the hospital again.

On February 27, when Mumia’s current health crisis became known, [the first issue of the newly restarted Jamal Journal](#) had literally just finished printing. The newspaper was published mostly to present the evidence supporting our new [Color of Change petition to Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner](#) calling for DA Krasner to stop defending Mumia Abu-Jamal’s unjust conviction and to secure his release as quickly as he possibly can.

To support our demand for Abu-Jamal’s release, the petition cites the overwhelming evidence of police, prosecutorial, and judicial misconduct that has forever destroyed the legitimacy of Abu-Jamal’s 1982 conviction. Our 40-page newspaper presents this overwhelming evidence for DA Krasner and the whole world to see.

We recently updated this petition to cite the current health emergency as now making Abu-Jamal’s release even more urgent. The updated petition begins by declaring:

“Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently suffering from COVID-19, congestive heart disease, liver damage, and a worsening of a severe and debilitating chronic skin condition. The cirrhosis of the liver and increased likelihood of liver cancer resulted from his untreated Hepatitis C in spring 2014. His Hep C went untreated for nearly two years until attorneys secured a preliminary injunction that forced the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to meet basic national treatment guidelines and give him the fast acting anti viral Hep C cure. In addition, Mumia was treated with topical steroids for his skin condition, which caused a diabetic reaction. Prison medical staff

neglected to monitor and follow up on their own chart notations for three weeks! His unmonitored glucose levels resulted in a severely high glucose level resulting in ketoacidosis, requiring Mumia to be rushed to the ICU. Mumia Abu-Jamal now relies upon that very same prison healthcare system, the prison infirmary, for treatment during his current health crisis. Our collective call for Abu-Jamal's release could not be more urgent. As Abu-Jamal's physician Dr. Ricardo Alvarez says: The Only Treatment is Freedom."

Please [sign the Color of Change petition here](#), and visit www.JamalJournal.com for other ways to support Abu-Jamal, including the current campaign to directly contact Secretary Wetzl, Governor Wolf, and DA Krasner through telephone calls, email, and social media.


Jamal Journal: *Mumia Abu-Jamal is now suffering from COVID-19, congestive heart failure, liver cirrhosis, and a severe worsening of his chronic debilitating skin condition. As a consultant physician, please tell us about his current condition. What does Abu-Jamal need that he is not getting from the prison authorities?*

Dr. Ricardo Alvarez: The first thing I should note is that in discussing Mumia's health, it is important for his supporters to understand that he has sacrificed some measure of privacy. This sacrifice has been necessary at times so that supporters can be vigilant of his health and I believe Mumia seeks to help improve the conditions of ALL prisoners. We saw this with the example of the legal precedent set to access Hepatitis C medications. In this regard it is particularly important that Mumia supporters continue to link with and support all political prisoners and all prisoners.

Jamal Journal: *Can you please tell us about Mumia's COVID diagnosis?*

Ricardo Alvarez: Mumia needs freedom for his COVID. He can get that from Prison authorities. There is a compassionate release program, which cruelly is used to

release prisoners on their deathbed and then only in limited cases. It doesn't have to be that way. Covid is an extraordinary circumstance and a compelling basis for decarceration of our elderly. It won't happen until we demand action.

In fact, Dr. Brie Williams, a Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and director of the [Amend: Changing Correctional Culture Program](#), and one of the nations experts on care of the elderly incarcerated, has written [an affidavit for release based on COVID](#)  .

Dr. Williams writes: "I submit this affidavit in support of any defendant seeking release from custody during the COVID-19 pandemic, so long as such release does not jeopardize public safety and the inmate can be released to a residence in which the inmate can comply with CDC social distancing guidelines. The statements in this affidavit are based only on the current state of emergency..."

According to Dr. Williams, because of the COVID pandemic, the entire community is at risk if prison populations are not reduced. Prisons are ill equipped to humanely stop the spread of infection. Correctional Officers bring COVID into and out of prisons.

Furthermore, inmates have the highest risk of acute illness and poor health outcomes if infected with COVID. There are more than 2.3 million people incarcerated in the United States, approximately 16% of whom are age 50 or older. The risk of coronavirus to incarcerated seniors is high. Their advanced age, coupled with the challenges of practicing even the most basic disease prevention measures in prison, is a potentially lethal combination. To make matters worse, correctional facilities are often ill equipped to care for aging prisoners, who are more likely to suffer from chronic health conditions than the general public. 70% of older people have at least one chronic disease.

So the most important point of advocacy is for the release of all our elders in COVID

prisons. Prisons are becoming a death sentence. Some prisoners have feared to share their symptoms for fear of isolation in barbaric conditions.

There is good data to show that releasing our elders is not a significant public safety risk.

Jamal Journal: *Then there is the congestive heart failure.*

Dr. Ricardo Alvarez: Yes, Mumia needs freedom for his congestive heart failure. We don't fully know what he needs medically inside prison because we do not yet have all the records. From what we have it is clear he needs regular monitoring.

A diagnosis of Congestive Heart Failure is a serious disease with 50% mortality in 5 years in the best of circumstances. There is interesting data to show that the physiological age of prisoners averages 10 to 15 years older than their chronological age, which means that their physical bodies literally age faster. It makes sense when you consider the enormously stressful conditions of the constant threat of violence. But it also makes sense when you consider that prisoners are denied physical contact and loving connection.

Patients in the general population with congestive heart failure often have to check their weights daily and eat well with low salt diets. Mumia's diet will always be limited by the poor quality food that is contracted to major food service corporations.

Congestive heart failure may be prone to frequent hospitalizations due to the delicacy of the heart's inability to adequately pump blood. But just as prisoners may fear declaring their symptoms of COVID for fear of isolation, so too Mumia and other prisoners may fear declaring symptoms that would lead to hospitalization because of fear of the barbaric four point restraints. Prisoners are going to think twice about what threshold they will use to seek medical care when they are denied

compassionate conditions of hospitalization.

Jamal Journal: *The liver cirrhosis?*

Dr. Ricardo Alvarez: Mumia needs freedom for his liver cirrhosis. Again, we do not have the full records to determine if he is meeting the highest standard of care to monitor for cancer which would require ultrasounds every six months and checking for certain markers.

We do know that the cirrhosis was caused by the unnecessary delay in treatment that resulted from Hep C treatment protocols. That has been proven in the courts and Mumia's legal case to force the PA DOC to give him treatment consistent with current guidelines has paved the way for other inmates to get effective but expensive anti-viral medications.

Just as Mumia may fear hospitalization so too he may reasonably fear care in the prison infirmary where in 2015 he was repeatedly given courses of steroids for his skin condition even when there was clear documentation of a grossly elevated blood sugar level. Steroids are known to elevate blood glucose. He eventually needed to be admitted to the ICU in diabetic ketoacidosis as result of this negligence. And yet Mumia is dependent on these facilities for his care.

Jamal Journal: *What about the skin condition?*

Dr. Ricardo Alvarez: Mumia needs freedom for his severe debilitating skin condition. It makes sense that Mumia's skin condition is exacerbated in the stressful conditions of imprisonment.

Unfortunately, the number of medications and treatments are limited. We already know the dangers of steroids. Mumia has a deep understanding of his own health and makes clear that he believes in natural remedies when possible.

The release from prison will not only help his skin condition because he can be in a loving and supportive community with human touch but also because he will have access to a variety of balms and other healing products that are denied in prison. Only FDA approved medications or simple emollients such as Eucerin or Vaseline will be administered in prison.

If the severity of his skin condition is exacerbated and hospitalization might be an option then he must suffer the concern of being chained during his entire hospital stay. What he needs now is assurance that he will not be in four point restraints when hospitalized and to have access to healing balms from traditional healers consistent with his medicinal beliefs.

-The Jamal Journal is published by the uncompromising International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Please visit our website www.JamalJournal.com to learn more.

Source: [Jamal Journal](http://www.JamalJournal.com)



Rev. Annie Chambers speaks out in support of BAmazon workers

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 20, 2021



March 20 is the next national day of action in solidarity with Alabama Amazon workers.

Gather at City Hall, 100 Holliday Street, Baltimore, MD 21202, 2 pm Rally
March to Whole Foods

Please join us on Saturday, March 20, to send a clear message to Jeff Bezos and Amazon that we support the Bessemer Alabama workers who are standing up for a union. We say stop union-busting!

Workers everywhere inspired by the majority, Black workers in Bessemer fighting to win the first U.S. union at Amazon, are prepared to continue building the solidarity movement that's arisen around this historic struggle!

The weekend of March 20 is also the U.N. Anti-Racism Day, with actions worldwide. March 21 is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. These

two calls for action are connected, as we know that the fight against racism and building worker power are inextricably linked.

A few weeks are left until voting in Bessemer ends on March 29. As Amazon and their union busters, Morgan Lewis, continue to roll out dirty trick after dirty trick, our demonstration will come at a consequential time.

Baltimore activists and community leaders have urged City Council members to pass a resolution. We haven't heard back yet.

So we will plan a protest at City Hall and then March to Whole Foods.

Join March 20 in solidarity with Alabama Amazon workers & against racism and union-busting!

Nationally initiated by Southern Workers Assembly and Support Amazon Workers Union

Social distancing and masks thank you!

We will have PPE available

The local protest is sponsored and endorsed by (list in formation):

Baltimore and Maryland Amazon Workers for Justice

Peoples Power Assembly

Reverend Annie Chambers

Dr. Marvin "Doc" Cheatham, President, Matthew Henson Neighborhood Association (West Baltimore)

Reverend CD Witherspoon

Prisoners Solidarity Committee

Women in Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha

Dr. Kenneth Morgan, Coalition Black Trade Unionist * for ID only

Baltimore Peace Action

Popular Resistance

Bill Goodin, writer, The National Black Unity News, and community activist

Struggle La Lucha

Youth Against War & Racism

Kermit Leibensperger, Shop steward, UFCW Local 1994

Cleve Andrew Pulley, Fired Walmart worker and Coordinator, Mass Action Coalition
to Jail Killer Cops

Courtney Jenkins, President Coalition Black Trade Unionist, Baltimore

Malaya, Baltimore

Ujima Peoples Progress Party



Women In Struggle supports Bessemer Amazon workers

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 20, 2021



Miranda Ethel on behalf of Women In Struggle/ Mujeres En Lucha sends message of solidarity to the Black women workers of Bessemer Amazon and all workers who are courageously standing up for a union. Join us on March 20, 2 pm at City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street, Baltimore, MD 21202. [#SupportBessemerAmazonWorkers](#) [#Union](#)



Virtual planning meeting: Tell

Kroger to stop closing over hero pay, March 24

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 20, 2021



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 AT 6:30 PM PDT

Virtual planning meeting - Tell Kroger to stop closing over hero pay
Online Event

SHUT DOWN CORPORATE GREED - NOT OUR SUPERMARKETS!

Join us on 3/24 for a virtual organizing meeting to plan a united community & labor

fight back against Kroger.

Register at the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84454123456>

Hazard Pay is a just demand for workers who risk their lives and the lives of their families, just by going to work.

The City of Long Beach & the City of LA put that demand into law for essential grocery store workers.

The answer from Krogers? The largest grocery chain in the U.S. whose profits are off the charts because of the pandemic thumbed their nose at the law, cried poverty and announced they would CLOSE FIVE LOCAL GROCERY STORES!

This greedy corporation wants to wipe out hundreds of jobs and leave some communities with precious little access to fresh, reasonably priced food. 'Food deserts' have plagued poor communities and especially Black and Brown communities for decades.

We cannot allow this giant corporation to destroy the livelihoods of hundreds and erase the access to supermarkets that people have fought for.

Log on to this virtual planning meeting to add your ideas and volunteer to help build a campaign for hazard pay for front line workers, and to stop food deserts in low-income communities within Los Angeles.

FIRST STEP: help plan and mobilize for a Rally @Ralphs.

Please reach out to lawworkersassembly@gmail.com for any questions.

Want to get more involved? Connect with us at our Linktree below:

<https://linktr.ee/harriettubman>



Atlanta: #StopAsianHate March & Rally, March 20

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 20, 2021

#StopAsianHate MARCH & RALLY

COME TOGETHER TO GRIEVE, HEAL, AND SUPPORT.

**MARCH 20
SAT, 1PM**

LIBERTY PLAZA

218 CAPITOL AVE SW

WEAR A MASK AND PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING.

ATLANTA, GA



#StopAsianHate March & Rally

Come together to grieve, heal, and support.
Sat. March 20, 1 pm

Liberty Plaza, 218 Capitol Ave. SW
Atlanta, GA
Wear a mask and practice social distancing.
Called by AIA: Asians In America



The real reason for U.S. attacks on China: global class struggle

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 20, 2021

As the 2020 U.S. presidential campaign wound down, there was a perception held by many that a Biden win would mean a more diplomatic international approach by the new administration.

But that presumption didn't consider the decades of uninterrupted hostility towards countries targeted by U.S. imperialism. Hostility towards Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Venezuela, Iran, Zimbabwe and other countries that try to chart a course independent of U.S. imperialism, gets passed on from administration to administration.

The vitriol toward China in particular has recently reached levels not seen in years.

China's victorious "people's war" against COVID-19 drew high praise from scientists around the world. But the virus was largely ignored in the U.S. even as it overwhelmed hospitals and devastated communities.

That stark contrast has fueled the new Cold War-level propaganda blitz. The White House pointed the finger of blame at China as Trump allowed the virus to rampage through the poorest and most vulnerable populations — Black and Brown and Indigenous.

Trump lost the election, but the Biden administration hasn't dropped the lies and attacks on China. That hostility has been around since that day in 1949 when Mao Zedong declared that "China has stood up."

Aggression and military threats are being amped up in the form of the "Pivot to Asia" — the new international orientation ushered in during the Obama administration. After decades of trying economic strangulation, and even with the inroads capitalism had made in the giant Chinese market, the imperialists haven't achieved their goal of recolonizing China.

The Pivot to Asia is the U.S. military's attempt to refocus on China. Though they haven't been able to extricate themselves from their bloody efforts to reconquer oil-rich West Asia and North Africa, important aspects of the Pivot to Asia have still proceeded.

Repeated provocations by U.S. battleships steaming close to China have become commonplace, and the Pentagon is quietly redesigning itself – getting its ducks in a row for an all-out war.

The Quad: a tool of imperialism

Biden's team is also continuing efforts to strengthen the as-yet loose alliance between the U.S., Japan, Australia and India against China. The alliance is called "the Quad" and the imperialists are banking on it becoming a version of NATO for Asia.

The Quad won't only be a military threat. It is meant to be a tool to complement all aspects of the U.S. relationship to China – a complete package.

Immediately after their first well-publicized summit by Zoom, the Quad are already proving to be an amplifier for Washington's imperialist voice. On March 12, Japan rejected China's offer to supply vaccines for every Olympic athlete in the postponed Tokyo Games and next year's Winter Games in Beijing. The International Olympic Committee had already welcomed the offer.

Australia, for its part, has for months bolstered the false theory, once again being promoted by the White House, that the virus "leaked" from a Wuhan laboratory, the implication being a cover-up by the Chinese Communist Party.

The real foundation of the U.S.-led hostility and aggression against China is the global class struggle – "a struggle to the death between the future and the past," as Fidel Castro, the leader of the Cuban Revolution, called it. Like Cuba, People's China has survived, and in fact thrived, against the most destructive imperialist empire ever.

The class struggle aspect of the relationship between China and the imperialist countries is obscured by the presence of a major capitalist economy functioning inside China which, on one hand, is in competition with U.S. capitalism and other major capitalist countries, but at the same time has become a global manufacturing center that they have interests in.

This capitalist economic sector functions in parallel to the giant economy which is

owned collectively by the Chinese working class and is directed by the Chinese Communist Party. The CCP has so far exercised control over the capitalists, and through state-owned industry has lifted 800 million people out of dire poverty.

This historic and unprecedented achievement by the workers' state is a blow to the U.S. and other imperialist countries and is the basis for the rising beat of their war drums.

Slander to conceal class truth

The lies and slander against China are used to conceal the class struggle from workers at home at a time when millions here in the U.S. have been thrown into poverty or near poverty by the pandemic and capitalist crisis.

Millions of youth have already rejected the Cold War atmosphere that made socialism a dirty word for more than half of a century in the U.S. The Occupy Wall Street movement, the popularity of Bernie Sanders' recent presidential runs, and the rise of left-leaning congressional representatives like "the Squad" are testament to that.

The popularity of self-described socialist political figures doesn't go as far as embracing the idea of workers' ownership of the means of production that exists in China, but it's still a development that has the corporate ruling class in the U.S. concerned.

One of the most egregious examples of the China-bashing campaign is evident in the World Health Organization.

Even though the Biden administration restored the U.S. share of WHO funding that was cut by Trump, the threat created by the financial attack has resulted in a split in the delegation that took a second trip to Wuhan to further investigate the origin of the virus in January. Key figures in the Biden administration are embracing those

WHO delegates that are now accusing China of not cooperating with their investigation and of a coverup of the virus' origin.

U.S. intelligence agencies pushed the “lab leak” theory under Trump. It was discredited by the first WHO delegation in the spring of 2020, and there was a consensus among the world’s scientific community that a “lab leak” was extremely unlikely. Now the Biden administration and U.S. intelligence agencies have revived it.

Many mainstream media — even some seen as left-leaning — are writing unfounded and hypocritical criticisms on the efficacy of Chinese vaccines, cynical attacks on China’s commitment to help poor countries being excluded by capitalist countries, and support for the discredited “lab leak” story. A March 8 [Politico article by Josh Rogin](#) is one example of a liberal publication carrying water for the imperialist White House.

China’s “people’s war” against the virus and its commitment to aid the poorest countries as the pandemic continues to plague the world will stand historically as an example of resourcefulness, strength, and most of all, global solidarity. The movement for social justice, especially activists in the U.S., where the most reactionary slanders against China take root, need to make every effort to bring the truth to light.

