

Karl Marx on the Paris Commune

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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During the Paris Commune, women workers defended the city from the capitalist armies.

March 18, 2021, marks 150 years since the beginning of the Paris Commune, the first time in history that the working class seized power in its own name and established its own form of government. Although the Commune was crushed after only two months, it provided valuable experience that paved the way for successful worker-led revolutions in Russia, China, Cuba and other countries. The Paris Commune continues to hold important lessons for socialist revolutionaries today.

Following is an excerpt from Karl Marx's book, "The Civil War in France":

On the dawn of March 18 [1871], Paris arose to the thunder-burst of “Vive la Commune!” What is the Commune, that sphinx so tantalizing to the bourgeois mind?

“The proletarians of Paris,” said the Central Committee in its manifesto of March 18, “amidst the failures and treasons of the ruling classes, have understood that the hour has struck for them to save the situation by taking into their own hands the direction of public affairs.... They have understood that it is their imperious duty, and their absolute right, to render themselves masters of their own destinies, by seizing upon the governmental power.”

But the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes.

The centralized state power, with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy, and judicature – organs wrought after the plan of a systematic and hierarchic division of labor – originates from the days of absolute monarchy, serving nascent middle class society as a mighty weapon in its struggle against feudalism. Still, its development remained clogged by all manner of medieval rubbish, seignorial rights, local privileges, municipal and guild monopolies, and provincial constitutions.

The gigantic broom of the French Revolution of the 18th century swept away all these relics of bygone times, thus clearing simultaneously the social soil of its last hinderances to the superstructure of the modern state edifice raised under the First Empire, itself the offspring of the coalition wars of old semi-feudal Europe against modern France.

Against repressive capitalist state

During the subsequent regimes, the government, placed under parliamentary control – that is, under the direct control of the propertied classes – became not only

a hotbed of huge national debts and crushing taxes; with its irresistible allurements of place, pelf, and patronage, it became not only the bone of contention between the rival factions and adventurers of the ruling classes; but its political character changed simultaneously with the economic changes of society. At the same pace at which the progress of modern industry developed, widened, intensified the class antagonism between capital and labor, the state power assumed more and more the character of the national power of capital over labor, of a public force organized for social enslavement, of an engine of class despotism.

After every revolution marking a progressive phase in the class struggle, the purely repressive character of the state power stands out in bolder and bolder relief. The Revolution of 1830, resulting in the transfer of government from the landlords to the capitalists, transferred it from the more remote to the more direct antagonists of the working people. The bourgeois republicans, who, in the name of the February Revolution, took the state power, used it for the June [1848] massacres, in order to convince the working class that “social” republic means the republic entrusting their social subjection, and in order to convince the royalist bulk of the bourgeois and landlord class that they might safely leave the cares and emoluments of government to the bourgeois “republicans.”

However, after their one heroic exploit of June, the bourgeois republicans had, from the front, to fall back to the rear of the “Party of Order” – a combination formed by all the rival fractions and factions of the appropriating classes. The proper form of their joint-stock government was the parliamentary republic, with Louis Bonaparte for its president. Theirs was a regime of avowed class terrorism and deliberate insult towards the “vile multitude.”

If the parliamentary republic, as M. Thiers said, “divided them [the different fractions of the ruling class] least,” it opened an abyss between that class and the whole body of society outside their spare ranks. The restraints by which their own

divisions had under former regimes still checked the state power, were removed by their union; and in view of the threatening upheaval of the proletariat, they now used that state power mercilessly and ostentatiously as the national war engine of capital against labor.

In their uninterrupted crusade against the producing masses, they were, however, bound not only to invest the executive with continually increased powers of repression, but at the same time to divest their own parliamentary stronghold - the National Assembly - one by one, of all its own means of defence against the Executive. The Executive, in the person of Louis Bonaparte, turned them out. The natural offspring of the "Party of Order" republic was the Second Empire.

The empire, with the coup d'état for its birth certificate, universal suffrage for its sanction, and the sword for its sceptre, professed to rest upon the peasantry, the large mass of producers not directly involved in the struggle of capital and labor. It professed to save the working class by breaking down parliamentarism, and, with it, the undisguised subserviency of government to the propertied classes. It professed to save the propertied classes by upholding their economic supremacy over the working class; and, finally, it professed to unite all classes by reviving for all the chimera of national glory.

In reality, it was the only form of government possible at a time when the bourgeoisie had already lost, and the working class had not yet acquired, the faculty of ruling the nation. It was acclaimed throughout the world as the savior of society. Under its sway, bourgeois society, freed from political cares, attained a development unexpected even by itself. Its industry and commerce expanded to colossal dimensions; financial swindling celebrated cosmopolitan orgies; the misery of the masses was set off by a shameless display of gorgeous, meretricious and debased luxury. The state power, apparently soaring high above society and the very hotbed of all its corruptions. Its own rottenness, and the rottenness of the society it had

saved, were laid bare by the bayonet of Prussia, herself eagerly bent upon transferring the supreme seat of that regime from Paris to Berlin. Imperialism is, at the same time, the most prostitute and the ultimate form of the state power which nascent middle class society had commenced to elaborate as a means of its own emancipation from feudalism, and which full-grown bourgeois society had finally transformed into a means for the enslavement of labor by capital.

The direct antithesis to the empire was the Commune. The cry of “social republic,” with which the February Revolution was ushered in by the Paris proletariat, did but express a vague aspiration after a republic that was not only to supersede the monarchical form of class rule, but class rule itself. The Commune was the positive form of that republic.

Social stronghold of workers

Paris, the central seat of the old governmental power, and, at the same time, the social stronghold of the French working class, had risen in arms against the attempt of Thiers and the Rurals to restore and perpetuate that old governmental power bequeathed to them by the empire. Paris could resist only because, in consequence of the siege, it had got rid of the army, and replaced it by a National Guard, the bulk of which consisted of working people. This fact was now to be transformed into an institution. The first decree of the Commune, therefore, was the suppression of the standing army, and the substitution for it of the armed people.

The Commune was formed of the municipal councilors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally workers, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time.

Instead of continuing to be the agent of the Central Government, the police was at

once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible, and at all times revocable, agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at worker's wage. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of state disappeared along with the high dignitaries themselves. Public functions ceased to be the private property of the tools of the Central Government. Not only municipal administration, but the whole initiative hitherto exercised by the state was laid into the hands of the Commune.

Having once got rid of the standing army and the police - the physical force elements of the old government - the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression, the "parson-power," by the disestablishment and disendowment of all churches as proprietary bodies. The priests were sent back to the recesses of private life, there to feed upon the alms of the faithful in imitation of their predecessors, the apostles.

The whole of the educational institutions were opened to the people gratuitously, and at the same time cleared of all interference of church and state. Thus, not only was education made accessible to all, but science itself freed from the fetters which class prejudice and governmental force had imposed upon it.

The judicial functionaries were to be divested of that sham independence which had but served to mask their abject subserviency to all succeeding governments to which, in turn, they had taken, and broken, the oaths of allegiance. Like the rest of public servants, magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible, and revocable.

The Paris Commune was, of course, to serve as a model to all the great industrial centres of France. The communal regime once established in Paris and the secondary centres, the old centralized government would in the provinces, too, have to give way to the self-government of the producers.

In a rough sketch of national organization, which the Commune had no time to develop, it states clearly that the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest country hamlet, and that in the rural districts the standing army was to be replaced by a national militia, with an extremely short term of service. The rural communities of every district were to administer their common affairs by an assembly of delegates in the central town, and these district assemblies were again to send deputies to the National Delegation in Paris, each delegate to be at any time revocable and bound by the *mandat impératif* (formal instructions) of his constituents. The few but important functions which would still remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as has been intentionally misstated, but were to be discharged by Communal and thereafter responsible agents.

The unity of the nation was not to be broken, but, on the contrary, to be organized by Communal Constitution, and to become a reality by the destruction of the state power which claimed to be the embodiment of that unity independent of, and superior to, the nation itself, from which it was but a parasitic excrescence.

While the merely repressive organs of the old governmental power were to be amputated, its legitimate functions were to be wrested from an authority usurping pre-eminence over society itself, and restored to the responsible agents of society. Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workers and managers in his business. And it is well-known that companies, like individuals, in matters of real business generally know how to put the right person in the right place, and, if they for once make a mistake, to redress it promptly. On the other hand, nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of the Commune than to supersede universal suffrage by hierarchical investiture.

Mistaken conceptions of the Commune

It is generally the fate of completely new historical creations to be mistaken for the counterparts of older, and even defunct, forms of social life, to which they may bear a certain likeness. Thus, this new Commune, which breaks with the modern state power, has been mistaken for a reproduction of the medieval Communes, which first preceded, and afterward became the substratum of, that very state power. The Communal Constitution has been mistaken for an attempt to break up into the federation of small states, as dreamt of by Montesquieu and the Girondins, that unity of great nations which, if originally brought about by political force, has now become a powerful coefficient of social production. The antagonism of the Commune against the state power has been mistaken for an exaggerated form of the ancient struggle against over-centralization. Peculiar historical circumstances may have prevented the classical development, as in France, of the bourgeois form of government, and may have allowed, as in England, to complete the great central state organs by corrupt vestries, jobbing councilors, and ferocious poor-law guardians in the towns, and virtually hereditary magistrates in the counties.

The Communal Constitution would have restored to the social body all the forces hitherto absorbed by the state parasite feeding upon, and clogging the free movement of, society. By this one act, it would have initiated the regeneration of France.

The provincial French middle class saw in the Commune an attempt to restore the sway their order had held over the country under Louis Philippe, and which, under Louis Napoleon, was supplanted by the pretended rule of the country over the towns. In reality, the Communal Constitution brought the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts, and there secured to them, in the workers, the natural trustees of their interests. The very existence of the Commune involved, as a matter of course, local municipal liberty, but no longer as a check upon the now superseded state power. It could only enter into the head of a Bismarck - who, when not engaged on his intrigues of blood and iron, always likes to

resume his old trade, so befitting his mental calibre, of contributor to Kladderadatsch (the Berlin Punch) - it could only enter into such a head to ascribe to the Paris Commune aspirations after the caricature of the old French municipal organization of 1791, the Prussian municipal constitution which degrades the town governments to mere secondary wheels in the police machinery of the Prussian state. The Commune made that catchword of bourgeois revolutions - cheap government - a reality by destroying the two greatest sources of expenditure: the standing army and state functionarism. Its very existence presupposed the non-existence of monarchy, which, in Europe at least, is the normal encumbrance and indispensable cloak of class rule. It supplied the republic with the basis of really democratic institutions. But neither cheap government nor the "true republic" was its ultimate aim; they were its mere concomitants.

The multiplicity of interpretations to which the Commune has been subjected, and the multiplicity of interests which construed it in their favor, show that it was a thoroughly expansive political form, while all the previous forms of government had been emphatically repressive. Its true secret was this:

It was essentially a working-class government, the product of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of labor.

Except on this last condition, the Communal Constitution would have been an impossibility and a delusion. The political rule of the producer cannot co-exist with the perpetuation of his social slavery. The Commune was therefore to serve as a lever for uprooting the economical foundation upon which rests the existence of classes, and therefore of class rule. With labor emancipated, every person becomes a worker, and productive labor ceases to be a class attribute.

Expropriation of the expropriators

It is a strange fact. In spite of all the tall talk and all the immense literature, for the last 60 years, about emancipation of labor, no sooner do the working people anywhere take the subject into their own hands with a will, than uprises at once all the apologetic phraseology of the mouthpieces of present society with its two poles of capital and wages-slavery (the landlord now is but the sleeping partner of the capitalist), as if the capitalist society was still in its purest state of virgin innocence, with its antagonisms still undeveloped, with its delusions still unexploded, with its prostitute realities not yet laid bare. The Commune, they exclaim, intends to abolish property, the basis of all civilization!

Yes, gentlemen, the Commune intended to abolish that class property which makes the labor of the many the wealth of the few. It aimed at the expropriation of the expropriators. It wanted to make individual property a truth by transforming the means of production, land, and capital, now chiefly the means of enslaving and exploiting labor, into mere instruments of free and associated labor. But this is communism, “impossible” communism! Why, those members of the ruling classes who are intelligent enough to perceive the impossibility of continuing the present system – and they are many – have become the obtrusive and full-mouthed apostles of co-operative production. If co-operative production is not to remain a sham and a snare; if it is to supersede the capitalist system; if united co-operative societies are to regulate national production upon common plan, thus taking it under their own control, and putting an end to the constant anarchy and periodical convulsions which are the fatality of capitalist production – what else, gentlemen, would it be but communism, “possible” communism?

The working class did not expect miracles from the Commune. They have no ready-made utopias to introduce *par décret du peuple*. They know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending by its own economical agencies, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances

and people. They have no ideals to realize, but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant. In the full consciousness of their historic mission, and with the heroic resolve to act up to it, the working class can afford to smile at the coarse invective of the gentlemen's gentlemen with pen and inkhorn, and at the didactic patronage of well-wishing bourgeois-doctrinaires, pouring forth their ignorant platitudes and sectarian crotchets in the oracular tone of scientific infallibility.

When the Paris Commune took the management of the revolution in its own hands; when plain workers for the first time dared to infringe upon the governmental privilege of their "natural superiors," and, under circumstances of unexampled difficulty, performed it at salaries the highest of which barely amounted to one-fifth of what, according to high scientific authority, is the minimum required for a secretary to a certain metropolitan school-board - the old world writhed in convulsions of rage at the sight of the Red Flag, the symbol of the Republic of Labor, floating over the Hôtel de Ville.

Source: [Marxists Internet Archive](https://www.marxists.org/archive/communes/paris/1871/03/03.htm)



Cambridge, Mass., calls to end the embargo on Cuba

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The U.S. city of Cambridge, Massachusetts, unanimously approved a resolution Monday calling for an end to the U.S. embargo against Cuba, still in force despite widespread rejection in the United States and abroad.

[Policy Order 2021 #50](#) calls for “the immediate restoration of engagement with the Republic of Cuba,” urging the U.S. Congress to “pass legislation that will finally end the unsuccessful and harmful 59-year old economic, financial and commercial embargo” as well as the restrictions on travel to and from Cuba.

The complete restoration of trade and travel between the two countries would be beneficial to both, the resolution notes, particularly in the areas of food production, economic opportunities, education, health care, tourism, arts, music, and sports, along with medical and biotechnological research.

The Policy Order was introduced by Councilor Patricia Nolan and co-sponsored by Councilors Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler, Dennis J. Carlone, and Quinton Zondervan.

Councilors Carlone and Zondervan previously introduced a similarly successful Policy Order in October 2020, approved unanimously by the Cambridge City Council, that called for scientific and medical collaboration with Cuba, considering Cuba's many successful epidemiological and medical approaches to COVID-19, including the development of low-cost vaccines.

Cambridge, a city of 110,000 people across the river from Boston, the capital of Massachusetts, is home to both Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, as well as to a number of the country's leading biotechnology and research institutes, including Moderna — developer of one of the leading COVID-19 vaccines.

Tonight, the City Council of [#Cambridge](#) passed a resolution urging the lifting of the [#US](#) blockade against [#Cuba](#). Cambridge joined 18 other [#US](#) cities and the overwhelming majority of the international community asking □□ to end this harmful policy. <https://t.co/HmtT96lTIF> pic.twitter.com/g6me1sIudV

— Lianys Torres Rivera (@lianystr) [March 16, 2021](#)

According to Cambridge City Councilor Nolan: "It is past time for the United States to have full relations - diplomatic, trade and travel - with Cuba, our close neighbor, since both our countries would benefit and can learn from each other. The embargo should never have been instituted - it was only due to short-sighted, misguided policies of the Cold War era, and the USA should join the rest of the world in establishing relations."

In response to the resolution, the former head of the Cuban Mission in the United

States, Jose Ramón Cabañas, remarked on Twitter that it is “almost a joke to surrender American foreign policy under the opinion of one particular group in one particular point of the national geography when you have so many cities and local governments asking for engagement with Cuba.”

Cambridge is the second city in the past month to call directly for lifting the U.S. embargo of Cuba, following a similar call from the City of Chicago on February 23.

It is also one of 16 resolutions passed by city and town councils over the past year, many of which have emphasized the need for collaboration with Cuba on COVID-19 treatments considering Cuba’s many advances in this regard.

Source: [teleSUR](#)



Biden bombs Iraq and Syria, continues 30-year war to control

world's oil

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Blood and Oil and Trump and Biden, part 2

- [Blood and oil and Trump and Biden, part 1: Trump seeks war on Iran to save U.S. fracking industry.](#)

It was called the highway of death.

On Feb. 26, 1991, U.S. military jets and helicopters rained napalm, cluster bombs and 30mm shells on convoys of Iraqi soldiers and civilian refugees leaving Kuwait. At least a thousand people were burned alive or shot to death while fleeing.

U.S. pilots called it a “turkey shoot” and “shooting fish in a barrel.” It was the final act of the massive bombing campaign the first Bush administration named Operation Desert Storm.

Between Jan. 27 and Feb. 28, 1991, U.S. planes dropped 88,500 tons of bombs on Iraq, killing 110,000 people. They destroyed the country’s oil refineries, power grid, water pumping stations, sewage treatment plants, food and pharmaceutical industry — and its only plant for baby formula.

Among the targets was Public Shelter 25 in the Amiriyah neighborhood of Baghdad. On Feb. 13, the U.S. Air Force hit it with two laser-guided “smart bombs.” At least 409 civilians, many of them children, were burned to death.

War never ended

The bombing never stopped. Between 2001 and 2019, the U.S. military launched 326,000 bombs and missiles at countries in the region. At least 152,000 fell on Iraq

and Syria.

In 2020, the Trump regime made the bombing figures secret. But the bombs kept falling.

According to a [Brown University study](#) released in September 2020, U.S. military action has displaced 37 million people since 2001.

Exactly three decades after the massacre on Iraq's Highway 80, President Joe Biden ordered an airstrike on the Syria-Iraq border. On Feb. 26, 2021, two U.S. F-15 Eagles dropped seven 500-lb. laser-guided bombs on the town of Abu Kamal. According to Reuters news agency, 22 people were killed. The airstrike was illegal under U.S. and international law.

The U.S. has now been at war in West Asia and North Africa for 30 years. No matter who is in the White House, the war machine rules.

Two days after the U.S. Air Force attacked Abu Kamal, Israel's made-in-the-USA air force launched missiles at the Syrian capital of Damascus. The settler state bombs Syria regularly on behalf of its armorers in Washington.

Sanctions and B-52 flights

In its first days, the Biden White House stepped back from Donald Trump's pursuit of all-out war with Iran. It pulled the USS Nimitz strike force out of the Arab-Persian Gulf. Biden said the U.S. would rejoin the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) "nuclear deal."

However, on March 5, Biden renewed a "national emergency" against the Islamic Republic, extending the sanctions that are killing Iranian civilians. On March 4, he did the same thing to Venezuela. Iran has made clear there can be no talks with the U.S. unless the sanctions end.

On March 8, two U.S. B-52 long-range bombers flew over the Arab-Persian Gulf, the sixth such mission since November. They were escorted by U.S.-made Israeli fighters as they flew over Palestine.

No pause in arms to Israel

Biden also said he wants to end the war in Yemen, which Washington's Saudi clients are losing. He "paused" arms sales to the Saudi kingdom.

There is no pause, however, in the flow of the most advanced arms in the U.S. arsenal to the racist state of Israel. Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Benny Gantz openly threaten to use them to attack Iran.

Nor is there a pause in the U.S.-Israeli blockade of Gaza and the Israeli occupation regime's daily terror against the people of Palestine, on whose stolen land the racist settler state was created.

On March 7, an Israeli drone struck a fishing boat off Gaza, murdering three fishers.

Biden officials say the U.S. still supports the "Abraham Accords," which the Trump regime brokered between Israel, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. That so-called "peace deal" involves massive arms sales. It is in reality a military alliance against Iran.

Iraqi resistance strikes back

On March 3, Iraqi Resistance forces retaliated against a U.S. base at Ayn Al Assad. The Pentagon says a U.S. "contractor" died of a heart attack after 10 Grad rockets hit the site. "Contractor" could mean a worker at the Pizza Hut or Burger King franchises on the base. Or it could mean a mercenary.

"The resistance sees confrontation as the only option that guarantees the freedom

and dignity of this country after exhausting all the means that others have bet on with the occupation,” the coordinating body for the Iraqi resistance factions said in a statement on March 4.

On March 10, improvised explosive devices hit four U.S. military convoys in northern Iraq.

Biden won't stand up to Wall Street, but he'll kill on its behalf

Joe Biden won't stand up to corporate power. He's not fighting the GOP to raise the minimum wage, even to \$15 an hour in five years. He's not canceling student debt or fighting for Medicare for all.

But, like his predecessor, the new president has no problem denying medicine to people in Iran and Venezuela. He is willing to have U.S. troops fight the people of Iraq and Syria on their soil for control of their oil.

He is continuing the war George H.W. Bush started three decades ago.

30 years of war for plunder

To be clear, it's all one long war — from bombing and invading Iraq to bombing Libya, from 10 years of destruction in Syria to mass murder in Yemen, from the 20-year occupation of Afghanistan to sanctions and covert attacks on Iran and Venezuela, from drone strikes in Somalia and Pakistan to the 1999 NATO bombing of Yugoslavia and the ongoing U.S. proxy war in Ukraine. The war has been raging since 1991.

It is a desperate bid to seize back the stranglehold Wall Street corporations once had on the world's energy supply. In 1960, seven monopolies, five of them U.S.-based, controlled 99% of the oil production in the capitalist world. More than half the overseas profits of U.S. corporations came from the ownership of oil.

When the “Cold War” ended with the fall of the Soviet bloc, the U.S. capitalist ruling class thought they could get all that back. The Pentagon and CIA have taken millions of lives and spent trillions of dollars in a futile attempt to turn back time, even as the technology of energy marches forward.

Trump and Biden target people’s defenders

The Feb. 26 attack targeted members of Iraq’s People’s Mobilization Units (Hashd al-Sha’abi). The State Department and the lying corporate media call them “Iranian proxies.” They are in fact popular militias formed to defend the Iraqi people against ISIS. “Fighting ISIS” is Washington’s phony pretext for keeping U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria.

Last Jan. 3, PMU commander Mahdi Abu Muhandas, Iran’s Gen. Qassem Soleimani and seven of their colleagues were murdered in an airstrike ordered by Donald Trump. The two had organized the military campaign that drove ISIS out of Iraq and Syria.

Soleimani and Muhandas were heroes in the region. Millions turned out for their funerals. On Jan. 10, 2020, Iraq’s parliament voted that U.S. troops should leave their country. The Trump regime refused.

On the campaign trail, Biden criticized the Soleimani-Muhandas assassination — not for the war crime it was, but for tactical reasons. He was speaking for those in the U.S. establishment who were leery of the Trump regime’s push for direct war with Iran.

Operation Martyr Soleimani

On Jan. 8, 2020, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps launched Operation Martyr Soleimani, a counterstrike on two U.S. bases in Iraq. In precision strikes, 16 1,000-lb. missiles destroyed buildings and injured 109 U.S. soldiers who were sheltering

underground.

In an interesting political move, the Pentagon declassified footage of the attacks this March 2. The strikes demonstrated Iran's ability to strike U.S. occupation forces in the region.

Right to resist U.S. occupation

The Pentagon claims it bombed Abu Kamal because of a Feb. 15 rocket attack on the U.S. base in Erbil, 300 miles away. The U.S. says a "military contractor" died and a U.S. soldier and other "contractors" were wounded.

U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria are an occupying force. They are there against the wishes of those countries' governments and people. They have no right to be there. Their presence is a crime under international law. And resistance to occupation is a right.

On Jan. 20, Syria's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Bashar Al Jaafari told the UN Security Council: "The American occupation forces continue to plunder Syria's wealth of oil, gas and agricultural crops, burning and destroying what it cannot steal.

"The new U.S. administration must stop acts of aggression and occupation, plundering the wealth of my country, withdraw its occupying forces from it, and stop supporting separatist militias, illegal entities and attempts to threaten Syria's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity," he said.

Since October 2019, U.S. troops have occupied Syria's oil fields, denying Syrians access to their own oil. U.S. troops in Syria also provide shelter and logistical support for terrorist groups that attack Syrian and Iraqi civilians.

Mass murder in Yemen: Made in USA

On Feb. 4, Biden announced he was “ending all American support for [Saudi] offensive operations in Yemen, including relevant arms sales.”

Biden has said, “The war must end.”

That six-year war has killed a quarter of a million people, many of them children. Many were murdered by U.S.-made bombs and missiles fired from U.S.-made Saudi aircraft flown by U.S.-trained Saudi pilots. Many more died of hunger and disease caused by the blockade of Yemen’s ports by Saudi Arabia’s U.S.-made Navy.

The United Nations says 16 million Yemenis will go hungry this year. A Yemeni child dies every 10 minutes because of the war.

Biden qualified his statement, however. He said that the U.S. would still help the Saudi Kingdom “defend its sovereignty.”

What sovereignty is that?

Saudi Arabia is a U.S. colony

Since the end of World War II, the Saudi kingdom has been, in effect, a U.S. colony. So have the other five monarchies on the Arabian Peninsula.

For 75 years, the House of Saud has forked over its oil revenue to U.S. banks, oil monopolies and arms contractors. It has funded CIA covert operations from Nicaragua to Afghanistan to Syria. It has used its oil wealth to prop up the dollar and its position as swing producer to manipulate world oil markets at Washington’s command.

Those in the U.S. ruling class who have their hands on that cash cow are not about to let it go. It is too important to oil company profits, the military-industrial complex and the position of Wall Street and the dollar in the world economy.

On Feb. 27, Biden's Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said the U.S.-Saudi "relationship" was not "ruptured" but "recalibrated."

Iran's 'crime'

Before the 1979 revolution, the U.S. ruled Iran as well. The tyrant Shah owed his throne to a CIA-orchestrated coup in 1953.

At Henry Kissinger's orders, the Shah bailed out the U.S. arms industry after the Vietnam War. He put the country's oil income at the disposal of U.S. bankers and arms firms.

The Islamic Republic of Iran ended that colonial relationship. Iran has been in Washington's crosshairs ever since.

Since 2015, the Saudi kingdom has been the U.S. arms industry's No. 1 overseas paying customer. The United Arab Emirates is No. 2. And 2015 was also the year those states launched their murderous war on Yemen.

'Game of Thrones' in Riyadh and Washington

In his 2016 election campaign, Trump fulminated against Saudi Arabia. Trump was the candidate of the U.S. fracking industry. His billionaire backers were in a price war with the Big Oil "supermajors" that control Saudi oil production.

But in May 2017, his fourth month in office, Trump went to Riyadh. He got his friends at Blackstone Group a cut of the Saudi petrodollar pie. And his tune changed.

Trump also made some big arms sales there. "Saudi Arabia's Naval Capabilities Will Balloon Thanks To Huge U.S. Arms Deal," [Warzone reported](#) on May 19, 2017.

Trump's visit to the kingdom was followed by a coup inside the Saudi royal family. King Salman ousted Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Nayef and replaced him with his

own son Mohamed Bin Salman. Mass arrests and a few “accidental” deaths followed. The Salman faction forged an alliance with the Trump faction of the U.S. ruling class.

Fail to defeat Yemeni people

On Aug. 18, 2018, a U.S.-made missile hit a school bus in Yemen, killing 40 children. On Oct. 2, 2018, Saudi dissident Jamal Khashoggi, a U.S. resident, was hacked to death inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. The killers were a hit squad dispatched by Mohamed Bin Salman.

In March 2019, the U.S. Congress passed a bill restricting military assistance to Saudi Arabia. Trump vetoed the measure.

Despite the destructive power of its U.S.-made arsenal, the Saudis and their proxies are losing the war in Yemen. Yemen’s government and Popular Committee fighters are now on the verge of capturing Mar’ib, the last Yemeni city held by Saudi mercenaries.

Yemeni forces have also struck heavy blows at the Saudi kingdom itself, launching missile strikes on military bases and oil facilities. A Yemeni attack on two Aramco refineries in 2019 almost sank the oil giant’s first public stock offering.

On March 7, Yemeni forces struck the Saudi’s Abha International Airport and Aramco plants and tank farms in Jeddah, Dhahran and Ras Tanura.

Yemeni victories are the context for Biden’s stated change in U.S. policy.

Will Israel take over U.S. role in Yemen?

On Feb. 9, three days after Biden announced an end to “relevant arms sales,” Israel announced a \$9.5 billion arms deal with the United States. According to Israel’s

Channel 12, it includes the purchase of more F-35 and F-16 fighter jets, SH53K helicopters, refueling planes, advanced weaponry and the Eitan, a new-generation armored personnel carrier developed jointly by Israel and the U.S.

“Purchase” isn’t exactly the right word. Most of the money comes from a \$38-billion U.S. aid package negotiated by the Obama administration, passed by Congress and signed into law by Trump. That package, the largest U.S. military aid package ever, also allows Israel access to arms from the U.S. military stores in Israeli-occupied Palestine.

According to reports, Israel has set up a spy base on the Yemeni island of Socotra. UAE troops and U.S. Marines seized the island in March 2020.

The content of the arms deal raises the prospect that Israel could take over the U.S. logistical role in the Yemen war, and give Washington “plausible deniability.”

Citi bankrolls arms deal

There was a hitch with the arms deal: The \$38 billion Congress approved was supposed to last Israel 10 years. But Tel Aviv had already spent \$31 billion.

Citigroup, the fourth largest U.S. bank, solved the problem. It extended a \$2.5-billion loan to tide Israel through until Washington sends more money.

Citigroup is a mover in the U.S.-Israel-Saudi axis. In its own words, “Citi boasts the largest presence of any foreign financial institution in Israel, and offers corporate and investment banking services to leading Israeli corporations and institutions and global corporations operating in Israel.”

According to a March 6 Fox News report, “Among all the major large banks [sic], Citigroup has some of the deepest business relationships with the [Saudi] kingdom and its massive business empire.” Saudi Prince Al Waleed Bin Talal is one of the

bank's top shareholders.

Pivots and proxies

"Can Biden Finally Put the Middle East in Check and Pivot Already?" read a headline in [Foreign Policy magazine](#) March 2.

Many in the U.S. military-political establishment now see Washington's long war in the "Middle East" as a quagmire. They want a "pivot to Asia" to threaten China. That view has been expressed by Secretary of State Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin.

"China is the only country with the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to seriously challenge the stable and open international system - all the rules, values, and relationships that make the world work the way we want it to," Blinken said in a March 4 address.

However, energy corporations retain great power in Washington. So do the bankers who hold their debt. They are not about to let the U.S. retreat from its war to control the world's oil and gas. They are in a political alliance with Israel and the royal families of the Arabian Peninsula.

On March 11, the Wall Street Journal reported that Israel had carried out 12 clandestine attacks on Iranian tankers in the last year.

When Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu threatens to attack Iran if the U.S. eases sanctions, he speaks for the fossil-fuel faction of the U.S. ruling class.

Fight for Europe's energy market

In the late 20th century, U.S. companies lost Western Europe's energy market to Russia. They want it back.

A weapon in their arsenal is the proposed East Mediterranean Pipeline Project, a \$7-billion scheme to bring stolen natural gas from the waters of Israeli-occupied Palestine to Greece via Cyprus.

The three countries agreed to build the pipeline at a March 2019 meeting in Jerusalem presided over by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. In a December 2020 visit to Athens, Trump's Energy Secretary Dan Brouillette proclaimed full U.S. support for the controversial project.

U.S. oil giants loot Palestine

U.S. energy giant Chevron now operates and owns controlling stakes in the Tamar and Leviathan fields off the coast of Israeli-occupied Palestine. Chevron became the largest U.S. energy company in October 2020, when it acquired Trump-connected Noble Energy.

Noble was the first U.S. company to drill in Palestinian waters. Chevron paid \$4 billion and assumed Noble's \$8 billion debt. Chevron's Israeli drilling partner, the Delek Group, is owned largely by U.S. investors, including Citigroup.

ExxonMobil has joined the hunt for gas in the Eastern Mediterranean. Chevron and Exxon discussed a merger last year.

Israel — an imperialist land bridge

Also in October, representatives of Israel's Europe-Asia Pipeline Company agreed to transport oil from the UAE to Europe via occupied Palestine. Trump's Secretary of Treasury Steven Mnuchin went to Dubai to see the agreement signed. The U.S. International Finance Development Corporation announced it would back the project.

The EAPC pipeline runs from Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba to the ancient port of

Askalon just north of Gaza. It was built in 1968 to carry the Shah of Iran's then U.S.-owned crude to the Mediterranean. The U.S. and Israel want to see a pipeline across Saudi Arabia from the UAE to occupied Palestine.

But will such massive capital investments be profitable?

Fossil fuel industry in crisis

2020 was a disastrous year for energy prices. They have now rebounded — in part due to Saudi production cuts — but the fossil fuel industry's long-term prospects are dim.

Over the past four years, China has invested \$360 billion in solar power, fuel cells and other fossil fuel alternatives, driving down the cost of renewable energy worldwide. The Chinese Academy of Sciences is pioneering research in thorium reactors. In January, China unveiled the prototype of a electric-powered Maglev (magnetic levitation) train that can travel 385 miles per hour.

Europe is trying to cut its gas imports, which already exceed what the Paris climate agreement will permit. Germany now operates a hydrogen-powered train. Half of that country's electricity is generated from non-carbon sources.

Meanwhile, new oil and gas fields are being discovered around the world — including in Iran, which has the planet's second-largest natural gas reserves. If Iran were to generate electricity with nuclear power, it could export a lot more gas.

Ted Cruz wants to block Russian gas

Despite sanctions imposed by the Trump regime, it appears the Nord Stream 2 pipeline will bring more Russian gas to Europe by June.

Texas Senator Ted Cruz has blocked the nomination of Ted Burns, Biden's choice for

CIA director, to force the White House to put even more sanctions on the pipeline.

Cruz is speaking for Texas-based Cheniere Energy, which exports liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Europe. In 1998, Cheneire patented the technology the U.S. fracking industry uses today. It took the energy price bubble caused by the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq to make its use profitable.

No profits without war

Washington's long war in the "Middle East" is not about getting oil and gas for its own use. The world is swimming in these resources. It's about monopoly. It's a desperate effort to control supply so that U.S. energy companies can regain market share and value and find profitable outlets for their surplus capital.

In July 2011, Iran, Iraq and Syria agreed to build a \$10-billion gas pipeline from Iran to the Mediterranean. Its planned capacity is 40 billion cubic meters per year, four times that of the proposed East Med Pipeline.

That very year, the U.S., Saudi Arabia and Israel began their murderous intervention in Syria. Sanctions, war and U.S. troops have prevented the pipeline's construction.

The 2003 invasion of Iraq bailed the U.S. energy industry out of the price collapse that followed the fall of the USSR. It created an energy bubble that transfixed Wall Street for a decade.

Sanctions and war unleashed the "shale revolution" that made the U.S. the world's top oil and gas producer. War and sanctions made Keystone XL, the Dakota Access Pipeline, Line 3, Line 5 and the plunder of Canada's tar sands seem profitable.

Back in 1968, Israel opened the Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline a year after its U.S.-paid troops seized Egypt's Sinai Peninsula and shut down the Suez Canal.

'The largest U.S. aircraft carrier'

In June 1967, when the U.S. military was mired in the war against Vietnam, Israel attacked Egypt and Syria. The war was launched with Washington's blessing. Those countries were leading the opposition to U.S. control of the region's oil resources.

The 1967 war shifted the regional balance of power in favor of the U.S.-backed monarchs of the Arabian Peninsula and the Shah. For a while.

In the next few years, Libya and Iraq nationalized their oil industries. In 1979, the Shah was gone. Twelve years later, the U.S. launched its war to recolonize the region.

Ronald Reagan's Secretary of State Alexander Haig called Israel "Israel is the largest, most battle-tested and cost-effective U.S. aircraft carrier that cannot be sunk."

Will its U.S. paymasters launch the Israeli war machine against Iran in another desperate attempt to repeat 1967? To what lengths will the Biden White House go to keep U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria?

From Eastern Mediterranean to Western Pacific, U.S. out!

How long will this war go on? How many more must die? How many more trillions of dollars will be spent so that U.S. energy companies can make money and Wall Street bankers can keep their hold on the world economy?

The \$1.9-trillion COVID relief package pales beside the amount spent on war.

The millions in this country facing joblessness, homelessness, hunger and debt don't need war or sanctions. We don't need confrontation with Iran or a "pivot" to Asia. We don't need troops in Iraq and Syria or bombs falling on the people of Yemen.

We need a mass movement to shut down the war machine, end aid to the racist state of Israel and bring all the troops home now.



To: Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner: Stop defending Mumia Abu-Jamal's unjust conviction

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 18, 2021

Please sign the Color of Change petition to Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner: [Stop Defending Mumia Abu-Jamal's Unjust Conviction](#)

Dear Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner,

We, the signers of this petition, declare:

Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently suffering from COVID-19, congestive heart disease, liver cirrhosis, and a worsening of the severe debilitating chronic skin condition. The cirrhosis of the liver and his skin condition resulted from a near-fatal bout with Hepatitis C in early 2015, which went unattended for nearly two years until attorneys sued the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections for failure to meet basic treatment guidelines. At that same time Mumia was repeatedly treated with steroids courses for his skin condition while medical staff neglected to follow up and monitor a severely high glucose level. Because steroids cause an increase in sugar levels, they effectively induced a diabetic ketoacidosis, which required Mumia to be rushed to the ICU. Abu-Jamal now relies upon that very same prison healthcare system for treatment during his current health crisis, and while the higher level of vigilance that occurs with advocacy will surely prompt more responsible monitoring, the very conditions of prison medicine will never suffice for the care of our elders in prisons. Our collective call for Abu-Jamal's release could not be more urgent. As Abu-Jamal's physician consultant, Dr. Ricardo Alvarez says: The Only Treatment is Freedom.

Even without the current health emergency, Mumia Abu-Jamal's 1982 conviction was already a travesty of justice, obtained through a combination of police, prosecutorial, and judicial misconduct, as documented by Amnesty International. Abu-Jamal has suffered from extreme injustice at all levels of the criminal justice system. These numerous improprieties have tainted Abu-Jamal's conviction beyond repair.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently represented by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. We the petitioners are not his lawyers and do not speak for them. Instead, we are the grassroots movement of people united by the fact that we care about the fate of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

We are outraged by the many different ways that racism and institutionalized white supremacy have irreparably harmed Mumia Abu-Jamal's civil and human rights, and

his rights to the fair adjudication of his case. The District Attorney's continued defense of the 1982 conviction & subsequent appeals process only affirms the longstanding racial injustice that has marred this case.

DA Krasner, you have the authority to secure the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal. You have secured release of over a dozen persons whose unjust convictions were based on evidence of innocence deliberately ignored through improprieties by police and prosecutors. Abu-Jamal deserves the same level of fairness. If law has plain letter meaning, then please adhere to the 1889 directive from the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania that the District Attorney's Office "...seeks justice only..." Also remember that same Court's 1959 reminder that regardless of a DA's belief in guilt, all defendants are "...entitled to all safeguards of a fair trial as announced in the Constitution..."

Therefore, we respectfully urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to stop defending Mumia Abu-Jamal's conviction. Please secure the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal as soon as you possibly can.

The Evidence of Police, Prosecutorial, and Judicial Misconduct:

The racism throughout Abu-Jamal's case is stark and unmistakable. Please remember that Albert Sabo, the 1982 trial judge, declared his intent to help prosecutors "fry the ni**er," according to an 2001 affidavit by a court stenographer that was rejected by the Court. This and other egregious examples of overt racism thus form a key reason why he has attracted such wide-ranging support. This support includes the most prominent Black intellectuals of our generation, including Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Angela Davis, Cornel West, Henry Louis Gates, Jr, Michael Eric Dyson, and Marc Lamont Hill. In November, the blacklisted football player and anti-racist activist Colin Kaepernick declared his support for Abu-Jamal. Outside the US, support for Abu-Jamal has come from such luminaries as Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu, as well as the European

Parliament, Japanese Diet and the country of France. The widely-respected human rights organization Amnesty International determined in its 2000 investigation that “numerous aspects of this case clearly failed to meet minimum international standards safeguarding the fairness of legal proceedings.”

One example of the injustice is the Batson issue regarding racial discrimination in the jury selection process. Even before your office’s discovery of the six previously undisclosed file boxes, we already knew that the trial prosecutor, Assistant DA Joseph McGill used 10-11 of his 15 peremptory challenges to strike otherwise qualified black potential jurors. In his 2008 dissenting opinion, federal Third Circuit Judge Thomas Ambro argued that this one fact alone was sufficient evidence for granting Abu-Jamal a Batson hearing. Therefore, he argued that the Third Circuit Court’s 2-1 ruling against Abu-Jamal’s Batson claim was unfair, and he wrote that the ruling went “against the grain of our prior actions...I see no reason why we should not afford Abu-Jamal the courtesy of our precedents.”

When, in 2009, the US Supreme Court then ruled against considering Abu-Jamal’s appeal of the 2008 Third Circuit Court ruling, it effectively ended Abu-Jamal’s Batson claim. However, upon inspecting the contents of the six file boxes that you thankfully handed over to the defense as the law required, Abu-Jamal’s defense team found two major pieces of evidence. The first, a handwritten letter to assistant district attorney Joe McGill penned by Robert Chobert, a key prosecution’s witness. In the letter, Mr. Chobert asks for his money—which suggests Mr. Chobert’s testimony against Abu-Jamal may have been bribed. The boxes also reveal other handwritten notes on original files, closely tracking the race of jurors. These notes are new evidence of racial discrimination in Joseph McGill’s selection of the 1982 trial jury. And, as a result, the Batson issue is now up for reassessment and review.

When the Third Circuit majority ruled against Abu-Jamal’s Batson claim in 2008, it ignored irrefutable evidence that Abu-Jamal’s defense had been blocked from

introducing the very evidence that the Third Circuit majority faulted the defense for not introducing. During the 1995 PCRA proceedings, Judge Albert F. Sabo (the original 1982 trial judge) literally had Abu-Jamal's lawyer arrested for trying to subpoena clerks from the Pennsylvania and Philadelphia court systems as part of the defense's PCRA petition argument that jury pools were not drawn "from a fair cross section of the community." Outrageously, in 2008, when the Third Circuit Court ruled against Abu-Jamal's Batson claim, the Court actually justified the denial by citing the absence of this very data that his lawyer had been arrested in court for trying to obtain.

Entire books have meticulously detailed the injustice throughout Abu-Jamal's case, such as those by authors Dave Lindorff (*Killing Time*, 2003), Michael Schiffmann (*Race Against Death*, 2006), and J. Patrick O'Connor (*The Framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, 2008). Veteran journalist Linn Washington, Jr. has been writing newspaper columns and articles about the Abu-Jamal case since it began on December 9, 1981 with the shooting death of Philadelphia Police Officer Daniel Faulkner and the near-fatal shooting of Abu-Jamal. Hence, the evidence of Abu-Jamal's unfair trial is abundant and quite accessible to anyone who reads the work by any of these four writers.

In 2010, investigative journalists Dave Lindorff and Linn Washington performed [a test to see whether bullets fired into the sidewalk at close range would leave visible markings](#). The test was designed to replicate the shooting scenario presented at Abu-Jamal's 1982 trial by ADA Joseph McGill, alleging that Abu-Jamal stood directly over Officer Faulkner and fired downwards at him, execution style. According to McGill's theory, Abu-Jamal missed several times because Faulkner actively dodged the shots by rolling side-to-side, until the final shot entered Faulkner's forehead and killed him.

Lindorff and Washington sought to test a central argument of German author

Michael Schiffmann's 2006 book *Race Against Death*, written as his PhD dissertation at the University of Heidelberg. Dr. Schiffmann examined the crime scene photos, including those taken by freelance photographer Pedro Polakoff, and concluded that there were no visible divots or markings in the pavement, which Schiffmann asserted should have been visible if the testimonies of key prosecution eyewitnesses Robert Chobert and Cynthia White had been accurate.

In 2010, Lindorff and Washington tested Schiffmann's assertion by firing a .38 caliber revolver several times into a concrete slab. They then closely analyzed the bullet marks left in the concrete slab. They concluded, without any ambiguity, that the bullets had indeed left visible markings. Therefore, if ADA McGill's theory (supported by Robert Chobert and Cynthia White's trial testimony) was truthful, there must have been similar bullet markings in the pavement next to where Officer Daniel Faulkner's body was found.

For their 2010 test, Lindorff and Washington also examined the 1981 Abu-Jamal / Faulkner crime scene photos taken by Pedro Polakoff, scrutinizing the exact area of the sidewalk pavement where Faulkner's body was found. Lindorff and Washington had one of Polakoff's 1981 photos and a 2010 gun test photo compared & analyzed by a NASA photo analyst named Robert Nelson. They concluded definitively that the 1981 photo did not show any markings similar to what was visible in the 2010 photo, meaning that "the whole prosecution story of an execution-style slaying of the officer by Abu-Jamal would appear to be a prosecution fabrication, complete with coached, perjured witnesses, undermining the integrity and fairness of the entire trial."

Before publishing their findings, Dave Lindorff and Linn Washington informed the Philadelphia DA's office about the results of their test, and specifically asked the DA for a quote to explain the lack of photographic evidence or testimony about bullet impact marks in the sidewalk around Faulkner's body. The DA's office responded to their questions with what Lindorff and Washington considered to be "a non-

response.” All the DA’s office told them was: “The murderer has been represented over the past twenty plus years by a multitude of lawyers, many of whom have closely reviewed the evidence for the sole purpose of finding some basis to overturn the conviction. As you know, none has succeeded, and Mr. Abu-Jamal remains what the evidence proved – a murderer.”

Unfortunately, there is even more in this story that reflects poorly upon the Philadelphia District Attorney’s office. Freelance photographer Pedro Polakoff told Dr. Michael Schiffmann in *Race Against Death*, that he approached the DA’s office with his photos in 1981, 1982 and 1995 but that the DA completely ignored him. Polakoff also told Schiffmann that because he had believed Abu-Jamal was guilty, he had no interest in approaching the defense, and never did. Furthermore, the DA never informed Abu-Jamal’s defense team about the existence of Polakoff’s photos, as they are required by law to do.

Consequently, neither the 1982 jury nor Abu-Jamal’s defense ever saw Pedro Polakoff’s photos. “The DA deliberately kept evidence out,” declared Pam Africa, representing The International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal at a Dec. 6, 2008 protest outside the Philadelphia DA’s office. “Someone should be arrested for withholding evidence in a murder trial,” said Africa

Mr. Krasner, we have presented sufficient evidence to explain why we believe that police, prosecutorial, and judicial misconduct has forever destroyed the legitimacy of Mumia Abu-Jamal’s 1982 conviction. We urge you in the strongest possible terms to stop defending Abu-Jamal’s conviction. Please secure his release as soon as you possibly can.

Ending the persecution of Abu-Jamal upholds the sworn duty of the District Attorney to obey the Constitution, that document that is supposed to ensure justice for all.

Please sign the Color of Change petition to Philadelphia District Attorney Larry



New York protest condemns massacre in Philippines

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 18, 2021

Chanting “Activism is not a crime!” and “Long live international solidarity!,” a rally outside the Philippine Consulate on New York’s swanky Fifth Avenue March 15 condemned the recent massacre dubbed Bloody Sunday. The action was called by BAYAN USA and the Malaya Movement.

Nine activists in Southern Tagalog were murdered by President Rodrigo Duterte’s regime on March 7. The rally began with the reading of their names and a minute of silence in their honor.

Nicole from Gabriela New Jersey, who participated in a delegation that lived and worked with Lumad peasants resisting corporate and government repression, declared: “It is our duty to continue their struggle, to amplify their voices.”

She led the crowd in chanting, "Oust Duterte now!"

People spoke representing overseas national democratic organizations of the Philippines. Several U.S.-based groups gave solidarity statements, including the Teamsters union.

"On March 5, Duterte was quoted saying 'kill them all' and 'disregard human rights,'" said a statement from the protest organizers. "This was an order to the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to kill 'communist terrorist groups,' a term the Duterte government uses to label all critics, cause-oriented groups and human rights defenders.

"On March 6, Philippine Ambassador to the United States confirmed that the Philippines will be receiving additional aid from the U.S. government. By the next day, the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines launched a synchronized raid across the Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Rizal leaving nine activists dead and six arrested."

One of the chants at the rally was, "From Palestine to the Philippines, stop the U.S. war machine!"

This U.S. military, political and economic support for the Philippine government continues regardless of whether Democrats or Republicans occupy the White House. The Visiting Forces Agreement ensures a continuing Pentagon occupation of the archipelago.

In February, [Reuters reported](#) that the Philippines received \$3.9 billion in "counter-terrorism" support since 2002, including \$689 million in military hardware. U.S. "aid" is exclusively used to suppress the movements of workers, peasants, Indigenous peoples, women and students fighting for their rights and for the country's independence from U.S. domination.

This bloody money, paid from the taxes of U.S. workers, is meant to ensure that Wall Street can continue to extract super-profits from the Philippines and exploit the millions of workers who are part of the Filipinx diaspora.

Last year, migrant nurses from the Philippines and Filipina-American nurses born in the U.S. had the [highest incidence of death from COVID-19](#) of all U.S. healthcare workers, as they are often on the frontline of hospital emergency rooms.

Justice for the victims of Bloody Sunday! U.S. out of the Philippines!



Spain punishes anti-monarchy speech: Free Pablo Hasél

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 18, 2021

Monarchies, monarchies ... what are they good for?

Let's talk about the kingdom of Spain, for example. The Spanish monarchy had been abolished by public demand almost a century ago. In 1936 there was a coup d'état

by Spanish fascist Francisco Franco and consequently a dictatorship followed until he died of old age on Nov. 20, 1975.

Before his death, the fascist dictator appointed Juan Carlos I (Bourbon Dynasty) as the head of Spain and made him sign the principles of his dictatorship, which Juan Carlos I agreed to with pleasure.

Due to Juan Carlos I's misbehavior, and with the Spanish monarchy in dire straits (I have to be careful what I say here, because people who have called out his crimes have ended up in prison), it was decided that to preserve the monarchy, he would abdicate in favor of his son Felipe VI, who became King of Spain on June 19, 2014.

In 2020, some members of the Spanish military exchanged tweets about wishing to kill 26 million Spaniards, because apparently that is the number that are not faithful to the principles of the dictatorship. Gen. Francisco Beca Casanova and Col. Andrés González Espinar openly discussed their wish to murder 26 million people by firing squad.

But that's okay. It's freedom of expression. Never mind that people with the same murderous wishes actually killed millions during and after the Spanish Civil War. Today many of their bodies have still not been recovered by their descendants, who have been searching for their loved ones for almost a century now.

Fascists protected, anti-monarchist jailed

And then we get to 2021. This year the Spanish High Court incarcerated a leftist Catalan rapper for his songs against the Spanish monarchy and for tweeting his opinions about the monarchy and the Spanish elite. His name is Pablo Hasél.

He has been demonized by the Spanish media and was incarcerated on Feb. 16. In his case, freedom of expression was not allowed. And this is a singer, a poet and an activist. He is not a military guy.

Please write to him to shame the Spanish judiciary for having incarcerated a singer for his songs and his opinions on Twitter. Also, please, know that your letters will be read by this judiciary system that incarcerates people for their opinions.

My wish is that so many letters will arrive that the Spanish monarchy and judiciary feel such embarrassment that they think twice about incarcerating people for their opinions.

There is another rapper, Valtònyc, who is in exile as a political refugee because Spain wants him incarcerated for the same reason. Another 15 singers are awaiting trial in Spain for their songs.

Then again, it's not all opinions that deserve incarceration. If you are a military fascist wishing to kill 26 million Spaniards, your freedom of expression will be respected.

You may write to Pablo at:

Pablo Rivadulla Duró
Modulo 9
Centro Penitenciario de Ponent
c/ Victoria Kent s/n
25071 Lleida
Spain



Zimbabwe-Cuba to build pharmaceutical plant

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 18, 2021

Cuba and Zimbabwe have set in motion a plan to set up a local state-of-the-art pharmaceutical plant, in a development expected to improve local drug supplies in the long term.

Cuban Ambassador to Zimbabwe Carmelina Rodriguez told The Sunday Mail that the proposed plant will further consolidate bilateral relations between the two countries.

“Zimbabwe and Cuba enjoy a very good relationship,” she said.

“For 40 years we have developed a historical relationship based on friendship, mutual respect and collaboration. Cuba and Zimbabwe are working to further deepen and broaden the co-operation in the development of the pharmaceutical industry here through the establishment of a plant to produce medical drugs in the country.”

Cuba has a highly developed biotech industry, which exports vaccines and medicines for diseases such as meningitis, hepatitis B and lung cancer to more than 40 countries.

Ambassador Rodriguez said Zimbabwe would be among the first countries to receive Covid-19 vaccines currently under development by Cuban scientists.

Experts in the Latin American country are developing four Covid-19 vaccines: Soberana 01, Soberana 02, Mambisa and Abdala.

Soberana 02 is reported to be the most advanced candidate and has shown high immune response against the virus in trials.

“This month, we are starting the third phase of clinical trials involving more than 150 000 volunteers,” she said.

“Cuba has signed a deal to carry out clinical trials in Iran in collaboration with the country’s Pasteur Institute, and also Mexico has also expressed interest on it.

“The development of this vaccine is not fortuitous, Cuba has a long experience in developing and producing vaccines thanks to the long investment in the biopharmaceutical and biotech industry.

“Cuba’s national vaccination program includes 11 vaccines against 13 diseases, eight of which are produced locally.”

Ambassador Rodriguez said Zimbabwean and Cuban experts were undertaking scientific exchanges on a Cuban-developed antiviral drug — Interferon Alfa2b — which reduces 50 percent of the symptoms in Covid-19 patients.

Cuba has a medical brigade of 30 senior doctors working at various hospitals countrywide. The island nation has been under tough United States economic

sanctions for the past 60 years.

Ambassador Rodriguez said the embargo was the biggest impediment to the country's development.

"Despite the obsession of the government of the USA, Cuba has moved forward.

"We Cubans have been creative and have firmly resisted the onslaught of the worst economic siege, which has tried to suffocate the nation."

Source: [Sunday Mail](#)



Harlem, New York: Support Alabama Amazon Union, March 20

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 18, 2021

In the Spirit of Fannie Lou Hamer and Ella Baker

New York Unions and Communities

SUPPORT **ALABAMA** AMAZON **UNION**

Saturday, March 20, 2021 @ 2PM Sharp!

Amazon's WHOLE FOODS in Harlem

Malcolm X Blvd. & 125th Street - Corner

6000 (Mainly Black) Amazon workers in Bessemer, Alabama are fighting to unionize at Billionaire Jeff Bezos' anti-union, anti worker, racist company. Their victory can change the conditons for 100,000's of workers.



Coalition of
Black Trade Unionist, NY
(646) 523-8484

Teamsters Local 808
(718) 389-1900

December 12th Movement
(718) 398-1766

Workers Assembly
Against Racism
(917) 825-2302

From Alabama to Harlem Union Is A Human Right

Harlem, New York: Support Alabama Amazon Union

Saturday, March 20 - 2:00 p.m.

Amazon's Whole Foods, Malcolm X Blvd. & 125th St., Harlem

6,000 (mainly Black) Amazon workers in Bessemer, Ala., are fighting to unionize at billionaire Jeff Bezos' anti-union, anti-worker, racist company. Their victory can change the conditions for hundreds of thousands of workers.



‘Free the vaccine’ protest hits Pfizer profiteering

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 18, 2021

More than a hundred people gathered outside Pfizer's midtown Manhattan headquarters on March 11 to demand the drug company provide its COVID-19 vaccine to poor countries.

Under current schedules, it won't be until 2024 that most people in Africa, Latin America and South Asia will be vaccinated. That's because Big Pharma outfits like Pfizer think it's not profitable enough to do so sooner. Last year Pfizer had a net income of \$9.6 billion.

Speakers said the unavailability of vaccines was a death sentence for the poor. Among them was Dr. Roona Ray, a family physician and supporter of Physicians for a National Health Program.

The delayed rollout of vaccines for countries made poor by global capitalism threatens everyone's health. Rally participants pointed out that "no one is safe until everyone is safe."

Members of ACT-UP and other organizations came to the noontime rally, held two blocks from United Nations headquarters.

While Pfizer rolls in the profits, socialist Cuba is preparing to manufacture 100 million nonprofit vaccine doses. Before 1959, when Cuba was a sugar colony for Wall Street, the country wasn't even able to make an aspirin.





Philadelphia: Free Mumia! Free them all!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 18, 2021

Righteously angry people protested outside the office of Philadelphia's "progressive" District Attorney Larry Krasner on March 12. They demanded the immediate release of world-famous political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and all other incarcerated fighters for the people.

Abu-Jamal has been confirmed to have COVID-19 as well as congestive heart disease. The Pennsylvania deep state has been trying to kill him for almost 40 years.

The people stopped Mumia's execution twice after Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge signed death warrants in the 1990s. After Abu-Jamal was taken off death row, prison officials tried to kill him by medical neglect, first by denying him treatment for hepatitis C and now for COVID and heart disease.

As a sign of how much the wealthy and powerful want Abu-Jamal dead, it's been

revealed that National Public Radio asked Philadelphia radio station WHYI-FM for help in writing his obituary!

Over a hundred prisoners in Pennsylvania have died of the coronavirus. Gov. Tom Wolfe has refused to release prisoners over 50 years old who are most likely to die from it.

Pam Africa from the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal demanded the release of Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners. She denounced the phoniness of DA Krassner, who claimed he was against mass incarceration yet keeps the prisons full.

Krassner has opposed Mumia Abu-Jamal's struggle to get a new trial.

After the speak-out outside Krassner's office, people marched to block traffic in front of City Hall and South Broad Street. The power of the people will free Mumia!



