

New Orleans marches against U.S. imperialism

written by Gregory E. Williams
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In historic Congo Square. SLL photo: Gregory E. Williams

On Aug. 21, New Orleanians marched against U.S. imperialism, “from Kabul to the Caribbean,” as stated in the announcement.

The action was initiated by organizers with Freedom Road Socialist Organization – New Orleans, and the New Orleans Hospitality Workers Alliance, with support from the New Orleans Mutual Aid Society, Socialist Unity Party, and various community members.

Appropriately, the starting point was Congo Square in present-day Armstrong Park — one of the only communal spaces in the U.S. available to African people during slavery. Mississippi-born educator and poet, She Ra, told the crowd, “This land here is sacred. It was sacred before colonization ... [and when enslaved people gathered here on Sundays] they were able to hang onto some of their native tongue, spiritual practices, music and dance.”

She Ra thus framed the march, connecting the struggles within the belly of the beast — including the Black liberation struggle — to the just cause of the Cuban, Haitian, Afghan and other peoples holding the line against U.S. imperialism.

“Cuba, Haiti and Afghanistan are geographically separated, but they’ve been united in the common cause against U.S. imperialism. It’s the tax dollars that we produce in America that have been funneled toward suppressing the national self-determination of all these peoples,” said Toni Jones of Freedom Road.

The march ultimately went to the Hale Boggs Federal Building, where educational talks were given. But before that, the crowd wound through the French Quarter to reach those in the service industry. In the streets were valet drivers, shop workers, restaurant servers and cooks on break. These workers read the fliers, and some pumped their fists to shouts of “U.S. out of Cuba! U.S. out of Haiti! U.S. out of Afghanistan!” New Orleans workers, as in the rest of the country, can barely afford food, medical care and housing, while the military budget is over \$700 billion. Something’s gotta give!

In our conversations along the way, we affirmed our commitments to unity. The U.S. imperialists may have failed to destabilize Cuba and are retreating from Afghanistan, but the global situation is still dangerous. The dying beast of capitalism-imperialism can, and will, continue to lash out, as evidenced by increasing aggression toward China, but not just there.

Struggle-La Lucha's Bill Dores recently observed, "While the U.S. retreats from Afghanistan, the war against the Filipino people continues. It has been raging since 1898. The planes, the bombs, the guns and bullets that murder peasants and freedom fighters come from the USA. ... The Philippines was one of the first U.S. colonies. The U.S. has been there for over 100 years. If you want to see what kind of world the U.S. ruling class wants, look at the poverty, the death squads, and the mass murder in the Philippines."

Our duty, therefore, is to continue building up all progressive, anti-imperialist forces, and especially working-class revolutionary organizations.



Teach-in at the Federal Building. SLL photo: Gregory E. Willaims

