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Socialist Unity Party
Partido de Socialismo Unido

Twitter: @StruggleLaLucha

Facebook.com/strugglelalucha

email: info@struggle-la-lucha.org

We won't go back! Texas & Supreme Court attack on women must be defeated



Women protest against abortion ban at the Texas Capitol in Austin, Sept. 1.

Statement from Women in Struggle / Mujeres En Lucha and Socialist Unity Party

Texas Senate Bill 8, which took effect Sept. 1, bans abortion after six weeks, before many women are even aware that they are pregnant.

Anyone who sues an abortion provider under this law will be awarded a \$10,000 bounty. Texas Right to Life has already set up a "whistleblower" website where people can give anonymous tips about who might be violating the law.

In upholding SB8, the U.S. Supreme Court basically approved the notion that vigilantes can track down women and their "abettors."

There are no exceptions for rape, incest or diagnoses of fetal anomaly.

Who will be most impacted?

It is Black, Brown and Indigenous women, the poor and youth, those who rely on reproductive rights centers for



health care, including contraception, general checkups and cancer screenings. SB8 will effectively shut down care for transgender people, who will no longer be able to access needed hormone replacement therapy.

Many women will be forced to flee to other states just to obtain the basic right to control one's own body. But even this will not be possible for many poor, working-class and very young women who will be forced to risk their lives or health in back-alley abortions. The same reactionary forces behind

SB8, and those who did nothing to prevent it, care little about children and less about all women, regardless of who they love or their gender identity, including transgender women.

A box full of diapers and a car seat is of little help when families are facing joblessness and homelessness. Where is the fight to stop unemployment benefits from being cut? Where is the moratorium and cancellation of rents, foreclosures and utility shut-offs?

Where is the fight to stop forced sterilizations of poor and oppressed women from Puerto Rico to Mississippi, or the fight to make sure that all children — and every person — have free healthcare, or paid maternity leave for working families?

What about the lack of affordable, safe daycare that has forced women

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Hurricane Ida blows away illusions

By Gregory E. Williams

I am from a small town in Louisiana's Tangipahoa Parish, now living in New Orleans. Professionally, I am a cook and am training to be a biological lab technician.

When I first began to understand that Hurricane Ida was going to be bad, I was afraid. But to some extent I had been lulled into complacency by the fact that New Orleans has largely been spared from major hurricane damage for several years. On the other hand, the 2020 season was devastating for the western part of the state, which has still not fully recovered from those shocks.

Mentally, I was still unprepared as Ida made landfall as a category 4 storm near marshy Port Fourchon — the concept of "land" here is tenuous, and partly explains why the storm was able to maintain its strength.

I thought that by going 80 miles north of New Orleans I would be safe. After all, the biggest concern for us is always water. Parts of New Orleans are 8 feet below sea level, and the city now floods during regular rainstorms. I wanted to get out, and thought I would be safe as long as I was away from typical flood zones.

My assumptions were too optimistic. Based on the Saffir-Simpson hurricane wind scale, Ida was a Category 5 when it made landfall, with winds right at 157 mph. Unsurprisingly, when it barreled through northern Tangipahoa Parish, where I was staying with family, the destruction was immense.

The problem here is the trees. Within one acre (43,560 square feet) of where I am writing, I have counted to fallen trees. Visually, the rest of the town looks similar. Trees have blocked roads and fallen onto houses. They have ripped down power lines, or else the electrical poles themselves have uprooted — sometimes twisted into splintered segments.

As in New Orleans and other parts of the state, people here are without power. Gasoline and groceries are in short supply.

This has been hard on my family, as one family member fell and broke his hip during the storm, and many of us had to be outside during the worst of it in order to help him. First responders were unable to come until the next day.

Takeaway messages

1. Climate change means that nowhere is completely safe. My plan of travelling 80 miles north was laughable, considering that at least 25 people were killed by the storm in distant New Jersey as of Sept. 4. Eighteen have died in New York.

We cannot behave as if hurricanes are just a Southern problem, or even a coastal problem. This storm crossed a long stretch of the country, far inland.

2. Capitalist society — especially in this period of profound crisis and long-term decline — is completely unable to deal with stress of this, or really any, magnitude. On paper, this is the richest country in the world, but that wealth is hoarded

by a few, while virtually all social and material infrastructure is deteriorating. Because of socialist planning, tiny Cuba is able to deal with storms far better than the U.S.

The whole of Cuban society is mobilized to deal with hurricanes, and the aftermath is about recovery, not greed. Regular preparedness drills are conducted everywhere. The focus is on risk-reduction with an integrated response from local fire departments, health, transportation and other public services.

Before storms occur, Cuban government officials, police and military personnel help people move their belongings to safer locations. The government also guarantees replacement of all lost property. Most impressively, they have a 100-year plan to move towns further inland in response to climate change.

Meanwhile, here, horror story after horror story is emerging in the aftermath of Ida. In New Orleans, the government — city, state and federal — did not provide transportation that would have allowed working-class residents without vehicles to evacuate. This is despite the fact that the city issued mandatory evacuation orders.

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Nurses, who worked inside a warehouse where more than 800 nursing home residents were housed amid squalid conditions, say they are haunted by the scenes they witnessed during Hurricane Ida. As seniors called out for help, the air conditioning quit and toilets overflowed. At least four people died.

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