

# En Puerto Rico, sigue la lucha del pueblo

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
September 7, 2021



Mientras la dictadura de la Junta de Control Fiscal impuesta por el congreso de EUA y sus lacayos en el gobierno local hacen todo por destruirnos como país y hundirnos en la pobreza y la desesperación, el pueblo sigue adelante organizándose y luchando en varios frentes.

Ya está claro que la administración del achichincle gobernador Pedro Pierluisi en nada va a favorecer al pueblo. Tanto él como su hermana Caridad, a quien llevó a residir en La Fortaleza para ayudarlo a gobernar sin haber sido elegida por el pueblo, tienen como prioridad privatizar cualquier agencia que queda del pueblo.

Pero en su arrogancia, no cuentan con que el pueblo ya está cansado del abuso por

los malos servicios de salud, energía, educación, vivienda, seguridad pública, etc, además del terrible aumento en el costo de vida y la canasta básica.

Hay luchas por todos lados, entre ellas, comunidades enteras contra las antenas de telecomunicaciones, contra la construcción en zonas marítimo terrestres, en pro de la defensa de la educación, sindicatos, pero ahora la más urgente es la lucha contra la terrible privatizadora de energía Luma porque ya hay mucha indignación por los incesantes apagones por todo el país.

Hay varias manifestaciones pautadas para estos días tanto en contra de Luma como contra la Junta de Control Fiscal.

La lucha es cuesta arriba, pero se sigue avanzando. ¡Fuera Luma y la dictadura de la Junta y sus lacayos en el gobierno!

Desde Puerto Rico para RADIO CLARIN de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci.



# How Reagan's war drive exploited a tragedy: The real story of Korean Air Lines Flight 007

written by Struggle - La Lucha

September 7, 2021

Thirty-eight years ago, 269 people were killed when Korean Air Lines flight 007 was shot down over the Soviet Union on Sept. 1, 1983.

President Ronald Reagan called it "an act of barbarism." U.S. cops kill as many people every three months.

Less than five years later, the U.S. Navy blew up Iran Air flight 655 on July 3, 1988, killing 290 people. Reagan's Vice-President, [George H.W. Bush, declared](#) a month afterwards, "I will never apologize for the United States — I don't care what the facts are."

The Korean airliner flew as far as 365 miles off course to go over sensitive Soviet military bases at night. Monitoring Soviet communications, the [National Security Agency later admitted](#) the socialist country's air defense personnel thought the jet was a U.S. RC-135 spy plane, a Boeing military plane that's identical to the Boeing 707 commercial aircraft.

The Iranian airliner, on the other hand, was on its expected course when it was shot down in broad daylight, 7,600 miles from the U.S., by a missile fired by the USS Vincennes. Both tragedies were used by the military-industrial complex to get what it wanted.

After its airliner was shot down, Iran was compelled to end the Iran-Iraq war on poor

terms. Using the “divide and conquer” tactic, both the Carter and Reagan administrations promoted this bloody war that killed hundreds of thousands of people. Now it was time to end it, with both Iran and Iraq severely weakened.

The shootdown of the Korean airliner unleashed a tidal wave of hate against the Soviet Union. Corporate media acted as cheerleaders. Reagan used the 269 deaths to push through huge increases in the Pentagon budget.

A crucial part of this war drive was deploying Pershing II medium range nuclear missiles in West Germany in November 1983. These mass murder weapons — that could hit Soviet soil in eight minutes — were installed despite millions of people having demonstrated against them.

### **War propaganda at the U.N.**

Pumping up the anti-communist campaign was a Hollywood spectacular at the United Nations Security Council, courtesy of the U.S. Information Agency. Its director was Reagan’s buddy Charles Wick, co-producer of “Snow White and the Three Stooges.”

Five TV screens were set up in the council chamber to show the video. The MC was U.S. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick.

She had dismissed the murder and rape of four churchwomen in El Salvador by the oligarchy’s National Guard. “The nuns were not just nuns,” [Kirkpatrick said](#). “The nuns were also political activists.”

Thirteen years later the video’s producer, [Alvin Snyder, admitted](#) that “the video was powerful, effective and wrong.” It featured alleged comments of Soviet pilots, many of which were mistranslated.

Adding to the right-wing uproar was the death on flight 007 of John Birch Society

leader and Congress member Larry McDonald. The fascist had nominated Nazi war criminal Rudolf Hess for a Nobel Peace Prize.

The Birchers claimed that flight 007 was actually captured by a secret Soviet weapon with McDonald and the other passengers being held captive. Interestingly, other Congress members — including Ku Klux Klan Senator Jesse Helms — flew on KAL flight 015, which followed flight 007 and kept on the correct flight path.

All the while, the Reagan regime was conducting a massive cover-up that rivaled Watergate. Key radar tapes were destroyed. Gag orders were issued to silence witnesses.

By law, the National Transportation Safety Board was supposed to investigate the shootdown. It was illegally ordered instead to turn over its evidence to the State Department, which sat on it.

### **Deliberately off course**

One of few voices to question the White House story about flight 007 was British journalist R.W. Johnson. His book “Shootdown” was published in 1986 and is worth reading today.

Johnson described the tremendous odds against the Korean airliner having accidentally flown so far from its designated flight path. He quotes retired Canadian Major-General Richard Rohmer: “Did the [Korean] 747’s crew know the aircraft was off course? ... Yes, they knew exactly where they were ...”

Here’s some of the reasons “Shootdown” gives for disbelieving that flight 007 flew 250 miles over Soviet territory by “mistake”:

- \*The Boeing 747 was equipped with the Inertial Navigation System. The INS has three computers so it can continue to function even if two of the

computers crash. Over a five-year period there was only one INS error per every 20,000 flights, most likely caused by programming errors.

- It's hard to believe that such an error was made by the captain of flight 007, Chun Byung-in. The experienced pilot was known as a "human computer."
- Chun wasn't alone on the 747 flight deck. Even if the INS and the autopilot were uncoupled, the crew would have had to ignore the amber warning light. They also would have had to fail to notice the reading on the magnetic compass.
- Standard procedure would be for the plane's weather radar to be in its ground-mapping model. This would have clearly shown the Soviet Union's rocky Kamchatka peninsula that the plane flew over.
- Captain Chun repeatedly gave false positions of his location. He flew almost directly over the Soviet bases of Petropavlovsk and Korsakov. Chun turned to go over the Soviet Union's Sakhalin Island.
- In order to make evasive maneuvers, including increasing the speed, Captain Chun took 10,000 pounds more fuel than he put on the flight release sheet.
- Retired Trans World Airlines pilot and navigator Robert Allardyce along with his associate James Gollin listened to the last words of flight 007's First Officer Son Dong-Hui. It was first broadcast on ABC's "20/20" program. They heard: "For South Korean Director ... repeating instructions. Hold your bogey (or 'bogies') north (or 'course') ... repeat conditions. Gonna be a bloodbath ... you bet."

As R.W. Johnson pointed out, both "director" and "bogey" are military, not civilian, aviation terms. He wrote that First Officer Son "was in touch with the mission director of what could only have been a surveillance mission."

### **Using passengers as bait**

Flight 007 wasn't the first Korean Air Lines plane to go over Soviet territory by

“mistake.” On April 20, 1978, KAL flight 902 flew over the Soviet base at Murmansk before it was forced to land by a Soviet fighter. One passenger was killed.

South Korea is a virtual colony of Wall Street and its military-industrial complex. In the middle of Seoul is a U.S. military base. That’s like British or German troops occupying New York City’s Central Park.

The CIA uses South Korea to spy on the socialist Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and, at that time, the Soviet Union. KAL flight 007 was used as bait to “light up” every Soviet radar in the region, as well as to listen to radio communications.

Collecting info for the Pentagon were at least two RC-135 spy planes; another spy plane, the Orion P-3C; the USS Observation Island, operating the Cobra Judy radar; and the 1982-41c spy satellite. The U.S. also had a series of ground radar stations. Meanwhile the space shuttle Challenger was circling the earth.

Ernest Volkman, editor of “Defense Science,” described the results:

“As a result of the KAL incident, United States intelligence received a bonanza the likes of which they have never received in their lives. Reason: because of the tragic incident it managed to turn on just about every single Soviet electromagnetic transmission over a period of about four hours and an area of approximately 7,000 square miles, and I mean everything. ... Now, admittedly, that’s a cynical statement, but we’re talking about a very cynical business here.”

More good news from the 269 dead passengers and crew was a boom in “defense” stocks, including Lockheed.

## **Risking nuclear war**

The Reagan administration was possibly the most adventurist in U.S. history. It wanted to put MX nuclear missiles on Japanese bullet trains.

Secretary of Defense [Caspar Weinberger wrote](#) that Secretary of State Alexander Haig wanted “to invade Cuba and, one way or another, put an end to the Castro regime.”

Reagan worshipper [Peter Schweizer bragged](#) how U.S. bombers would fly to the edge of Soviet air space before peeling off at the last minute. Every time Soviet fighters were forced to scramble. Pretending to launch a nuclear first strike must have been great fun!

This was the most dangerous time of the Cold War since the Cuban missile crisis. A Soviet diplomat told Brian Becker — now the ANSWER Coalition’s national director — that the KAL 007 crisis reminded him of John F. Kennedy’s assassination. Many on the far right claimed that accused JFK assassin and patsy Lee Harvey Oswald was a Soviet and/or Cuban agent.

Starting on Nov. 7, 1983 — the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution — U.S. and other NATO forces staged the Able Archer ‘83 exercise, which included a simulated nuclear attack. Soviet Defense Minister [Dmitry Ustinov warned](#) that NATO’s exercises “are becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish from a real deployment.”

Meanwhile U.S. naval exercises were staged in the northern Pacific near Soviet waters. These included the Fleetex ‘83 exercise and a simulated amphibious assault on Okinawa. This was seen as preparation for invading Soviet territories like the Kuril Islands, Sakhalin or Kamchatka.

The same year racist Reagan invaded the Black Caribbean island of Grenada while U.S. Marines landed in Lebanon. The CIA continued the Contra war in Nicaragua that cost 50,000 lives and was paid for by starting the crack epidemic.

Billions were spent to overthrow a progressive government in Afghanistan. Reagan

did everything he could to prop up the apartheid regime in South Africa that was keeping Nelson Mandela in jail.

### **Gambling with 269 lives**

Like Trump, the Reaganites wanted to ditch arms-control treaties. Part of this campaign was leaking to journalists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak that a huge radar was being built at Krasnoyarsk in Siberia. In their July 27, 1983, newspaper column, they claimed the facility would violate the anti-ballistic missile treaty.

What was needed to whip up this allegation was finding out if there was a radar gap on the Soviet Union's Pacific border. Hence the flight of KAL 007 over a string of Soviet military bases, forcing its military to turn on every radar.

U.S. electronic platforms jammed as many Soviets radars as they could. This allowed flight 007 to get clean across Kamchatka.

Soviet fighters were sent to stop the intruder. Flight 007's pilot Chun Byung-in ignored warnings that included tracer shells shot by Soviet pilot Vassily Kasmin.

Chun instead staged diversionary tactics like a military aircraft would. (Chun was a former Korean Air Force pilot.) These tricks included reporting that he was climbing when he was actually descending.

Kasmin was finally given an order to fire missiles at the intruder. The Soviets had no idea that it was a commercial airliner.

R.W. Johnson believes that National Security Advisor "Judge" Bill Clark and CIA director William Casey were responsible for sending flight 007 into Soviet airspace.

If worse came to worse, flight 007 might be forced to land on Soviet territory, like KAL flight 902 did in 1978. But 007 pilot Chun Byung-in tried to escape instead. Two

hundred sixty-nine people were killed.

Clark looked for an exit. When the Secretary of Interior James Watt was forced to resign after making bigoted remarks, Clark slipped into the job. Within a year he was back at his California ranch.

The sad tale of flight 007 should be remembered for the deadly risks taken by the U.S. military-industrial complex. Poor and working people shouldn't believe White House lies about the Soviet Union 38 years ago or the People's Republic of China today.

*Unless otherwise noted, the source is "Shootdown: Flight 007 and the American Connection" by R.W. Johnson.*



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# Happy Labor Day — now drop dead

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
September 7, 2021

At least 7.5 million workers will lose all their unemployment benefits on Sept. 6. Another 3 million workers will lose part of their income. That's how the capitalist

government celebrates Labor Day.

Two million workers in California will be thrown off a cliff. So will 1.2 million in New York State and nearly a half-million in Pennsylvania.

What are jobless workers and their loved ones to do? Counting family members, 20 million or more people will be endangered.

Hunger will increase and so will people losing their homes. Food banks are bracing for an upsurge of need.

The cut-off on Labor Day comes after the U.S. Supreme Court declared the ban on evictions and foreclosures to be illegal. What should be illegal are rent-gouging landlords and banksters stealing homes.

Hardest hit will be Black and Latinx workers. The [official unemployment rate for Black workers](#) is 9.2 percent.

Ending the benefits comes after the capitalist economy added only 235,000 jobs in August instead of the predicted 720,000.

That gives the lie to the claim that unemployment benefits are an incentive for people not to work. [Even Forbes magazine](#) — the self-described “capitalist tool” — admits that isn’t true.

The jobs aren’t there. There are six million fewer people employed than last spring.

Yet President Biden [sent an Aug. 19 letter](#) to members of Congress that it was “appropriate” for the federal unemployment benefits to expire.

Who elected you, Joe? Is it “appropriate” for children and their parents to go hungry?

What's needed is a fightback. That's what the [Unemployed Workers Union](#) is doing in Maryland. It helped stop Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan from cutting unemployment benefits in July.

We need to increase the volume. If Congress doesn't act to restore these absolutely necessary benefits, the labor movement should march on Washington, D.C., and the state capitals.

As Frederick Douglass said: "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

Jobs or income now! Don't starve — fight!



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# Los Angeles protest: Peru's will must be respected!

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
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On August 26, Peru Libre — the Free Peru national political party - organized a

demonstration in the Koreatown neighborhood of Los Angeles. A group formed by people from Peru, other South American countries, Mexico and the U.S. gathered in front of the Peruvian Consulate to show support for the government of newly-elected President Pedro Castillo.

They demanded an end to the war that has been waged against Castillo by the Peruvian Congress and military, which are acting under the influence of the U.S., Canada, and the oligarchs and transnational corporations that control their governments.

“The U.S. government has no business in Peru,” declared Lazaro Aguero, a Peru Libre Party member. “You don’t have the right to put military bases in Peru. Peruvians are the ones who must solve their problems, not you. We don’t want your bases and that’s not what the Peruvian people need. You should stay away from the political issues of Peru.”

This war was going on even before the presidential elections that pitted Pedro Castillo, an Indigenous school teacher and union organizer, against Keiko Fujimori, the daughter of former right-wing dictator Alberto Fujimori. Maneuvering by Fujimori and the Peruvian elite blocked Castillo from being officially declared president for more than a month after his decisive victory in June’s runoff election.

Peru Libre is a socialist party that has massive support from the people, especially impoverished rural and Indigenous Peruvians. As usual when it comes to parties that put the interests of the people ahead of the interests of corporations, the right wing wants to destroy it. Old tools of imperialism like defamation and lies through the capitalist-owned media are being used to achieve this goal.

Peru’s Congress is another body working to destabilize the Castillo presidency. Everything that Castillo and his party try to do, like forming a cabinet with the people they want, is being denied, as seen in the forced resignation of Foreign

Affairs Minister Hector Bejar.

Bejar, a former member of the Maoist guerrilla movement Sendero Luminoso, rejected the Washington-dominated Lima Group and sought a new approach to relations with Venezuela and Nicaragua. That was too much for Western imperialism — so he had to go.

The oligarchs might have forced Hector Bejar to resign with pressure from the right-wing sectors. But he will remain in the war by continuing to assist and advise Castillo's government.

### **Destabilization campaign**

The destabilization campaign is ongoing. It is urgent that independent, internationalist media go to Peru and show the rest of the world that the people of Peru support Castillo's government in its fight against powerful enemies who have the Congress, the media and the military on their side.

The local media, to the surprise of no one, is on the side of the reactionary forces — especially after Castillo cut the slush fund by previous governments given to the media to pay them off for their support.

The media have always been supportive of former Peruvian governments and spoke in their favor. But with Pedro Castillo, they act completely differently. During the presidential runoff, Fujimori had the support of all the corporate media. Afterward, dissatisfied with the results, they helped in her attempt to steal the elections by falsely claiming she had won.

The people didn't remain idle. Through massive mobilizations and demonstrations, they were able to deter the attempted coup. Social media was the only reliable way that Peru Libre and President Castillo had to counter the lies spread by the mainstream media and counter-balance its partiality.

As for the other prong of imperialist-controlled sabotage, the Peruvian military brass, many of them are afraid that they will go to jail as punishment for crimes committed during Alberto Fujimori's presidency, as President Castillo promised to bring justice to their victims. Therefore they have another reason to want regime change.

## **Taxing big business**

President Castillo is also demanding that foreign corporations pay over 20 years of back taxes or they will not be allowed to operate in the country. Before, these transnationals (the mining sector being one of the biggest) were tax-exempt with the excuse that they were "bringing jobs to the country." The truth is, they brought few jobs and took vast amounts of the nation's wealth, leaving the poor, and especially Indigenous people, destitute of the most basic necessities of life.

It's no coincidence that the right-wing-controlled Congress just voted to allow more U.S. military bases in Peru.

The current constitution was written during Fujimori's presidency and, like in any other capitalist country, devised to support the interests of the bosses and landlords instead of the people. The Peruvian Congress can impeach the president at any time, even without serious charges against the sitting official. In late 2020, Peru had [three presidents in the space of a week](#).

Speakers at the Aug. 26 protest explained that the people are demanding a new constitution. Signatures are being collected everywhere, even here in the U.S., for a referendum on a new constitution to be created by an elected popular assembly. This is something of the utmost importance to the future of Peru.

As in Bolivia, Venezuela and all Latin America, the reactionary forces do not accept Indigenous and working-class people in power. A democratic Peru must be defended

at any cost and President Castillo must be respected because the people chose him.



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# **Vietnam resists Washington's anti-China campaign**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
September 7, 2021

Vietnam and China fought an unfortunate border war in February and March of 1979, egged on by U.S. imperialist interference in the region. Nevertheless, relations between the two countries have steadily improved, based on a shared interest in peaceful socialist construction, resulting in deepening political and economic cooperation.

Currently, maritime disputes are the biggest threat to this long-lasting peace. Controversies have arisen around commercial fishing, oil exploration and other activities in the waters that China calls the South Sea, and Vietnam calls the East Sea. There are competing claims about control of various small islands.

One-third of the world's trade passes through these waters. But the situation must

also be understood in the context of U.S. military provocations; for example, this year, Washington has deployed a Navy strike group headed by the USS Theodore Roosevelt in the sea.

Despite ongoing disputes, both the Chinese and Vietnamese governments have firmly maintained that they will resolve all issues through dialogue and recourse to maritime law.

On April 26, a high-level meeting was held between Vietnamese and Chinese officials in Hanoi. In attendance were Vietnamese President Nguyễn Xuân Phúc, Communist Party of Vietnam General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng and China's National Defense Minister Wei Fenghe. The leaders pledged to strengthen bilateral ties and military cooperation.

In Xinhua News' paraphrase, President Phúc said that "Vietnam will stay on guard against and firmly resist any schemes to undermine Vietnam-China relations, and will never follow other countries in opposing China."

Further, they stressed that they must resist pressures from outside the region to interfere in the maritime disputes.

This is not an abstract concern. U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris arrived in Hanoi on Aug. 24. The thrust of her visit was to try to convince the Vietnamese government to become part of an anti-China alliance.

During the trip she said, "We need to find ways to pressure and raise the pressure, frankly, on Beijing to abide by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and to challenge its bullying and excessive maritime claims." Harris's appeal to the U.N. is rich, considering that Washington has consistently flaunted the U.N.'s resolutions demanding an end to sanctions against Cuba and other unilateral imperialist bullying.

The Biden administration's approach to the region is a continuation of Trump-era policies, as well as Obama's "pivot to Asia." The 2018 declassified report, ["U.S. Strategic Framework for the Indo-Pacific,"](#) lays out the overall strategy and goals. The first bullet point reads, "How to maintain U.S. strategic primacy in the Indo-Pacific region and promote a liberal economic order while preventing China from establishing new, illiberal spheres of influence, and cultivating areas of cooperation to promote regional peace and prosperity?"

The "peace and prosperity" bit is the most outrageous part. If they were serious about that, they would end their occupation of South Korea, stop providing weapons to the Duterte regime in the Philippines, etc. The generals in Washington would likely love to have a military base in Vietnam, but as part of its revolutionary sovereign policy, Vietnam does not allow foreign bases on its soil.

But the important thing here is that, despite considerable trade and diplomatic relations between Washington and Hanoi, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is not on board with the U.S.-led anti-China coalition.



# **Cuba, COVID, and Ending the U.S. Blockade: What can we do? Sept. 19**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
September 7, 2021



# CUBA, COVID, AND ENDING THE U.S. BLOCKADE: WHAT CAN WE DO?



**Lianys Torres Rivera**  
Cuban Ambassador  
to the U.S.



**Gail Walker**  
IFCO Executive Director



**Dr. Samira Addrey**  
Graduate of ELAM  
(Escuela Latino-  
Americana de  
Medicina)

**SUN, SEPT 19**  
**3PM - 5:30PM EST**  
**REGISTRATION**  
**REQUIRED:**

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- Lianys Torres Rivera, Cuban Ambassador to the U.S.
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- Dr. Samira Addrey, Graduate of ELAM (Escuela Latino-Americana de Medicina)

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## **Hurricane Ida blows away illusions**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
September 7, 2021

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 barrelled 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 10 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

for areas outside the levees, and strongly advised other residents to evacuate. Some 35% of Black households do not own an auto, and about 20% of white households don't own autos.

In Independence, La., over 800 nursing home residents from facilities owned by Baton Rouge businessman Bob J. Dean Jr. [were thrown into a warehouse](#). These people were left in their own filth. At least four of them have died. This is all too similar to Hurricane Katrina.

The working class has no stake in this rotten society. Overthrowing capitalist rule is truly a matter of life and death.



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# **‘Woke’ imperialism, women’s liberation and Afghanistan**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
September 7, 2021

There is no greater hypocrisy than the deceitful lies of imperialist propaganda. One of the most damaging, since it rests on 20 years of destructive war and occupation,

is that the U.S. war on Afghanistan was about liberating Afghan women.

U.S. imperialist involvement — a euphemism for war and terror — actually began 42 years ago, when the CIA's Operation Cyclone launched in 1979 under Jimmy Carter's presidency. It continues today in the form of sanctions and even bombings, as witnessed by the recent drone strike that killed at least 10 people, eight of them children, as young as two years old.

### **The real fight for women's rights**

U.S. terror and intrigue began following the 1978 Saur Revolution that brought the socialist and progressive People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) to power, decisively toppling the old Kingdom of Afghanistan.

The April Revolution, led mostly by young women and men of Kabul, ushered in major changes that included women's rights in education and participation in government. Debts owed to cruel feudal landlords were abolished. Women were trained as teachers and books were published in all of the Indigenous and minority languages.

Brigades of women spread out across the country to teach and provide medical services, similar to the Cuban Revolution's "literacy brigades" of mostly young women that went into the countryside and mountains to teach the poor.

The marriage age was raised from 8 years to 16. Maternity leave with a three-month's salary was established. By the end of the 1980s, half of the health and education workers in Afghanistan were women.

The story of Afghanistan's women and their struggle for liberation is remarkable. But it's seldom told in the capitalist West, whose propaganda is filled with distortions and bitter lies.

## **First woman vice president**

Dr. Anahita Ratebzad was an Afghan socialist, a founding member of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and a member of the Revolutionary Council. She was also the first woman vice president of Afghanistan from 1980 to 1985 — decades before the United States could boast about the election of Kamala Harris.

In the 1960s, she founded the Democratic Organization of Afghan Women (DOAW), and in 1965, Ratebzad and other Afghan women organized the first International Women's Day March in Kabul. Earlier in 1963, Dr. Ratebzad graduated as a medical doctor.

There is vast documentation that the imperialist bourgeoisie knew full well that the Soviet Union had not planned, let alone carried out, the April Revolution.

It was Afghans led by the PDPA that requested assistance from the Soviet Union, whose borders bounded with Afghanistan, to help in the growing civil war promulgated by reactionary and corrupt warlords bent on overturning the new government.

What is not well understood is that the U.S. was deeply involved in the Afghan civil war, not on the side of the new government, but on the side of the reactionaries who were bent on the destruction of the progressive gains, which foremost included women's rights.

In 1979, the CIA began arming and financing the Afghan mujahideen — murderous warlords — and later conspired with both Osama Bin Laden and the Taliban. The CIA operation, dubbed "Operation Cyclone," was the longest and most expensive in U.S. history. It continued after the Soviet army withdrew in 1989.

Later, the CIA ran death squads that terrorized Afghan villagers and murdered children.

## **U.S. war and occupation**

In 1992 the Afghan warlords, backed by the U.S., finally succeeded in overthrowing the PDPA government. At the time, Western governments celebrated this as a “victory against Soviet tyranny.” In 1996 the Taliban movement, a product of infighting among the warlord factions, seized control of the country. Socialist leaders who had been held under house arrest were executed.

In 2001, the Taliban made a convenient first target for the U.S. “war on terror” after the 9/11 attacks. In two decades of U.S. war and occupation since then, only a tiny percentage of women and girls were able to advance themselves, inadvertently becoming show pieces for Western NGOs and the media. But the vast majority of Afghan women have remained in the worst possible conditions.

Business Insider, certainly not a revolutionary source, documents Afghanistan among the 25 poorest countries. Afghanistan is listed as the 7th poorest, with a gross domestic product of \$499.44 per person, just ahead of war torn Yemen. It was more likely that an Afghan woman or girl would be blown up by a landmine or starve to death than have the opportunity to go to school.

Wherever imperialism goes, it creates misery and backwardness, stunting and distorting the development of the colonized, occupied and even the neocolonial world.

## **Class roots of women’s oppression**

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, advanced a materialist conception of history. Included was the thesis that the development of private property during the period of prehistory led to the first division among humans — the overthrow of matrilineal society and the consequent oppression of women.

While they rested that conclusion on anthropological studies that were available in the 19th century, their conclusions have now been more fully documented. (See Engels' ["The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State"](#) and Bob McCubbin's ["The Social Evolution of Humanity."](#))

The materialist view of history explained that the development of society was based on changes in the mode of production from slavery (referring to the slavery of antiquity), feudalism and capitalism to socialism and what lies in the future, communism.

It is the struggle of classes that drives this process forward.

Marx and the thinkers that followed him did not view this process as stagnant and linear but rather one that was ruptorous, chaotic and revolutionary. Sometimes different modes of production existed side by side for a period of time before contradictions gave way to change.

The role of religion and culture is a product of the dominant economic system. Ideas do not abstractly exist somewhere in the stratosphere; they are deeply connected to all human society. That includes the ideology of patriarchy.

The modern-day women's liberation movement in the United States is not exempted. It emerged and was influenced by the great struggles against imperialism, including the Vietnamese liberation struggle, and domestically, the Black liberation movement.

Dorothy Ballan explains in the pamphlet ["Feminism and Marxism"](#) how the development of the birth control pill, which gave women some modicum of control over their bodies, buttressed the movement.

## **Socialist revolutions**

The Russian Revolution of 1917, which established the Soviet Union, was the very first revolution that shook off both the chains of capitalism and feudal relations, and others followed.

In 1949, the Chinese Revolution threw off the shackles of feudalism. Chinese women, who “hold up half the sky,” participated in bringing about a new China that abolished child brothels, concubinage and arranged marriages in the revolutionary Marriage Law of 1950. Foot binding, a cruel process of mutilating girls and a product of feudal China, was banished.

What the revolutionary socialist women and men of Afghanistan were able to accomplish from 1978-1992, prior to their revolution’s destruction and losses, was nothing short of heroic.

The grinding poverty and the existence of feudal conditions mitigated against everything they were trying to accomplish. Yet they fought.

Their struggle took place in the shadows, both literally in proximity and figuratively, of the great Bolshevik Revolution that brought innumerable gains to women and all of the Soviet people. The Soviet revolution could not have helped but raise the expectations of the Afghan people.

Ironically, it was the retreat of the Soviet leadership during this period, leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union, that would also figure negatively into the equation.

While today it is the oppressor’s history that dominates our capitalist culture with slanders and self-righteous criticism, none of it can change the heroic character of those women and men who fought for genuine social change.

### **Reparations needed for Afghan people**

At present the Afghan people are suffering from staggering inflation. It’s not just

burqas rising in price, as the media snidely reports, but food and many other necessities. The New York Federal Reserve and other banks are blocking Afghanistan's nearly \$9.5 billion in assets.

U.S. imperialism and its banker rulers owe reparations to the people of Afghanistan who have suffered pillage, death and destruction for the last four decades.

Our role as women in the Western capitalist world is to end imperialist war, occupation and sanctions — the only sure route to the liberation of women worldwide. Regardless of twists and turns, self-determination for the people of Afghanistan will ultimately bring progress.

U.S. out of Afghanistan — reparations now!



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## **Austin protests Texas governor's attack on women**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
September 7, 2021

Austin, Texas – Around 100 people rallied at the Texas State Capitol on September 1 to protest against the statewide abortion ban that went into effect that same day. Texas abortion clinics have been forced to stop taking appointments in order to avoid what could be thousands of lawsuits against them. The new law especially affects low-income and working-class women who don't have the resources to take time off work, since the ban forces women in Texas to drive an average of 248 miles one way to access an abortion clinic out of state.

Austin Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) organized Wednesday's action and co-led the rally along with the Feminist Action Project, another student organization based at the University of Texas-Austin.

The central demands of the protest were to stop Governor Greg Abbott's attacks on women, and to call for abortion rights and democracy. Chants included, "Governor Abbott, you can't hide! You don't care if women die!" and, "When women's rights are under attack, what do we do? Stand up, fight back!"

The protest began with a rally outside the capitol building, featuring many chants and speeches. Protesters then marched down Colorado and 11th Streets, and finally into the capitol itself, where chants echoed loudly throughout the building. The protest closed out with a call to action, urging all who attended to stay organized and join organizations like SDS or the Feminist Action Project to continue the struggle.

Source: [FightBack! News](#)



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# **The money that never arrives in Cuba**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
September 7, 2021




With the money she earns cleaning houses in the morning and an office at night, Virgen Elena Pupo, a 47-year-old Cuban migrant, has managed to raise her family in Washington, D.C., but has not been able to help her parents in Holguín, Cuba. She is separated from her parents by more than 1,246 miles. In Cuba's eastern region, Holguín has been hit hard by an increase in COVID-19 cases, but Pupo cannot visit or send money to her parents due to the restrictions on [flights](#) and [remittances](#) from the United States as a result of former U.S. President Donald Trump's policies that President Joe Biden has [continued](#).

On October 27, 2020, a week before the U.S. presidential elections took place on November 3, Trump issued his final [sanction](#) against the island. Trump included Cuban financial company Fincimex, Western Union's main partner in the country, in the Cuban Restricted List. The pretext was that it [belongs](#) to the Cuban business corporation, Grupo de Administración Empresarial S.A.

This measure cut off the channels for sending remittances to Cuba, and Pupo's elderly parents have not been able to receive any help amid the pandemic as a result of this move.

Fincimex issued a [statement](#) on August 27, 2021, announcing delays in the delivery of remittances that arrive in Cuba from third countries due to the difficulty of finding financial institutions willing to authorize operations. The inclusion of this company in the list of restricted entities by the U.S. Treasury Department "continues to generate fears in the international banking sector about accepting operations directed to... [Fincimex] and tendencies to limit the scope of these transactions," said the Fincimex [statement](#).

The U.S. policy relating to remittances goes against all logic. Remittances have come to the rescue of families affected by the coronavirus all over the world. [According](#) to the World Bank, money sent by migrants to their families in "low- and middle-income countries surpassed the sum of FDI [foreign direct investment] (\$259 billion) and overseas development assistance (\$179 billion) in 2020." For example, remittances grew historically in Mexico in the first six months of 2021, as La Jornada recently [reported](#). They reached \$23.6 million, which is 22 percent more than the remittances received during the same period in 2020.

"As COVID-19 still devastates families around the world, remittances continue to provide a critical lifeline for the poor and vulnerable," [said](#) Michal Rutkowski, global director of the Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice at the World Bank. The regular remittances that poor Latin American migrants send to their families have become vital to many of the region's economies. Generally, it's the working poor who send small sums of money, sometimes up to eight times a year, usually sending more money than they earn during the year. For years, remittances have been one of Mexico's [main sources](#) of foreign exchange, and remittances form close to or [more than 20 percent](#)  of the gross domestic product of Honduras, El Salvador and

other countries in Central America. They protect millions of people. But why do migrants do it? Why do they make sacrifices and send money back to their home countries? Surveys say that the explanation for this grand gesture of solidarity, with enormous macroeconomic impact, lies above all in supporting the institution of family. Migrants send money out of moral inspiration and loyalty to their parents, siblings, children, and nieces and nephews.

In a 2006 [study](#) on remittances and their imprint on the Cuban family, researcher Edel Fresneda Camacho recognized that this type of aid is not intended for productive investment. “It constitutes an important source of income for the recipient families, [for] their consumption and saving capacity, and implies an improvement in living conditions,” which in the case of Cuba includes the possibility of investing in a small private business.

Camacho and other researchers have given an account of the manipulative forays of the U.S. government on this front. In the 1990s, during the crisis known in Cuba as the “[Special Period](#),” the United States reinforced the economic siege. The former U.S. President Bill Clinton prohibited remittances from August 1994 to 1998 except under strictly humanitarian conditions: illness or in cases of people with official immigration permission. Bush imposed even more cruel restrictions, allowing only visits to the island once every three years if the person visiting had very close relatives in Cuba—aunts, uncles, and cousins were not considered “family.”

Even then, remittances managed to continue reaching the island. That is, until now. Without Western Union offices, without the possibility of shipments by DHL, with banks being intimidated and flights being suspended to all provinces, except for those very limited to Havana, Pupo can only hope that her elderly parents can survive the pandemic without any help from her. And she prays every day for common sense to prevail among those making policies in the White House, which is located just two blocks away from the office she cleans at night with the stubborn

will to keep her loved ones afloat.

*This article was produced by [Globetrotter](#). Rosa Miriam Elizalde is a Cuban journalist and founder of the site Cubadebate. She is vice president of both the Union of Cuban Journalists (UPEC) and the Latin American Federation of Journalists (FELAP). She has written and co-written several books including *Jineteros en la Habana* and *Our Chavez*. She has received the Juan Gualberto Gómez National Prize for Journalism on multiple occasions for her outstanding work. She is currently a weekly columnist for *La Jornada* of Mexico City.*

