

Building Relations with Cuban Labor: 'Take Cuba off terrorism list'

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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SOLIDARIDAD ENTRE LOS TRABAJADORES

Building Relations with Cuban Labor (BRCL) group and others gather for photos after the Havana May Day rally. Collage made from photos by Jason Newman, LRCT

On the eve of May Day 2024, a group of union members, their union officers, and supporters, mainly from the West Coast of the U.S., participated in a trip aptly named Building Relations with Cuban Labor (BRCL). The visit was planned to provide support for Cuban workers and to experience the wide spectrum of developments they have accomplished.

As everyone in the group got to know each other, they discussed their goals, such as reporting back to their organizations about the horrific impact of the U.S. blockade of Cuba and the urgent need to demand that Cuba be taken off the Trump (then Biden) list of “State Sponsors of Terrorism.”

On May 15, the Biden administration, facing upcoming elections, made news by announcing it was removing Cuba from a short list of countries that they allege are “not fully cooperating against terrorism.” That was not the same as removing Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list, according to a U.S. State Department official. They did not remove Cuba from that list, which has served to tighten the 62-year-long U.S. blockade of Cuba, contributing to a severe economic crisis on the island and to shortages of food, fuel, and medicine.

U.S. union members learn about Cuba

The BRCL group was composed of union representatives and labor coalitions, community groups, women, lesbian, and socialist organizations, all of whose activities included support for Cuba. There were longshore workers from the ILWU Local 10 and Local 52, the A. Philip Randolph Institute, SEIU Local 73, and professors and teachers from the Federation of Teachers.

At a meeting in the offices of **Central de Trabajadores de Cuba** (CTC — the Cuban Workers Central union federation), Julio Morales Vereas, the CTC’s secretary general, and Nancy Roman spoke before opening the floor for discussion.

Morales talked about the revolutionary [Cuban Labor Code](#), which legally establishes the rights of all unions and workers, ensuring they hold power.

- Unions have the right to participate in company management, receive management information, and use facilities for representatives.
- Union agreement is required for layoffs, changes in working hours, and

access to the annual safety report.

- Workers have the legal right to participate in workplace assemblies to debate and approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiated by the union. The contract covers local pay systems and the implementation of employment production plans.
- The union's contract protects worker rights, including a 40-44-hour week and 30 days paid annual leave in the state sector.
- Unions have the right to stop any work they consider dangerous as part of a comprehensive health and safety policy.
- Grievance and disciplinary complaints go before workplace boards called Organs of Labor Justice, the majority of whose members are elected by workers.

Some other highlights of the BRCL visit included:

- **ELAM, the Latin American School of Medicine**, has trained tens of thousands of physicians from low-income communities in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, as well as the U.S. New doctors from over 100 ethnic groups, half of whom are women, make a commitment to return to work in underserved areas after receiving a scholarship.

They study in a school that recognizes every patient's right to care and care that centers learning in the community, where health promotion is as important as disease management.

- Cuba's **Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology** conducts world-recognized research and development of biopharmaceuticals for the treatment and prevention of diseases. One of their successes was finding a treatment that prevents amputations for diabetics.

Speakers emphasized the need to provide medicine where it is most needed

without the constriction of profit-driven competition. A current goal of their research is finding a cure for dementia, a disorder women suffer more than men.

- **FANJ**, the Foundation of Antonio Nunez Jimenez. Here, the BRCL delegation learned about Cuba's commitment to environmental sustainability under climate change. They are working on solutions to the rising ocean level and the threat of superstorms in the Caribbean basin.

There were many opportunities to visit local communities, see the restoration of Old Havana, and enjoy Cuba's vibrant culture at jazz clubs, dance concerts, and art centers.

Most thrilling was May Day in Havana where tens of thousands of Cuban workers greeted their guests representing labor unions from all around the world. Music and dances began as the sun rose over the Atlantic. Former Cuban President Raul Castro and President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez spoke under a banner reading, "POR CUBA JUNTOS CREAMOS." (Together, we create for Cuba.)

On the following day, the BRCL delegation attended the **Conference of Labor Solidarity** with all the other international labor delegations at the Cuban Palacio de Convenciones.

Union leaders from many countries spoke. Before President Canales addressed the packed hall, a news video showing the horror of genocide in Gaza was broadcast.



Primarias boricuas, cortesía de corporaciones gringas

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Una farsa corporativa para seguir robándole al pueblo

Como en muchas partes de Nuestra América, en Puerto Rico también estamos en un proceso eleccionario este año. Aunque las elecciones generales son en noviembre, esta semana celebrarán primarias los dos partidos coloniales que hasta ahora se han alternado la administración del país, el Partido Popular Democrático o PPD que aboga por la permanencia de la colonia bajo el disfraz del Estado Libre Asociado y el Partido Nuevo Progresista que aboga por la incorporación de PR a los Estados Unidos.

Si bien ambos partidos basan sus promociones en acusaciones del otro contendiente de su propio partido, es el PNP, el administrador actual de la colonia, que se lleva el

premio en groserías y mentiras increíbles. Al ver sus anuncios por televisión, una se queda atónita de ver cómo ocultan y tergiversan la realidad. Según esos productos publicitarios, vivimos en un paraíso donde los servicios son de calidad para todo el pueblo. Donde las escuelas, hospitales, viviendas, servicio de energía, etc., es insuperable y la gente vive muy feliz y agradecida del gobernador que ganó con solo un tercio de votantes. Da un verdadero asco cuando miramos la realidad de nuestro pueblo con pobreza, con nuestra juventud sin poder educarse ni tener un futuro, sin servicios adecuados de salud.

Pero lo importante que queremos puntualizar es: ¿quiénes se benefician? ¿quiénes están detrás de esta publicidad?

No nos debe tomar por sorpresa que en una colonia, sean las corporaciones, bufetes de abogados, y millonarios gringos quienes financien estas campañas para que se mantengan las injustas leyes que le otorgan preferencias a inversionistas extranjeros como la Ley 60 de exenciones contributivas que hacen de Puerto Rico un paraíso fiscal. Han venido a Puerto Rico para robarnos nuestros terrenos, construir edificios y viviendas de lujo para alquileres a corto plazo, desplazando a comunidades y elevando los precios de las viviendas, haciendo que una familia de ingresos medios ya no puede tener un residencia asequible.

Pero por más anuncios que paguen estos buitres, gane quien gane las primarias, es el pueblo en noviembre quien tendrá la oportunidad de sacarlos a todos y elegir a candidatas y candidatos honestos y patriotas que han formado una gran Alianza de País entre el Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño y el Movimiento Victoria Ciudadana que puedan derogar esas leyes preferenciales y reviertan las privatizaciones.

Desde Puerto Rico, para Radio Clarín de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci



Detroit protests U.S.-armed Zionist attack on Rafah, Wayne State students demand divestment

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Hundreds gathered in Grand Circus Park on May 27 to march through downtown Detroit, protesting the recent U.S.-armed Zionist attack that set refugee tents ablaze in Rafah, adding more bodies to the tens of thousands martyred in less than eight months. [CNN confirmed](#) that the munitions used in the deadly strike on Rafah were U.S.-made, provided by Genocide Joe Biden.

Passers-by and drivers stalled as the march passed through intersections and waved support for the marchers' drums, chants, large Palestinian flags, and the many "Abandon Biden" signs.

Two miles away, the Wayne State University encampment demanded that the

university administration meet with Palestinian students to discuss divestment. In November, the WSU Student Senate passed a resolution asking the administration to develop investment criteria to ensure the university is not complicit in war profiteering or “investing in companies that knowingly contribute to or benefit from human rights violations in Palestine and around the world.”

University President Kimberly Andrews Espy’s Dec. 4 response boils down to hiding behind a “fiduciary responsibility” to enrich the independent WSU Foundation and support free speech and exchange of ideas – as long as it doesn’t disrupt the bombs falling on Palestine.

Students and their organizations’ efforts to put divestment on the Board of Governors’ agenda were locked out or thrown out of meetings by plainclothes police. Only then was the encampment established on May 23. The University administration has now ordered all spring/summer school classes to be held virtually until further notice, essentially closing the university.

Local press reports that Congressional Representative Rashida Tlaib, the only Palestinian representative in Congress, spent the night at the WSU encampment and urged the university to reopen the school. Tlaib is a WSU alumnus. The African American Studies Department has lent its support to the encampment.

Despite this support, cops broke the encampment on May 30, arresting 12. On May 21, an early dawn police attack sprayed chemicals on students and violently broke up the University of Michigan encampment in nearby Ann Arbor. But still, they rise to free Palestine.





White supremacy on the court:

Angel Reese targeted

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Over a year ago, Struggle-La Lucha covered the media offensive against LSU women's basketball star [Angel Reese](#).

Even before the events of 2023, Reese rose to prominence in the broader basketball world not only because of her prowess on the court. Reese is a strong and outspoken advocate for the rights [of Black women](#).

Furthermore, she was one of the first big college stars to embrace the new "Name, Image, and Likeness" deals. College athletes finally could be paid for their labor after the [Supreme Court](#) found that the NCAA's restrictions on such deals violated the Sherman Antitrust Act. This SCOTUS decision forced the NCAA's hand, which soon after voted to allow "NIL" deals.

Reese and many others immediately and understandably took the opportunity to finally take a small share of the mega profits being raked in by the [NCAA industrial complex](#). In reality, nobody should make money from the players' labor except the players.

Due to the general [capitalist backlash](#) against NIL money and the racist backlash against Reese personally for her Black pride, Reese has become somewhat of a controversial figure, meaning she is constantly disrespected in the big business media.

The LSU Tigers women's basketball team should have basked in the sunshine that was their program's first national championship in 2023. Instead, Reese and her predominantly Black teammates came under vicious racist attack after Reese

directed John Cena's "you can't see me" gesture at Iowa Hawkeyes' Caitlin Clark in the waning moments of LSU's victory. Clark, who is white, used this gesture throughout the 2023 tournament but never faced criticism.

As soon as Reese responded in kind, the sports media establishment answered with a smear campaign that labeled Reese as a [classless](#) troublemaker. Professional windbag and former MSNBC host [Keith Olberman](#) even went as far as to tweet that Reese was a "fucking idiot."

The 2023 saga climaxed when Jill Biden invited Iowa's Clark to LSU's championship White House visit. Black winners are dissed, and white losers are rewarded.

Much to her credit, Reese responded with strength and pride. Angel Reese has never run from who she is: a young Black woman from Baltimore committed to the highest excellence in her craft. The racists have never stopped hating her for it.

If only the saga ended there. Unfortunately, a year later, the collegiate sports landscape has only slid further into racism and reactionary backlash. Let's start with the continued stories of Reese and Clark.

'Great white hope' narrative escalates

Caitlin Clark continued to shine despite the Hawkeyes' loss to LSU. Her remarkable 2023-2024 season, averaging 28.1 points, 7.1 rebounds, and 8.2 assists per game, are incredible numbers. These outstanding stats earned her a second consecutive title as the most outstanding player in women's college basketball. To cap it off, Clark broke Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's all-time collegiate basketball scoring record.

Clark shattered collegiate records and led her Hawkeyes to back-to-back NCAA title games. There is no doubt that Caitlin Clark is a skilled player who was welcomed into the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) in April 2024. However, as women's basketball legend Diana Taurasi analyzed, it is highly unlikely that she

will repeat her college dominance against WNBA talent.

Clark's basketball skills aside, the narrative surrounding her has only become more pernicious and widespread since her defeat in the national championship game last year. Disney, Fox, and Hearst executives smelled an opportunity.

Disney owns the ESPN sports media conglomerate. Fox has built its own sports media empire over the past decade. Hearst owns NBC, which has also built an extensive sports media network.

All of these channels, social media personalities, and talking heads were strangely united when it came to talking about Clark's greatness. In fact, that greatness was so great that it projected her into being the greatest women's basketball player of all time, the "GOAT."

The WNBA is filled with a history of talented players who have won championship titles in leagues on multiple continents.

Maya Moore, for example, is a four-time WNBA champion, a two-time Euroleague champion, and a three-time champion in the Women's Chinese Basketball Association. She has a WNBA scoring title and two Olympic gold medals.

There are dozens of players with accolades similar in stature to Moore. To name just a few: Lisa Leslie, Sue Bird, Candace Parker, Cheryl Miller, Tamika Catchings, and Diana Taurasi. Between these six names alone, there are countless national championships, Olympic medals, and individual awards.

Yet somehow, this 22-year-old from Iowa is unquestionably the "GOAT," though she has only now entered the WNBA as a player with the Indiana Fever and has yet to win championships or medals. Sports history is filled with college heroes who faded away in the professional leagues.

To be clear, this is not meant to be a hit piece against Caitlin Clark as a player. It is essential to separate Clark, the player, from Clark, the figure. Still, there is no doubt that Clark the figure's stature in the sports media landscape exposes a racist double standard in organized sports.

This disproportion between Clark's lack of professional achievement and her massive stature in the sports industrial complex exposes an agenda within the capitalist sports-media complex, an agenda to assert a "[great white hope](#)" narrative in response to continued Black excellence in college and professional basketball.

White supremacy is a system that has to be enforced at every turn and in every arena. Collegiate basketball is no different.

Reese: 'I haven't had peace'

That brings us back to Angel Reese. A year removed from LSU's triumph on the court against Clark's Iowa, Reese and her teammates still found themselves feeling under siege from the media and the broader college basketball industrial complex.

On the evening of April 1, the LSU women faced "great white hope" Caitlin Clark and her Hawkeyes in the Elite Eight round of the NCAA tournament, commonly called "March Madness." Iowa and Clark were victorious this time in a hard-fought 94-87 game.

Following her team's loss to Iowa, Angel Reese spoke of the hell she and her teammates have faced as punishment for being great: "I've been through so much. I've seen so much. I've been attacked so many times ... Death threats. I've been sexualized. I've been threatened - so many things, and I've stood strong every single time."

Reese continued, "I'm still a human. All this has happened since I won a national championship. I haven't had peace since then."

Describing this scene as heartbreaking does not even scratch the surface. All Angel Reese did was succeed and be unabashedly herself. White athletes are lionized for fierce competitiveness and dramatic gestures.

Black athletes face everything ranging from widespread scorn to outright death threats. Think about that. This young woman, age 22, has already faced a wave of racism reminiscent of the terrible attacks the Black community faced under the Jim Crow South.

Reese's revelation regarding the horrors of the past year comes on the heels of the [horrific racist attacks](#) on the University of Utah women's basketball team while in Idaho for the NCAA tournament. The threats were so severe that the team had to switch hotels.

The most unfortunate part of this saga is that it is now part of a long history of racist attacks on Black athletes for no other reason than to punish those athletes for being Black and successful. In 1947, when Jackie Robinson integrated baseball, he not only faced verbal abuse but [physical assault](#) from racist fellow players.

In 1974, as baseball legend and home run king Hank Aaron chased down Babe Ruth's record of 714, Aaron faced hundreds if not thousands of [death threats](#). If only it stopped there. As the 1974 season wore on, the FBI apprehended more than one Klan-aligned group of terrorists that had plans to assassinate Aaron. His only crime was being great.

Black athletes have been under siege in the United States for this long because the Black community has been under siege by racist capitalism since the first African people were brutally kidnapped from their homes in West Africa in the 15th century.

Anyone who considers themselves a progressive or an anti-racist has a responsibility

to stand up in defense of Angel Reese and all Black athletes who have and will come under attack simply for being themselves.

Credit for women's basketball growth

The racism in sports doesn't stop with violent attacks on individual athletes. The entire sports media narrative around Clark is steeped in pernicious racist logic.

Again, there is no doubt that Caitlin Clark is an excellent basketball player and has reached a special level of individual achievement in college athletics. However, she is not particularly unique in being a great basketball player.

In a [thoughtful article](#), Baltimore Black community writer and educator [D. Watkins](#) explored how the pioneers of organized women's basketball and the WNBA, many of whom are Black, have been left behind in the current landscape.

Hundreds of Black women have dedicated themselves over decades to building the WNBA from a dream into a reality and as an international brand. Yet, one wouldn't know that based on the rush of articles and news stories praising Caitlin Clark as the sole savior of the women's game.

And even where the sports industrial machine wasn't asserting Clark as the greatest of all time or "GOAT," they still pushed her narrative to the front of the sport. Young legends like Angel Reese and Kamila Cardoso have been lost in the shuffle, two players who have actually won championships.

Ahead of the WNBA draft, [ESPN](#) asserted in an April 15 article that "Caitlin Clark has been a singular force who has grown the women's game in ways no college player ever has before."

This is an unbelievable, to the point of being sensationalist, statement. To say that Clark definitively played a more significant role in growing the game of women's

basketball than forerunners like [Cheryl Miller](#) and [Sheryl Swoopes](#) is as inaccurate as it is racist.

It is truly unbelievable the lengths the mainstream capitalist sports establishment will go to to defend their “great white hope.” Even after Clark’s second straight championship loss, the [Indianapolis Star](#) published an article asserting that championships are meaningless when assessing Clark’s greatness.

This would be shocking news for athletes such as Baltimore Ravens superstar quarterback Lamar Jackson, who is [incessantly derided](#) for not having a Super Bowl championship, regardless of two MVP wins and dozens of record-shattering statistics. Or one could point to [Reggie Miller](#), an Indianapolis Pacers legend who is constantly analyzed in the context that he never won a championship despite being one of the best scorers in the history of the NBA.

As with everything else in racist U.S. society, the bar for Black people is much higher. Apparently, Caitlin Clark doesn’t need a championship for the country to recognize her utter greatness.

The sports media machine might not be done worshiping Clark and ignoring Black athletes, but all progressives must see through these various narratives around her and her competitors as what they are: racist propaganda aimed at reinforcing age-old double standards for Black athletes.

Stand with Angel Reese! Black Lives Matter! End racist attacks on Black athletes!



NATO's escalation in Ukraine: A recipe for direct war on Russia?

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Ukraine is preparing for French military instructors' arrival, reported [Bloomberg News](#) on May 28.

This announcement resulted from a high-level phone call between Ukraine's Commander in Chief Oleksandr Syrskyi, Defense Minister Rustem Umerov, and French Defense Minister Sebastien Lecornu.

"I've already signed the documents that will allow the first French instructors to visit our training centers soon and familiarize themselves with their infrastructure and staff," Syrskyi said on Telegram.

Earlier this year, French President Emmanuel Macron stated that "nothing should be ruled out" when asked about sending NATO troops to Ukraine. Lithuanian President Gitanas Nauseda has repeatedly expressed readiness to send professional

soldiers for training missions to Ukraine. In March, Czech President Petr Pavel said sending military trainers would be possible.

The [New York Times reported](#) earlier this month that NATO members are moving closer to sending instructors into Ukraine to train its troops.

Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr., the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that U.S./NATO military “trainers” will be sent to Ukraine, according to the Times. “We’ll get there eventually, over time.”

Mark Episkopos says in *Responsible Statecraft*: “Brown’s comments tacitly concede two realities that Western officials have been loath to acknowledge: the Ukrainian war effort is slowly crumbling and cannot be sustained without a steady escalation of Western involvement.

“Yet there is a third factor that should be of serious concern to U.S. and European leaders: sending NATO personnel into Ukraine ... [will] embroil NATO states, including the U.S., in a shooting war with Russian forces.”

First trainers, then combat troops

Yes, sending so-called military trainers is, in fact, an aggressive escalation. Imperialist military wars can start with “military trainers.” During the First Indochina War (1946-1954), French military trainers in Vietnam began an escalation of the imperialist war on Vietnam, eventually leading to the deployment of French combat troops. This eventually led to U.S. involvement, first with trainers, then followed by tens of thousands of combat troops.

On May 14, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in an unannounced visit to Kiev, vowed Washington would take “tangible steps” to ensure Ukraine’s addition to the NATO military alliance, [RFE/RL reported](#).

Of course, NATO is already deeply involved in Ukraine, supplying weapons and training to the Ukrainian military.

On May 20, a bipartisan group of U.S. lawmakers sent [a letter to Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin](#) urging him to authorize the use of U.S.-supplied long-range weapons to strike deep within Russian territory. The letter reflects Congress' growing move to escalate U.S. military operations in Ukraine, including expansion beyond Ukraine's borders into Russia.

The letter, authored by House Intelligence Committee Chairman Michael Turner and other members of Congress, requests authorization for the use of U.S. weapons against strategic targets inside Russia and calls on the Defense Department to provide training for more Ukrainian pilots on operating F-16 fighter jets.

2014 coup regime is no democracy

The Ukraine regime was imposed in February 2014 by a U.S.-backed coup that overthrew the elected government. The far-right regime represents Western imperialist interests, local oligarchs and neo-Nazis. The residents of Ukraine's Donetsk and Lugansk regions did not recognize the new regime. In April 2014, in the Donbass mining region, the autonomous Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (DPR and LPR) were declared, and the Minsk Accords laid out the process for their recognition.

The Kiev regime never implemented the Minsk Accords and began military operations against Donetsk and Luhansk. Bombing and air raids targeted the civilian population, killing at least 15,000. Kiev massed an occupation army in the region. In February 2022, the DPR and LPR asked Russia for aid. That's when Russia began its Special Military Operation, sending troops into DPR and LPR to secure their territorial integrity.

The Kiev regime declared martial law in 2022. All elections have been canceled. Elections for the Ukrainian parliament, where all opposition parties have been removed, were canceled. Presidential elections were scheduled for March 2024 but were canceled. Volodymyr Zelensky said, "Now is not the time for elections."

There is no popular support for Zelensky, the regime, or its war. The Ukrainian population is being wiped out. At the start of 2022, Ukraine's population was estimated to be around 42 million. By mid-2023, estimates suggest the population in Kiev-controlled areas has declined to as low as 28 million. Millions of Ukrainians have fled the country, and the birth rate has plummeted to a historic low in the last two years, reaching levels unseen in the past 300 years.



Filipino community stages sit-in for fast food workers' rights

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, May 27, 2024

Contact: Patrick M., J4JW Community Support Network, (240) 242-9729, j4jw.wheaton@gmail.com

WHEATON, MARYLAND — During the holiday lunch rush on Monday, the Wheaton Jollibee floor grew to standing-room only as crew members called out orders named “Holiday Pay” and “Fair Wages” to cheers. In a Memorial Day “dine-in” coordinated by the Justice 4 Jollibee Workers Community Support Network, Filipinos and allies across the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region sought to amplify workers’ demands for equitable pay. Around 60 community members attended, including the family members of Jollibee crew and local Starbucks workers, despite management’s attempts to quell the event.

In January, [Wheaton Jollibee workers came forward with a public statement](#), sharing that their request for double pay on holidays has not been met by management. Since its opening in 2021, the restaurant serves customers year-round, including Thanksgiving and Christmas, but are not further compensated on these days. On May 1, the Community Support Network hosted a flyering event to amplify workers’ demands.

Instead of using their actual names for lunch orders, supporters opted to name their orders “holiday pay” and other labor-related slogans. Workers announcing these orders resulted in celebrations from customers and smiles on crew members’ faces. Alongside these calls, community members also flyered throughout the store about the Wheaton Jollibee workers’ campaign and placed a tip jar on the cashier counter. The event was inspired by the [solidarity “sip-ins” supporting Starbucks baristas](#) in their fight to unionize, according to Community Support Network organizers.

Restaurant management attempted to deter the dine-in by taking the tip jar away within the first 30 minutes and calling mall security. They further tried to mandate

the cashiers to not take “Holiday Pay” as a name, but afternoon customers were creative, pivoting their orders to names like “Holly” or “Justice.”

The sit-in occurred while wait times peaked up to an hour as workers cooked and packed both in-person and online orders. These conditions exemplify the workers’ need to be compensated fairly on the busiest days of the year.

This holiday pay campaign is inspired by [a similar campaign in New Jersey](#), where Jollibee workers won reinstatement, back pay and a public apology after being illegally fired last year. The Wheaton location is one of thousands of restaurants that are part of the multinational Jollibee Foods Corporation, which earned [over \\$4.2 billion USD in revenue in 2023](#).

Link to press kit [here](#). Please credit material to the Justice 4 Jollibee Workers Community Support Network. More photos and videos available upon request.



People's Conference for Palestine closes with a pledge to mobilize against Rafah invasion

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The conference concluded with a commitment to intensify ending the genocide in Gaza and igniting a summer of struggle for Palestine

After three days of idea exchange and relationship building, the People's Conference for Palestine ended with a bold call to mobilize: surround the White House on June 8 in protest of Israel's ongoing offensive against Rafah.

"Biden said he had a red line, remember the red line? He said, if Netanyahu dares go into Rafah, that's a red line, we the United States, will stop sending weapons to Israel," said Brian Becker, executive director of the ANSWER Coalition, said during the plenary session entitled "How Do Movements Achieve Transformation?"

"Israel went ahead and invaded Rafah, and what did Biden do? He continued to send the bombs and the missiles to carry out the massacre in Rafah and throughout Gaza. Biden's red line is a lie!" Becker declared.

Becker announced that on June 8, a date picked to mark the 57th anniversary of the s-called Six-Day War, "we are going to be surrounding the White House with tens of thousands of people dressed in red, surrounding the White House and letting Biden know, and letting the world know, and letting Palestine know, that we will be the red

line to stop the massacre in Gaza.”

The last day of the conference unfolded as Israel bombed hundreds of forcibly displaced Palestinians sheltering in tents in Rafah, martyring dozens of people. Horrific images and videos spread around the world of sheltering families burning alive. Rafah currently contains millions of Palestinians displaced by the ongoing Israeli genocide in Gaza.

As the horrific news unfolded, Mohammed Nabulsi, leader in the Palestinian Youth Movement, denounced the US government’s complicity in the genocide of the Palestinian people.

Nabulsi denounced “those who send humanitarian aid simultaneously as they send bombs.” Biden has made promises of aid to Gaza through the building of a temporary pier for the delivery of humanitarian goods.

“They think they can scare us with Trump... you know who was fighting during those four years of Trump’s administration? We were!” Nabulsi continued. “They say they want to save democracy, we want to save our people. To hell with their democracy.”

From May 24 to May 26, conference attendees from all sectors of the movement for Palestine met in Detroit, Michigan for the People’s Conference for Palestine, creating a space to build the movement for Palestine in [every corner of society](#). Not once did the thousands of attendees, representing hundreds of organizations participating in the global Palestine solidarity movement, forget that first and foremost, they are organizers of masses of people.

Also in the plenary session entitled “How Do Movements Achieve Transformation,” historian and journalist Vijay Prashad outlined the significance of maintaining the struggle following the height of student Gaza Solidarity Encampments, many of which have by now been brutally suppressed by police. According to Prashad,

university administrators might assume that “by the end of the spring semester, as is normal, things will taper down, students will go home in the summer, when they come back in the fall semester, they’ll forget what they did in the spring. It’s our responsibility to be the bridge for those students from the spring semester into the fall semester.”

“It’s our responsibility to deepen and carry on the kind of movements and things you’ve already been doing. It’s not what you should do, it’s what you have to do more.”

Life from a life sentence

Sana’ Daqqah, activist, journalist, and the wife of the martyred Palestinian prisoner Walid Daqqah, joined the conference program for the second time, following her [address](#) on May 25. Sana’ was part of a special plenary session on the Palestinian prisoners’ movement.

The movement for political prisoners is a key part of Palestinian political life. Before October 7, 2023, Israel was holding [5,200 Palestinian political prisoners](#) in its jails. This included 170 children and 1,264 administrative detainees held without trial or charge. The struggle to fight for the freedom of these thousands of prisoners is a demand that inspires people’s movements globally, including in the United States, where freedom fighters, principally those involved in the Black liberation movement, have been held as political prisoners for decades. Today it is estimated that over 8,000 Palestinians are being held in Israeli prisons.

“In the 60s the prisoners were placed in cells without the bare necessities for life. In this way, the occupation tried to bury the youth, the thousands of youth that entered into the prisons. But instead the exact opposite happened and the resistance emerged within the prisoners’ movement in the 70s through hunger strikes,” Sana’ Daqqah outlined. “Into the late 80s and 90s, the prisoners’ movement played a

critical role during the first Intifada. In fact, much of the First Intifada was administered from within the prisons themselves.”

“We have to be proud of being part of a people that brings out a prisoner movement like this and creates heroes and fighters like ours,” Daqqah affirmed. “The prisoners decided to create life from a life sentence.”

Palestine and internationalism

Palestine as a cause has ignited the support of people’s movements and governments across the world, a level of international solidarity that was reflected in the plenary session entitled “Palestine and Internationalism.” A key speaker was Mandla Radebe, associate professor in the University of Johannesburg, and Chairperson of the South African Communist Party in Gauteng province.

Radebe outlined that because of the shared struggle between the South African and Palestinian people against apartheid, “South Africa’s government felt strongly that we should take legal proceedings to the [ICJ](#).”

“We as South Africans have a unique perspective of having lived in almost similar experiences with the people of Palestine. What was happening at the ICJ, it was in a sense a cathartic moment for South Africans, many ordinary South Africans who experienced first hand the oppressive apartheid policies.”

“International solidarity [is] one of the pillars of the struggle that helped us to defeat apartheid in South Africa,” Radebe continued.

Mask Off Maersk

Fitting the theme of drawing on the wellspring of energy at the conference for mass mobilization, the Palestinian Youth Movement, one of the key conveners of the conference, announced a new transnational campaign entitled, “Mask Off Maersk”

at the “Arms Embargo Now!” panel.

Mask Off Maersk aims to target one of the largest shipping companies in the world, while [68%](#) of Israel’s weapons are transported from the US. “Since October 7, we know that Maersk has shipped the most weapons to Israel out of any of the logistics companies,” said Aisha Mansour, an organizer with the Palestinian Youth Movement. PYM aims to utilize multiple sectors of society to target Maersk in this new campaign, including labor, media, and on college campuses. Organizers are demanding that Maersk cut ties with Israel. “We want to develop a multi-pronged and multi-regional strategy to pressure Maersk,” outlined Celine Qussiny of the Palestinian Youth Movement. “Since weapons are not the entirety of their business we believe this is winnable.”

Source: [Peoples Dispatch](#)



Los Angeles, June 22: Demonstrate

Against Death Merchants

written by Struggle - La Lucha
May 31, 2024

SAVE THE DATE!

DEMONSTRATE AGAINST DEATH MERCHANTS
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Jun 22, 2pm 1950 E Imperial Hwy, El Segundo

Abolish the Military Industrial Complex!

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UAW strike strengthens Gaza solidarity movement, labor joins fight against genocide

written by Struggle - La Lucha
May 31, 2024

May 24 — As the bloody Zionist/White House genocide against the people of Gaza continues, so do protests in solidarity with Palestine.

Since mid-April, university students, faculty, and staff across the U.S. and internationally have set up encampments, occupied buildings, and captured the attention of corporate media and social media alike.

Cops, private security companies, Zionist thugs, and other right-wing groups have been unleashed at Columbia University, at UCLA, and at many other colleges to try to end the encampments and demonstrations. But protestors have repeatedly regrouped.

Over the weeks, faculty and other college staff, as well as community members, have come out in support. Now, one of the United Auto Workers locals that represents graduate students at University of California (UC) campuses has initiated a series of “stand-up strikes.”

The power of 48,000 graduate students, teaching assistants, and researchers organized in UAW Local 4811 has strengthened the protest movement through rolling political strikes modeled after the historic victories against the big three automakers in 2023.

The series of actions is in response to the violence against the UC encampments. Two thousand striking UAW workers walked picket lines at UC Santa Cruz beginning on May 20, and the strike will expand to UCLA and UC Davis on May 28.

Local 4811’s potent intervention in the student Gaza solidarity campaign now has UC administrators grasping at straws. The main issue for the strikers is workplace safety. No one could argue with credibility that standing by while fascists attacked union members didn’t compromise the safety of these unionized workers.

Twenty-five students were sent to the emergency room while police stood by during the five-hour assault on April 30. Hoping to get an injunction, UC filed unfair labor practice charges with California’s Public Employment Relations Board. But yesterday, May 23, the charges were rejected. There will be no injunction against the strike.

This foray into the fight against the Biden/Netanyahu genocide isn’t the first by organized labor. The Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions called for support soon after the assault on Gaza began, and hundreds of union locals have responded.

UAW, United Electrical Workers (UE), American Postal Workers Union, American

Federation of Teachers, and many others have released statements calling for a ceasefire or divestment. Smaller locals have organized teach-ins in support of Palestine, and rank-and-file efforts within some unions are pushing the leadership in those locals that haven't spoken up to do so.

Weapons to Israel blocked at Oakland dock

In the first actual workplace union action to defend Gaza, on January 14, hundreds of unionists from the International Longshore and Warehouse Union joined by activists from the Arab Resource and Organizing Center (AROC) set up a picket line when a ship was scheduled to pick up weapons bound for Israel. Throughout the day, 200 dock workers from ILWU local 10 refused to cross the picket line to load the weapons onto the ship. Labor publications around the world reported the action at the Port of Oakland.

The January port action, the varied calls for a ceasefire or divestment by union locals, and the current UAW strike add a great deal of strength to the movement against the genocide in Gaza.

College administrations and mayors of major cities continue to unleash police and fascist attacks but are failing to achieve their goal of crushing the movement. New encampments and street demonstrations, recent disruptions of Genocide Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and heightened calls for disinvestment from anything that benefits the Zionist state are all testament to the determination of hundreds of thousands of students, community organizations and unionized workers.

The unionized labor element is not only a burst of strength in the immediate sense but also hints at the potential of a broad anti-imperialist movement. Consciousness about the role of the White House and Congress is growing as the U.S. military-industrial complex - the death merchants of imperialism - continues to build all of

the weapons that are adding to the death toll.

A report in the publication of the All India Central Council of Trade Unions about the role of U.S. unions against the genocide quoted Gerry Scoppettuolo of Pride at Work Eastern Massachusetts and Executive Board member of the Greater Boston Labor Council, who said, “Organized labor in the U.S. has not been as united in this way since the 1980s when a majority of labor opposed the Reagan/Kissinger support of death squads in Honduras, fascist national police in El Salvador, and the Contras in Nicaragua.”

A January article [posted to Prismreports.org](https://prismreports.org) quoted several unionists with Labor for Palestine, a network of activists across the spectrum of union locals in the U.S. Mary Jirmanus Saba of UAW Local 2865, which represents UC graduate workers said that activists in UAW are “looking for ways to support UAW workers in weapons plants and trying to disrupt those supply chains.”

Zachary Valdez of UAW Local 2110 in New York seconded Saba’s remarks when he said, “The labor movement has the power to disrupt supply chains. The UAW is uniquely placed within this system of oppression because ... UAW members are involved in the creation of weapons that are being sent to Israel and bombs that are being dropped on Gaza.”

Every victory in this struggle against genocide serves to isolate and expose the Zionist settler project and the U.S. imperialist war machine. Even just the mention of the power that workers hold over the means of production – in particular, the production of weapons being used in the genocide is nipping at the Achilles Heel of capitalism.

All out solidarity with Palestine! End the occupation!



Tribunal finds U.S. and Philippine leaders guilty of war crimes

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Following a hearing on May 17-18, the [International People's Tribunal on War Crimes in the Philippines](https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2024/05/) found Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., former President Rodrigo Duterte, and U.S. President Joe Biden guilty of war crimes and violations of international humanitarian law against the Filipino people.

The tribunal, convened in Brussels by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers and Friends of the Filipino People in Struggle, included jurors such as Lennox Hinds, Emeritus Professor of Law at Rutgers University and former legal counsel for Nelson Mandela; Suzanne Adely, President of the National Lawyers Guild (U.S.); Severine De Laveleye, member of the Chamber of Representatives of Belgium; Julen Arzuaga Gumuzio, member of the Basque Parliament; and Archbishop Joris Vercammen, former member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches.

They heard testimonies from 15 witnesses detailing extensive human rights abuses, including torture, extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, and attacks on Indigenous communities defending their ancestral lands from corporate plunder.

The tribunal concluded that the defendants committed numerous war crimes, including willful killing, forced displacement, torture, and harassment. They emphasized the violent repression by the Philippine government, supported by the U.S., against the Filipino people.

Julie de Lima, chairperson of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) peace panel, highlighted the disciplined nature of the New People's Army (NPA) in its fight for Philippine national liberation and self-determination and its adherence to international humanitarian law, reports [Marjorie Cohn in Truthout](#). The tribunal also found that the Philippine government's counterinsurgency operations led to numerous civilian deaths and other human rights violations.

Witnesses described several specific cases of atrocities committed by the Philippine military and police, including the killing of activists, Indigenous leaders, and a member of the NPA. The jurors determined that the Philippine armed forces carried out indiscriminate attacks and forced the displacement of over 500,000 people.

The tribunal found that the U.S. government is complicit in these human rights violations by providing substantial military aid, training, and support to the Philippine government, a "puppet government of the United States."

De Lima said that the U.S. is using the Philippines as a pawn in its strategy to maintain hegemony in the region, designating the Philippines a major non-NATO ally, a "partner" in its New Cold War aimed at "containing" China.

