

Syria: U.S., Israel, and Turkey behind terrorist takeover

written by Struggle - La Lucha
December 15, 2024



Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) fighters train in Idlib Province, Syria. In 2018, the U.S. State Department designated HTS as a terrorist organization and al-Qaida. Today Washington says the organization is bringing “democracy” to Syria.

Both corporate Western media and so-called progressive media have been positively giddy with celebration in the wake of the U.S. and Turkish-backed terrorist takeover of what was formerly the Syrian Arab Republic.

Articles and statements have flooded different outlets and social media profiles with statements congratulating the Syrian people on their victory over the “dictator”

Bashar Al-Assad. According to these news corporations and non-profit organizations, Syria will now finally be “free.”

These assertions are strange in the face of current events that are actively playing out in Syria. Since the Syrian Arab Republic officially fell and former President Assad fled on Dec. 9, the country has further devolved into chaos and fire.

Immediately after Hay’at Tahir al-Sham (HTS) troops entered Damascus, Zionist occupation forces unleashed the largest offensive in their history. Syria was the target of that offensive. Zionist air forces and artillery struck Syria [480 times](#) in less than 48 hours, destroying the entire Syrian military and navy. The Zionists faced no opposition from HTS forces.

Compounding the crisis, HTS and their allies have unleashed a bloody campaign against Syria’s religious and ethnic minorities. Fearing for their lives, thousands of Shia Alewives, [Syrian Christians](#), and Syrian Kurds have fled towards the Lebanese border seeking refuge. This refugee crisis mounts as reports across Syria confirm that HTS is summarily [executing](#) members of various ethnic and religious minority communities, as well as anyone associated with the Syrian Arab Army. No trials. No due process. Just blood.

This is supposedly the freedom Syria now has due to the fall of the Syrian Arab Republic and its longtime leader, Bashar Al-Assad.

All of this destruction and violence, which clearly benefits the U.S. and Israel, is supposedly justified because Assad was a “Dictator” and a “Tyrant.” The justification of imperialist regime change through allegations of dictatorship and tyranny is not new.

In 1990, Marxist analyst Sam Marcy wrote an article observing that these sorts of allegations were classic imperialist tactics aimed at breaking movements that would

resist the U.S. military. In this article, named ["A new turn in the world struggle: U.S. intervention in the Middle East,"](#) Marcy said:

"Vilification of Third World leaders opposed to U.S. intervention in their respective countries is not a new phenomenon in U.S. politics. But it reaches absolutely absurd heights when it comes to the Arab people.

"In the contemporary era, Col. Muammar Qaddafi of Libya and Saddam Hussein of Iraq have shared the kind of vilification that Nasser experienced. At present, the imperialist press, especially in the U.S., seems to have pulled out all stops in slander, deceit and vilification in the case of Saddam Hussein - criminal, terrorist, bum, tyrant, madman, etc., etc. ad nauseam."

Marcy goes on to point out the hypocrisy of the United States claiming the moral high ground in any situation on issues of human rights and territorial expansion. As Marcy notes, the entirety of the United States was built on the genocide of Indigenous peoples.

Nonetheless, Marcy notes several examples of how U.S. propaganda is used to undermine any leader in the Global South who would dare to resist their influence or their military sphere of control.

Just like with Saddam Hussein, the U.S. imperialist propaganda machine has churned for over a decade using any social problem inherent in a capitalist society like Syria as evidence that Bashar Al-Assad was a "criminal, terrorist, bum, tyrant madman, etc. etc. ad nauseam." This is a tactic the imperialists use again and again to justify the destruction of entire societies, from Iraq to Libya and now to Syria. All of this is with the aim of imperialist expansion throughout the Middle East and crushing any remaining resistance.

In the same article, Marcy prognosticated what is now unfolding across the Middle

East,

“The Arab people are not the only ones menaced by imperialism in the Middle East. The effort of the U.S. to make the Mediterranean Sea a U.S. lake has put the Middle East in danger of military intervention for many years now. No country there is safe. Few are free either from U.S. domination or its terror.

“The first duty of the progressive and working-class movement in the U.S. is to call for immediate withdrawal of U.S. warships, troops and planes from the entire Middle East area. As has been pointed out again and again, the terms of the NATO treaty are supposed to be effective only for the North Atlantic states in the North Atlantic. Europeans and the U.S. have no business under that treaty of even being in the Mediterranean.”

Not only has Marcy’s observation regarding U.S. military policy borne out in exponential horror since these words were written, but his call to the progressive and working-class movement is more important than ever.

In the 34 years since Marcy wrote his article, the U.S. invaded Iraq, NATO bombing assisted a terrorist takeover of Libya, and now a U.S.-enabled terrorist takeover has plunged Syria into darkness.

Now, more than ever, the entire movement needs to heed Marcy’s words and see the fall of Syria for what it truly is: another U.S. imperialist hostile takeover of a country that would dare resist its grasp of exploitation.



From the Jena 6 to immigrant rights: Fight for others as you'd fight for yourself

written by Struggle - La Lucha
December 15, 2024



This December marks 18 years since the start of the case of the Jena 6 — Robert Bailey, Mychal Bell, Carwin Jones, Bryant Purvis, Jesse Ray Beard, and Theo Shaw.

These six Black teenagers from the town of Jena, Louisiana, were initially charged with attempted second-degree murder of a white classmate after a series of white supremacist events at their high school. Following mass resistance, their charges were reduced to still-serious aggravated battery and conspiracy to commit aggravated battery. The movement ultimately got all charges against the six dropped to misdemeanor battery. All were free by 2009.

Because of the racism on display in the operations of the legal system, this case sparked one of the biggest civil rights protest movements in the U.S. since the

1960s. Activists marched in cities across the country, including 60,000 in Jena itself. Below is part four of a recent interview on the legacy of Jena with Larry Hales, a Black social worker who participated in the Jena 6 solidarity movement in Denver and other cities. We have also [republished three pieces Hales wrote](#) on the Jena 6 in 2007-08. You can read parts [one](#), [two](#), and [three](#) here.

Gregory E. Williams: Is there anything you'd like to add before we wrap up?

Larry Hales: I left out something when I was talking about workers and families. Aside from that question, "What are you really upset about?" [editor's note: from earlier in the conversation, referring to anti-immigrant, anti-homeless sentiment, etc.] We need to realize that these things aren't happening in a vacuum. When we talk about conditions – or we're seeing a phenomenon that we're having a hard time understanding why it's happening or what the impact is going to be on us – these things did not come out of a vacuum. It's systemic. And I think people either don't know, or they haven't thought about it because there isn't enough time often. Or sometimes people just don't care and you can't always really do that much about that.

But my father, when he left and said to my mom, "I'm not coming back here," he meant because at that point in history, living in Mississippi was very stifling. This was at the end of the Great Migration, the last Great Migration. There were no opportunities, and you were taking your life in your hands even just going to a store. It felt unsafe to be in Mississippi and to be Black because you didn't know what somebody was going to do, how to respond, and you didn't know how you were going to make your livelihood. And opportunities were in the North to work in the factories.

One of the first books I read when I became a socialist was the ["Blast Furnace Brothers"](#) by Vince Copeland. And I used to give that book away as a gift to people. I

said, whether you know a lot about politics or you know very little about politics, this is going to have a profound effect on you.

It's a story about when he was working with Black workers who wanted to be in the repair gang because all the Black workers worked in the blast furnace. And the white workers who were in repair gangs did not want a Black person in the repair gang. In fact, Black people weren't allowed to be in a repair gang. And the person who I'm pretty sure was Vinnie supported that worker getting in a repair gang. And I think Vinnie was ultimately fired and there was a wildcat strike. And it wasn't expected that the Black workers would go on strike for a white worker, but they did. And they were just waiting for someone to tell them.

Part of the backdrop is that, because of the migration that was happening, the white workers in the factories were anxious that these Black workers from the South were taking something away from them. And I think a lot of people fed on that anxiety and it turned into something racist. But we can talk to that anxiety, and we can explain to people that this is happening for a reason. And when it comes to immigrant workers today, they're leaving their homes in large part because of what has been done to them by the U.S.

Not long ago, someone told me a very basic way to talk to workers about this. They said if you're concerned about losing your job because someone is forced and willing to take less, then you fight for that person to get as much as you can. Fight for them to have what you want for yourself. And once you do that, then the bosses have no one left to super-exploit. And that's why you fight for other oppressed workers. Because we want to create a world where you're not the next target. I had left that out earlier, but I think it was important to say. That's part of that explanation for people who have a hard time understanding what's happening with immigrant workers, and they're turned against immigrant workers, and they start taking up these racist lines like they're eating your cats, and they're eating your geese, and

stupid shit like that. It doesn't start at the nonsense about eating cats. It starts with the conditions created by capitalism. And we have to talk about those conditions created by capitalism, but also why people would risk everything to come into a country that has done so much harm to them.

GEW: Right, we can flip that script and explain to people that we have the same enemy at the end of the day. Whether we're born here or we're immigrants, our enemy is the same capitalist class – the same imperialist ruling class. In *this* country, it's the capitalists who are making it to where you can't find affordable housing. But they're also the ones that destroyed the economies of Honduras and Haiti and Venezuela. And that's why immigrants are coming here. So wouldn't it make more sense for us to join with them and fight the ones who are actually screwing us over?

LH: I try to engage with my daughters politically. You know, they're pro-Palestinian. One used to draw all these watermelons for Palestine. And I remember my other daughter said to me once after George Floyd was killed, "Daddy, are the cops going to kill you?" That was 2020, so she was like seven then.

Lallan Schoenstein: That must have been so terrifying for her. Yeah, and it's hard to answer the question. You don't want to lie. You don't want to tell the whole truth, either.

LH: I said something to the effect that we want a society where we don't have to worry about that. So she asked me, "Daddy, is race a real thing?" She's seven.

I said race changes. The whole idea that there's this thing of race that is always *this*, always *this*, I was like, that's not true. Irish people used to be thought of as a different race from the British. Italians used to be thought of as a different race from the so-called nativists in the United States.

I was like, so it's not a real thing, it shifts and changes based on what people in power need it to be. As for our idea of race and the Black race, I was like, there was a little event called Bacon's Rebellion a long time ago. [a 1676-77 armed rebellion in the Virginia colony] There were white indentured servants, which is a form of slavery where people sell themselves for passage to the colony. And there were Black people who were captured. And there was a commonality in that shared circumstance.

And that ended at a certain point, and then race became a thing that was written into law. Not necessarily as in Black and white, but the fact that if you were Black and you were born into slavery, you would exist in slavery. And there was no way to get out of it. There was no period of time in which you ceased to be a slave like there were for indentured servants. You were just a slave. You were enslaved, I should say, not a slave. So I said to my daughter, we want to fight for a world where there's no idea of a white person, of whiteness. I was like, and Blackness is the opposite of whiteness and how race is viewed in our society.

And the pride that we hold in Blackness is different from the pride that a white person holds in whiteness. That pride in whiteness is a pride in what your whiteness *gets* you. The pride in Blackness is a pride in the *resistance* of that Blackness and the struggle against whiteness. I said eventually they will both cease to exist. It's not real and at the same time it is real. It's only real because of history, but it's not scientific otherwise.



Was South Korea's coup an attempt to restart the Korean War?

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Opposition lawmakers are alleging the full scope of President Yoon's coup involved a months-long plot to trigger a "limited war" with North Korea

As South Korea's political crisis continues following President Yoon's failed attempt to declare martial law on December 3, new details are emerging in the country's legislature that suggest the full scope of Yoon's coup plot may have included plans to trigger a "limited war" with North Korea. Planning documents circulated among accomplices prior to the martial law order also demonstrate that Yoon and former Defense Minister Kim Yong-hyun looked to past martial law orders as precedents, including those issued prior to the Gwangju Massacre and the Jeju Massacre.

A possible timeline of how Yoon's coup plans interacted with escalations against North Korea has begun to emerge. Yoon's tenure in office has been characterized by unbridled aggression against Pyongyang, and a cozy military relationship with Washington and Tokyo that sent tensions soaring throughout Northeast Asia. It is now known that Yoon's coup plans began in July of 2023.

Upon coming into office in 2022, Yoon adopted a military policy towards North Korea known as the Kill Chain Doctrine, which advocates the use of preemptive strikes in the event of suspected attacks. Over the next two years, the rate and magnitude of joint military exercises with the US exploded; over 200 days of US-ROK war games were held in Korea in 2023, and in August of this year the two countries held their first joint nuclear tabletop exercise to rehearse plans for a nuclear strike on the peninsula. Consequently, inter-Korean relations have entered a historic nadir. In December 2023, North Korea took the unprecedented step of renouncing its policy of peaceful reunification.

From garbage war to “limited war”

Following this historic falling out between the two Korean governments, tensions spiked along the de facto land and sea borders of the divided peninsula. One of the more iconic signs of the deteriorating relationship have come in the form of garbage-laden balloons landing in South Korea from the north. For decades, Pyongyang tolerated US-funded NGOs in the south sending propaganda balloons across the DMZ. The fleets of garbage balloons that North Korea began to fly south this spring marked an end to this policy of patience.

In Seoul, the garbage balloons triggered a series of escalatory actions over the course of the summer. But in October, a [new line](#) was crossed. For the first time, North Korea reported a series of drone incursions into its territory—an allegation which South Korea's Defense Ministry stated it could not confirm at the time. The

incident led to Pyongyang detonating roads and bridges at the DMZ in an attempt to forestall potential invasion. Now, lawmakers are alleging the drone incursion may have been part of a months-long effort to trigger a military response from North Korea that would end in a “limited war.”

On Sunday, December 8, a military container used to house drones and launchers caught fire. The next day, Democratic Party lawmaker Park Beom-gye [announced](#) he had received a tip from a military whistleblower alleging South Korea’s armed forces were responsible for the drone incursion in October. On December 10, Kim Yong-dae, head of Drone Operations Command, submitted to questioning by parliament. He explained to lawmaker Kim Byung-joo that the fire was caused by a short circuit. However, when Kim Byung-joo inquired who ordered Drone Operations Command to send a drone to Pyongyang, Kim Yong-dae replied, “I cannot confirm that.” Kim Yong-dae provided an [identical answer](#) to the lawmaker’s follow-up question inquiring where the drones had been launched from. This prompted Kim Byung-Joo to [accuse](#) the military of setting the fire in order to destroy evidence of the drone incursion.

Suspensions of a plot to restart the Korean War have also been raised by lawmaker Lee Ki-heon, who reported on [December 7](#) to the National Assembly that former Defense Minister Kim Yong-hyun attempted to order a direct strike on North Korea in order to “hit the origin of the garbage balloons” on November 28, just a week prior to the coup attempt on December 3. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have denied such an order was given, and reiterated the military’s position that a strike in retaliation for the garbage balloons would only be authorized in the event that they caused injury or death.

Meanwhile, correctional officials reported that Defense Minister Kim, who was [detained](#) on Sunday, December 8 , attempted suicide in custody on the evening of December 10. He is in stable condition and remains in detention awaiting an

expected indictment.

While lawmakers allege that Yoon's objective was to foment a "limited war," any attack by either Korean government on each other's de facto territory could rapidly escalate to a conflict involving the US, Russia, and China. All three of these countries have strategic military agreements on the peninsula.

A massacre in the making?

Other emerging details have demonstrated premeditated plans for repression in Yoon's coup. Lawmaker Choo Mi-ae has circulated [planning documents](#) from the martial law order that reference the infamous massacres that put down popular uprisings in Jeju and Gwangju.

From 1948 to 1949, South Korean soldiers, police, and paramilitaries slaughtered between 30,000 and 60,000 people in Jeju, and burned 70% of the island's villages as part of a scorched earth campaign conducted in response to a local armed insurgency against US occupation, and the impending 1948 election to establish the Republic of Korea, which was opposed by a majority of Koreans at the time. The [counterinsurgency war in Jeju](#) was prosecuted with the knowledge, support, and oversight of the US military.

In Gwangju, paratroopers acting under the orders of then-dictator Chun Doo Hwan killed up to 2,000 residents of the city, and engaged in a campaign of mass torture and rape. The incident occurred after Chun's declaration of martial law on May 17, 1980, prompting students and workers in the city to rebel against the military and establish a people's government that lasted for 9 days and resembled the Paris Commune. Once again, US support and foreknowledge was critical to enabling the massacre. President Jimmy Carter [directed the Pentagon](#) to assist Chun; South Korean paratroopers were permitted to be transferred from the DMZ, and an aircraft carrier and reconnaissance planes were deployed to the area.

Evidence of Yoon's plans for repression go beyond historical citation. Choo Mi-ae has further revealed plans to [secure hospitals](#) in the early phases of the martial law order, a sign that she claims indicates preparations for acts of mass violence. Several high-ranking military and police officials have attested to receiving personal orders from President Yoon to arrest key political figures, including opposition leader Lee Jae Myung. In an exclusive interview with [JTBC News](#), a Special Forces Officer revealed that second-day plans for the martial law order included the deployment of South Korea's 7th and 13th Airborne Brigades to Seoul.

Allegations of a wider war plot

Further testimony at the National Assembly suggests a grander plan for war than the "limited war" theory outlined above.

Citing anonymous military sources, lawmaker Kim Byung-joo, a former four-star general, Kim [told fellow lawmakers on December 10](#) that 20 members of the Special Forces' Headquarters Intelligence Detachment (HID) unit "were on standby at a location in Seoul" on the night of the martial law order. Kim claims the HID unit would have been mobilized to the National Assembly to arrest lawmakers, and questions whether they would have killed those who resisted, possibly while wearing [fake North Korean uniforms](#). The HID unit is normally deployed to the DMZ and is tasked with operations in North Korea, including sabotage, kidnappings, and assassinations. Kim has also said that the HID unit's [second-day orders](#) were to cause disturbances at the National Election Commission, saying, "they were not a simple arrest team." Kim is calling for further investigation.

On December 13, influential independent journalist Kim Eo-jun appeared before the National Assembly with a [bombshell claim](#). According to Kim, whose studio was [targeted by the military](#) in the early hours of the coup attempt, a source from "the embassy of an allied country" told him Yoon [planned to assassinate](#) Han Dong-Hoon,

the leader of the president's ruling party, on the night of the martial law order.

Kim Eo-jun claimed Special Forces in North Korean uniform were to act as an "assassination squad" undertaking the following plot: "First, Han Dong-hoon is to be assassinated during transportation after his arrest. Second, attack the arrest unit escorting Cho Kuk, Yang Jeong-cheol and myself, pretending to rescue them. Third, North Korean military uniforms will be buried at a specific location. Fourth, after some time, the uniforms will be discovered, and the incident will be attributed to North Korea."

Cho Kuk is an anti-Yoon politician who leads the minority Rebuilding Korea Party, and Yang Jeong-cheol is an influential former aide of former President Moon Jae-in.

Kim Eo-jun also said he received tips that Yoon planned to "kill American soldiers to induce the US to bomb North Korea," and that a biochemical terror attack had also been under consideration. Yoon would have thereby manufactured a situation from which he could emerge as the "reunification president" who successfully ended Korea's division by means of conquest.

Kim Eo-jun acknowledged the shocking nature of his claims, describing it as an "absurd story," and clarifying, "I have not confirmed all the facts." Journalist Kim further alleged that the First Lady, Kim Gun-hee, had also made contact with an OB (Old Boy, term for retired intelligence agent). Though he could not confirm the content of the call, journalist Kim raised the matter before the National Assembly out of consideration "that her husband is the Commander-in-Chief, so if there is even the slightest possibility these calls are related to disturbing public order, no risks should be taken." Journalist Kim called on the National Assembly to restrict the First Lady's communications.

The Democratic Party has vowed to investigate further, while the ruling People's Power Party floor leader Kwon Sung-dong dismissed the testimony as "fake news."

The US Embassy in South Korea denied that it had provided information to Kim Eo-jun, clarifying that US intelligence would have been able to distinguish a false North Korean attack and notified the South Korean government. However, this statement has only [raised further suspicions](#) against the US Embassy in some circles due to its similarity to a pronouncement made by Congressman Brad Sherman in an interview with the South Korean outlet MBC News the day before.

Ju-Hyun Park is the engagement editor at The Real News and an organizer with Nodutdol.

Source: [Peoples Dispatch](#)



Day of Mourning protest against genocide and theft of land

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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2024 National Day of Mourning was commemorated on Nov. 28 at Cole's Hill in Plymouth, Massachusetts. United American Indians of New England have kept this annual tradition since 1970 to mourn their ancestors. As shown in the photo above, it was a protest against genocide and the theft of lands here and in Palestine. Photo: UAINE.org



Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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Revolutionary journalist jailed for 43 years

People marched through downtown Philadelphia on Dec. 9, demanding freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners. It was the 43rd anniversary of Mumia's arrest by Philadelphia police, who also shot him.

Cops took Mumia to the hospital the long way, hoping he would die along the way. Framed for killing officer Daniel Faulkner, the Black revolutionary has been jailed 16 years longer than Nelson Mandela. He was on death row until 2011, with prison authorities still trying to kill Mumia by denying him and other prisoners health care.

Protesters gathered at City Hall by the statue of Octavius Catto, a Black political activist and freedom fighter who was murdered in 1871. Catto's racist killer, Frank Kelly, wasn't convicted.

Neither was Daniel Penny, who spent six minutes strangling the homeless Black man

Jordan Neely to death on a New York City subway car. The martial arts expert Penny was acquitted the same day people were protesting in Philadelphia.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has long had a target on his back. As a 15-year-old, Mumia became a member of the Black Panther Party.

The FBI started a file on the revolutionary teenager. Super racist Mayor Frank Rizzo threatened Mumia Abu-Jamal at a news conference.

Among the speakers at the City Hall rally was Teresa Shoatz, the

daughter of the late Russell Maroon Shoatz, who, like Mumia, was a member of the Black Panther Party. Shoatz spent 40 years in prison.

He was only released when dying of cancer — a result of deliberate medical neglect — and died 52 days later.

People marched from City Hall to the office of Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner, demanding Mumia's freedom. Krasner, a so-called reformer, insists on keeping Mumia locked up despite boxes of "lost" evidence that prove that he was framed.

The people will free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, and all political prisoners. Free them all!



Justice for Jordan Neely!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
December 15, 2024

Killer of homeless Black man goes free

Black Lives Don't Matter was the message given by a New York City court as the killer of Jordan Neely, Daniel Penny, was set free on Dec. 9. The white martial arts expert Penny knew what he was doing as he took six minutes strangling the Black homeless man Neely to death.

The killing took place within a subway car in Manhattan on May 1, 2023. Police let Penny go free. Only the anger of the people forced the District Attorney to bring charges.

Jordan Neely's father, Andre Zachery, was righteously angry at the license to kill given to Penny and every other white vigilante. Supporters of the killer had raised \$3 million for Penny's lawyers.

The December 12th Movement called two rallies on Dec. 10 to protest. "Jordan

Neely was murdered because he was Black, poor and America had made him mentally ill,” read the December 12th Movement’s statement. “All these are capital crimes in this country, which upholds one God — Profit.”

Reparations lawyer Roger Wareham, a member of D12’s International Secretariat, denounced the killer’s acquittal.

Wareham compared it to the U.S. Supreme Court’s notorious pro-slavery Dred Scott ruling in 1857. That court then declared, “Black people have no rights that white men are bound to respect.”

Jordan Neely — a homeless man who needed help — got no respect and was instead choked to death. As one protester’s sign stated, “Jordan Neely deserved to love.”

Former New York State assembly person and City Council member Charles Barron also attacked the killer’s exoneration. Following the evening rally, people marched to Wall Street, whose wealth began with slavery.



Born Jewish in Nazi Europe: My Journey to Become Anti-Zionist

written by Struggle - La Lucha
December 15, 2024

Join author and several honored guests in dialogue:

Born Jewish in Nazi Europe my journey to become ANTI-ZIONIST

Hear from:

Dr. Suzanne Ross Author

Layan Fuleihan Sponsor, The People's Forum

Bill Dores PAL-Awda NY/NJ

Mama Pam Africa Founder and Leader for Decades
of ICFFMAJ, Supporter of Palestine

Immortal Technique Hip Hop Artist
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Questions



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REFRESHMENTS



The term “holocaust survivor” usually renders a specific type of image in one’s mind. It’s easy to picture an ancient Bubbe or Zayde (Yiddish for “Grandmother” and “Grandfather”) trembling over a walker at the front of a synagogue, discussing the

importance of “Israel” to ensuring Jewish safety.

That description certainly does not apply to Suzanne Ross, the author of “[Born Jewish in Nazi Europe: My Journey to Become Anti-Zionist](#).” Ross was born in Nazi-occupied Belgium in the late 1930s. Ironically, her family fled to Belgium due to Nazi oppression in Germany and Poland. Turns out, nowhere in Europe was remotely safe for Jews at the time.

The book details her family’s early days fleeing Nazi persecution and how that experience shaped her views on the occupation of Palestine. Most of her extended family on both her mother’s and father’s side were not so lucky. Upwards of 30 members of her family were murdered outright by Nazi terror or died in concentration camps. As she describes, it was this sort of trauma that allowed U.S.-backed Zionist propaganda to take such a hold in the recently displaced European Jewish community.

What is striking about Ross’s experience as a child, experiencing the loss of so many family members, is how similar her story is to the hundreds and thousands of horror stories that come out of Gaza every week. It is exactly this sort of stark parallel that led Ross herself to abandon Zionism as an ideology and embrace the liberation of Palestine from Western imperialism.

As history unfolded, Ross’ views evolved dramatically along with the Zionist escalation against the entire Arab world. Ross attended university in the United States and quickly became involved in activism against racist Jim Crow conditions in the U.S. and apartheid in South Africa. The late ‘60s and early ‘70s saw a massive upsurge in aggression from the United States towards Arab liberation movements, all through the U.S. proxy state of “Israel.”

Ross’s memoir does an amazing job of analyzing how the contradictions between her growing anti-racist activism and her previous support for Israel led her to the

conclusion that the two could not be reconciled. Simply put, either we are against all forms of imperialism and fascism, the same systems that perpetrated the Holocaust, or we aren't.

While Gaza burns and Zionist forces lay claim to what they assert as their divine right to conquer Syria, Ross's perspective is more important than ever. At its heart, Ross's memoir is an ironclad case against Zionist mythology. Through the history of her life and the global geopolitical events that defined her life, she makes it abundantly clear that the Zionist project is no more than a U.S. imperialist front against the entire Global South. And that is exactly why her book is a must read.

Personal note

I usually don't write in the first person. But after finishing Ross' book and starting this review, I felt the need to say something on a personal level. Her evolution from a liberal Zionist to a passionate anti-Zionist activist is personally relatable. I am descended from people who faced the brunt of both Tsarist antisemitic pogroms in the Russian empire and the horror of the Shoah (Hebrew word for holocaust). I personally stood in Charlottesville as Nazis streamed past and around me, stuffed to the gills with body armor and carrying swastika-laden banners. However, Jews have a responsibility to stand up to all Nazis, regardless of whether they fly the confederate flag or the Star of David.

As I have grown older, I have only found more stunning the way that Jewish Zionists justify the genocide against the Palestinian people. As Ross details - the parallels are so clear. The connections are so patent. The catastrophic loss of life, limb, and land at the hands of a fascist enemy is no stranger to the Jewish community. Unfortunately, we allowed ourselves to be led into the depths of fascism by the United States in the dogged pursuit of its own agenda in the Middle East.

With all that said, it was beyond refreshing to read a Jewish perspective for

liberation. I will always be eternally grateful that Suzanne had the courage to tell her story. It was something that a young Jew like myself needed to hear.

Lev Koufax is an anti-Zionist Jewish activist.



From the Jena 6 to today: Ruling class imprisons youth abandoned by capitalism

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aggravated battery. The movement ultimately got all charges against the six dropped to misdemeanor battery. All were free by 2009.

Because of the racism on display in the operations of the legal system, this case sparked one of the biggest civil rights protest movements in the U.S. since the 1960s. Activists marched in cities across the country, including 60,000 in Jena itself. Below is part two of a recent interview on the legacy of Jena with Larry Hales, a Black social worker who participated in the Jena 6 solidarity movement in Denver and other cities. We have also [republished three pieces Hales wrote](#) on the Jena 6 in 2007-08. You can read parts [one](#) and [two](#) here.

Fake crime epidemic and the criminalization of youth

Gregory E. Williams: I want to touch on some of the current situations here in Louisiana. I'd like to get your thoughts on it. It mirrors what's happening in the country more broadly in terms of these intensified attacks and the far right in power.

Until the beginning of the year, Louisiana had the only Democratic governor in the Deep South, John Bel Edwards. And he's probably to the right of Biden. He'd been governor twice so couldn't run again. But the Democratic Party here ran a Black candidate, Shawn Wilson, who they did not promote at all. I've never seen an election like it. There was nothing. There was no campaign. And the far right Attorney General Jeff Landry won in a landslide. But this was only a landslide among those who voted, and *very* few people voted. There's no popular energy around him and he's a MAGA clone. He's like Governor DeSantis in demonizing LGBTQ+ people.

His main shtick is being "tough on crime" and all this racist language. It's not even really a dog whistle. A dog whistle is something subtle. This isn't subtle. This crime hysteria is so racist, trying to make people afraid of Black youth, basically. And one of the first things he did when he came to power in February 2023 was to ram

through a special session on crime in the legislature. And there's a Republican supermajority in the legislature, and they just rampaged and they rolled back every little reform that had happened.

Like I said, we had a very conservative Democratic governor before, but there was some criminal justice reform coming out of the Black Lives Matter period. I'd say that's the reason it happened. It was because of the struggle. So there was some reform, like they were no longer trying 17-year-olds as adults. And Landry's special legislative session reversed everything. They've basically gotten rid of parole. They've approved executing people with nitrogen hypoxia - just horrendous things. And so there's been a big uptick in juvenile arrests.

Some investigative journalism has come out on this. ([Richard A. Webster, Verite News](#)) They're not arresting juveniles for violent crimes because, first of all, there is no juvenile violent crime epidemic. There's some violence but there's no epidemic. So what's happening is that they're arresting masses of teenagers for petty things. And now that the 17-year-olds are being tried as adults again, that stays on their record. Even if they're not convicted of anything, that arrest is on their record, and it's gonna prevent them from getting housing, potentially. It's a barrier when they're applying for jobs, for school, and other things. And they're putting tens of millions of dollars into expanding juvenile incarceration facilities across the state. ([Julie O'Donoghue, Louisiana Illuminator and Verite News](#))

And that's just part of it. I'm thinking about this in terms of the legacy of the Jena 6. And all of this is sort of happening now, and there's really no movement. It's at a low point. There's been a Palestine Solidarity movement, which is good. There is some progressive organizing, but people aren't really in the streets resisting Landry. There's no pushback to speak of, so they're steamrolling everything. And also, his next legislative session is about to start, another special session, which is all about cutting taxes. Well, he wants to cut income tax and corporate tax to help the rich.

But he wants to increase the sales tax. That tax burden would be hardest on the working class because it hits everyday purchases. So now he's going to do what he's really in that job to do, which is to help out his millionaire and billionaire friends. [editor's note: these reforms passed]

And he's done it by stepping on oppressed people. He's like climbing over bodies to the top to be able to make it rich. I mean, he's already a millionaire himself through his investments in fossil fuels and this kind of thing. (Hard to trust somebody on the environment when he's making millions from the companies destroying the state.) It's all a huge giveaway to the rich in the midst of intensified attacks on workers. I'm just thinking about the effects, particularly on Black youth. And I'm thinking about this in terms of that history we've been talking about, the Jena 6 to today. I can't dictate what's going to happen, but as a movement, we need to think through this. What are the next steps?

Larry Hales: That whole idea that there's an uptick in crime - I live in New Jersey, but even in New York there's not an uptick in crime. Maybe the seeming randomness of things. And there are things that can be shocking to people, but things like this always happen to some degree. The only difference is information travels faster. There's always somebody there to record. There's so many cameras. You imagine these things that happen, and then you look at the 11 o'clock news, and then we have this photo of this individual, and they can track that person for 10 blocks. We didn't see this happen, but we see this person walking away, and here he is walking to his door. So I think that's one of the things.

But I feel like whenever things like this happen, they get this infusion of money. It's for the developers of the prison industry. It's for every step that's involved in building something that massive and those who are going to profit from it. But, in terms of people, we had something similar when I lived in Denver, and they were building a new "justice system." It had to actually be voted on. And, you know, they

want it. And the way they want it is that they were taking people to see the old county jail and city jail. And the conditions were horrible. I've been in the city jail; it was horrible. You had four people per cell, you had two bunks, and two people sleeping on the floor. I've been one of those people on the floor. But I asked the question, "*Why* are all these people here? Why do they have to be here?"

We had already been fighting this group that called themselves the Molly Brown Coalition and the Guardian Angels. We've been fighting them because they've been posting pictures of people who they say are drug users or drug dealers and putting them on lampposts all around the city.

We used to go and bust up their meetings. If you advertise a meeting publicly it means it's a public meeting and you can record it. The struggle that we raise is that the city has had an uptick in people being arrested for nonviolent drug crimes. And there needs to be drug treatment for users.

And even when there were violent crimes, well, where are these crimes coming from? At the same time that you're doing this, you're closing down schools in Northeast Denver and turning them into charter schools. You're closing down parks for children and opening dog runs. It's not that Black folks in these communities don't have dogs, but there are more children than there are dogs here. So why are you closing down children's parks? Why are you closing down schools? And then you're opening up the schools for lotteries, which means anybody from around the city can apply to be in that school. And it's no longer a neighborhood school.

We can talk about the issues of segregation, but when schooling is based on neighborhood schools and you close down those neighborhood schools, children are shipped to another neighborhood and have to take the bus to get there, and their parents have to plan for that. It disrupts everything for everyone. So we raised the people's platform based on the people's needs.

You're projecting that this many people are going to get arrested, based off *what*? Based off the inability to provide for people's very basic needs. You're telling me there aren't other community-based alternatives to incarceration? That \$100 million that you're spending on that can go towards other things.

I read this thing that one of the people said: imagine you're in your home, and your wife and your kid (they always say your wife and your kid) are by themselves in this house, and a 17-year-old breaks in and puts a gun to their heads. This was in one of the articles you sent me about the current spike in juvenile arrests in Louisiana. They create this fear, like this is going to happen to you, therefore we need to rein in these wild teenagers.

It's hard to start a struggle when there is no struggle, but often people are resigned to, like, what can we do? What can we do about this? And I think it often starts with, hey, this is happening, what do you think about it? Would you be interested in coming to a community meeting about this, talk about this, and what alternatives there can be? And sometimes, you know, that can start something big. But yeah, I think it's happening in a lot of places. There's this uptick, even though crime is down, they're still building a bunch of prisons.

I think there's always a way to get to people. Did you ever read Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"?

GEW: I've only read excerpts.

LH: That's the best way to consume it. I find that with a lot of academic stuff, there's a lot of word salad. It's an important theoretical piece on the point at which struggle, education and learning come together but sometimes you get the primary point out of things and that's what is most important not that you got through the entire book. And I think that's what excerpts do. But that whole idea of joining with

and building that dialogue with people and starting from that point. Because I find that often, when it comes to things like this, these types of policy changes and stuff like that, they're the least likely to arouse people's anger and get a movement going.

GEW: Right. Especially until there's a face that they can put on something. You can point to what's happening systemically with the policy. Okay, we know that more youth are being arrested, but sometimes when somebody gets killed – and you can't predict why that particular death moves people so profoundly. It's so horrible that it has to come to that sometimes, but it catches hold and all the anger comes out at one time. There's a deceptive surface quietude in this society. But like we've been talking about throughout the interview, that can be dispelled in a moment and a whole new sequence of struggle unfolds.

Lallan Schoenstein: I don't know if this is true, but I used to think that when violent crimes occur, very often it's within families when there's just too much despair and helplessness. And it's not like somebody going out and attacking somebody they don't know. It's like anger and despair within a family, which is when they're just pressed too hard, where things are too bad. So, I think the whole thing about violent crime is a myth.

But I was also wondering just about the question of opportunities for, say, teenagers – even just having a job, educational opportunities. I mean, what do they see as a possibility for the future? And when Landry vilifies and attacks them, it is a cynical thing of like, “Well, this is a way to deal with them because we don't have jobs. We're not going to give them any educational opportunities.” This whole generation of kids coming up has all kinds of potential, maybe even revolutionary potential. So from the ruling class point of view, jailing them is a way to deal with them. It's just cynical, but I think that that's how they think.

LH: It is. And I think that especially non-white, oppressed youth who have less

chances aren't given the benefit of the doubt of being a young person. I don't want to conflate one locality with another and why things happen the way they do, but I think we can generalize. When a white young person commits a crime, the system will just look at them differently. And it will just be like, "This was a bad thing." Like the kid who was inebriated and killed a family of four. I don't want people going to prison for substance addiction or substance use. But history tells me that if that were a Black youth who did that there would not be a plea deal worked out to avoid prison. And no one in the mainstream media would have looked at them sympathetically and just been like, "Oh, well, this was a mistake. He's going to remember that for the rest of his life." And I feel like this is a prison in and of itself. They would be shouting for that person's head.

And so I think that when people visualize crime in the U.S., it's a certain person committing those crimes. They visualize certain types of crimes and a certain person committing those crimes. And they may not even be conscious of the fact that they're doing that necessarily, right? Sort of an unconscious thing. If someone were to say, 20 minutes ago, someone got shot in some part of town, an image is gonna pop in people's minds, right? And then not only that image, a whole history of this person is going to pop in their mind. And the reasons why this person should be handled this way versus another way. And if it turns out that it's not who they thought it was, then what they think should happen begins to shift and change if that person looks different. It's not all the time, but frequently enough.

And we're just sort of conditioned that way. For instance, we're used to thinking that if someone said that we found this new serial killer, the first thing that pops into my mind is a white guy, a middle-aged white guy. So I think when it comes to youth crime, when they're building youth facilities, they're thinking of a certain kind of youth in prison.

LS: And with these mass killings, immediately you think of a young white person

who's coming from a very right-wing, fascist family where they've been brutalized – maybe military.

LH: I stereotype that right away, but it's so often the case.

GEW: And I think this is very conscious on the part of the pundits and the politicians who're stoking this stuff. I think it's very conscious for them. When we talk about somebody like Landry, he knows *exactly* what he's doing. And he knows that when he says crime – and when he says youth crime – he's talking about Black kids. And his super racist base is eating that up. Like I said, they're not the majority because very few people actually came out to vote for him. But they're eating that up. And then other people who aren't diehard racists still have that conditioning, like you said, because we've all grown up with that.

LS: Here in New York City, almost every single night, there's a police blotter report, and it reports some crime that happened in the city. And they have camera footage. And you really cannot see individual features of the person. All you can see is it's a Black person – it's a Black man – and everybody is supposed to look for this Black man. They ask everybody to look for him. They do it every single night. You can count on it.

LH: Yep, every night, here it comes!

You know, I worked with the homeless population, and my kids asked me – I love talking to my kids, we have the greatest conversations – but they asked me, “Daddy, do you help people?” And I said, “No, not enough at least.” And they're like, “Why? Isn't that what your job is?” And I said, well, it's an organization that has limited funds. And often it becomes this chase for funds. And so they're always concerned with data. Data has to say *this* because we need these funds. And then the whole idea of helping people gets lost in the shuffle. It's about the funds. And I get it, you have an organization, you have payroll, infrastructure, and you gotta pay for these

things. But the organization with limited funds becomes the answer to what should be addressed societally, I said.

And we worked with people who oftentimes were mentally ill and chemically addicted, and these things have happened. Yes, there's a part of mental illness that is genetic, where people are genetically predisposed, but it's the interaction of environment and genetics, often. I was like, so what we are seeing is people's response to trauma and hardship, and intergenerational trauma. That's what we're seeing, I said. This society created these conditions that people are responding to and it's not going to be a quick fix. It's not going to be a fix that will happen in this person's lifetime, unfortunately. I wish it would. But knowing that to be the case, there's ways for society to deal with it. And so one of the things people are talking about is this increase in crime. But what are you really upset with here? The city doesn't even have enough psychiatric beds.

LS: I remember in the '80s they closed whole wings of hospitals where there were people who were just on the edge of being able to take care of themselves, or maybe not quite able to take care of themselves, and they just put them out in the street.

LH: And then they warehoused them in jails and prisons. And now that they got rid of cash bail in New York City, and they can no longer warehouse people, people are left to the streets. And everyone's like, "Oh, what are we seeing here?" And I'm one of those people who say, yeah, it's a lot to take in. Believe me, I worked with a population of people who are unhoused. It's a lot to take in. And people are like, "Well, they're using the bathroom on the platform."

LS: Where else are they gonna use the bathroom, right?

LH: It's the most unsanitary city and people blame the unhoused. If you're worried about people using the bathroom publicly, then you should fight for more restrooms.

If you're worried about people being homeless on a platform, then fight for housing. And shelters are not housing. The shelter system is horrible in New York City. Absolutely deplorable. If you think they should just go to a shelter, then you go to the shelter and stay there a couple of nights. See how much you enjoy it. Just because a person is suffering from mental illness, that doesn't mean they can't tell when someone's treating them badly.

So again, what are you really upset with here? What are you really upset about? These politicians like Landry can really turn this around and make it seem as if we need these things and what we really need is something for youth to do, somewhere for them to go, a society where they can feel that they're a part of something.

LS: I just learned something on a Zoom call recently, in a discussion with young people. They said young people under 18 cannot go into some malls or supermarkets or stores anymore unless they have an adult with them. I was like, "What?" And then I went into a local mall and there were signs all over the place. You can't be here without an adult. I'm like, you know, for a young person who doesn't have a lot of resources, the store or the mall is a place where they can go to hang out and see their friends. It's like a home. I think that's a new thing that's happening. We actually are trying to get this young person who's talking about it to write about it. I had no idea, but now that somebody told me, I'm seeing it all over. It's like, no, you can't be here without an adult if you're under 18. Have you seen that in Jersey?

LH: Yeah, in certain areas of Jersey. Whenever there's something that happens with young people, it's all over the news. They play it up. And then that was the atmosphere that led them to create these rules in certain malls.

GEW: There's nowhere for them to go. If you hang out outside somewhere, you're loitering. You've got to be somewhere spending money, but now you can't go in the mall without an adult.

To be continued.



Class hatred erupts: Killing of UnitedHealthcare CEO highlights health care injustice

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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Prosecutors in New York City have charged 26-year-old Luigi Mangione with the killing of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson. Mangione was arrested in a McDonald's restaurant in Altoona, Pennsylvania. Charges include second-degree murder and illegal possession of a firearm.

Whether Mangione is the right person remains to be seen. What is undeniable is that the killing of the pig CEO has resulted in an eruption of righteous class hatred across the country. The masses are disgusted by the obscene profits of the health insurance industry - profits that come from DENYING health care, not from

providing it.

Last year, UnitedHealthcare had a net income of \$22.3 billion. Apologists in the media have been quick to point out that record profits across the industry are partly the result of the COVID-19 pandemic, but that does not change the underlying dynamics of the for-profit health care system.

To that point, a [recent study](#) by the Yale School of Public Health and other groups found that universal health care in the U.S. would have saved 212,000 lives and \$459 billion in 2020 when COVID-19 was raging. Insurance companies that lobby against universal health care know very well that this system kills hundreds of thousands of people every year. All the executives have blood on their hands.

Insurance companies (not to mention private hospital shareholders) are out to make money, first and foremost, not provide care. They make their money by fleecing workers already squeezed by high housing costs and low wages.

Speaking of the pandemic, that experience showed that workers, not CEOs, are essential, including in health care. What could possibly justify the bloated salaries and bonuses of people like Thompson?

Not surprisingly, politicians have been weighing in to defend CEOs. Kamala Harris' running mate, Tim Walz - who is governor of the state where UnitedHealthcare is headquartered - called the shooting of Thompson "horrific news and a terrible loss for the business and health care community."

Apparently, *this* killing is beyond the pale for Walz, even though Kamala Harris, as part of the Biden administration, is complicit in the murder of tens of thousands of people in Gaza, many of whom are children. Where's Walz's outrage about kids slowly starved to death or burned alive? For the Democratic Party's leadership, ruthless CEOs' lives matter, but not those of innocent children.

Working people seem to feel differently. It is not just the “radical left” who agreed that the corporate parasite was running a criminal operation, putting profits before people, not to be mourned. Many moderately progressive people have joined in, as well as ordinary people on the right, much to the chagrin of the pundits.

Right-wing influencers Ben Shapiro and Matt Walsh have faced backlash from their followers after condemning the “radical left” for not denouncing the killing of Thompson. As [Newsweek](#) reported, “Their followers disagreed with their criticisms and defended the left, arguing that they felt the same way about Thompson’s death and bashing Shapiro and Walsh for being ‘out of touch’ as wealthy media personalities.”

Here are a few comments quoted in the Newsweek article:

“I’m a Republican. I voted for Trump. I am unsubscribing from Ben. They are not like us.”

“Ben’s net worth is around \$50,000,000.000. He is a peer of Brian Thompson not one of us, the average American citizen.”

“[Shapiro is making] money by generating hate and division.”

This goes to show that even working-class people who have been taken in by the lies of rich scam artists like Trump are capable of realizing where their true interests lie, and it’s not with the rich.

If Shapiro and Walsh are misleading people about CEOs, isn’t it possible that they’re lying about immigrants and trans people? Isn’t it possible that they’re lying about climate change and the evils of socialism?

And what about Donald Trump? Isn’t he like Brian Thompson? He’s what Gen Z calls a “nepo baby,” a nepotism baby who comes from generational wealth. He inherited

wealth from his father, Fred Trump, a New York City real estate gangster. Now, he has the world's richest man, Elon Musk, at his right hand and a cabinet of billionaires. As of Dec. 10, the total net worth of the billionaires in the Trump administration equals at least \$382.2 billion – which is more than the GDP of 172 different countries.

Isn't it possible that Trump is not really interested in combating elites but instead wants to give those elites more wealth and power? Just food for thought.



Korean community in U.S. stands up against martial law

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In nearly back-to-back rallies, the Los Angeles Korean community turned out to protest the decree of martial law by White House-backed South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol. Nodutdol, the youth activist organization based in the Korean diaspora in the U.S., held an emergency rally on Dec. 4 at the South Korean

Consulate. Rallies were also held in the Bay Area and in New York City.

The U.S. representatives of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions held a second rally at the Consulate on Dec. 7, calling for a general strike until Yoon steps down.



