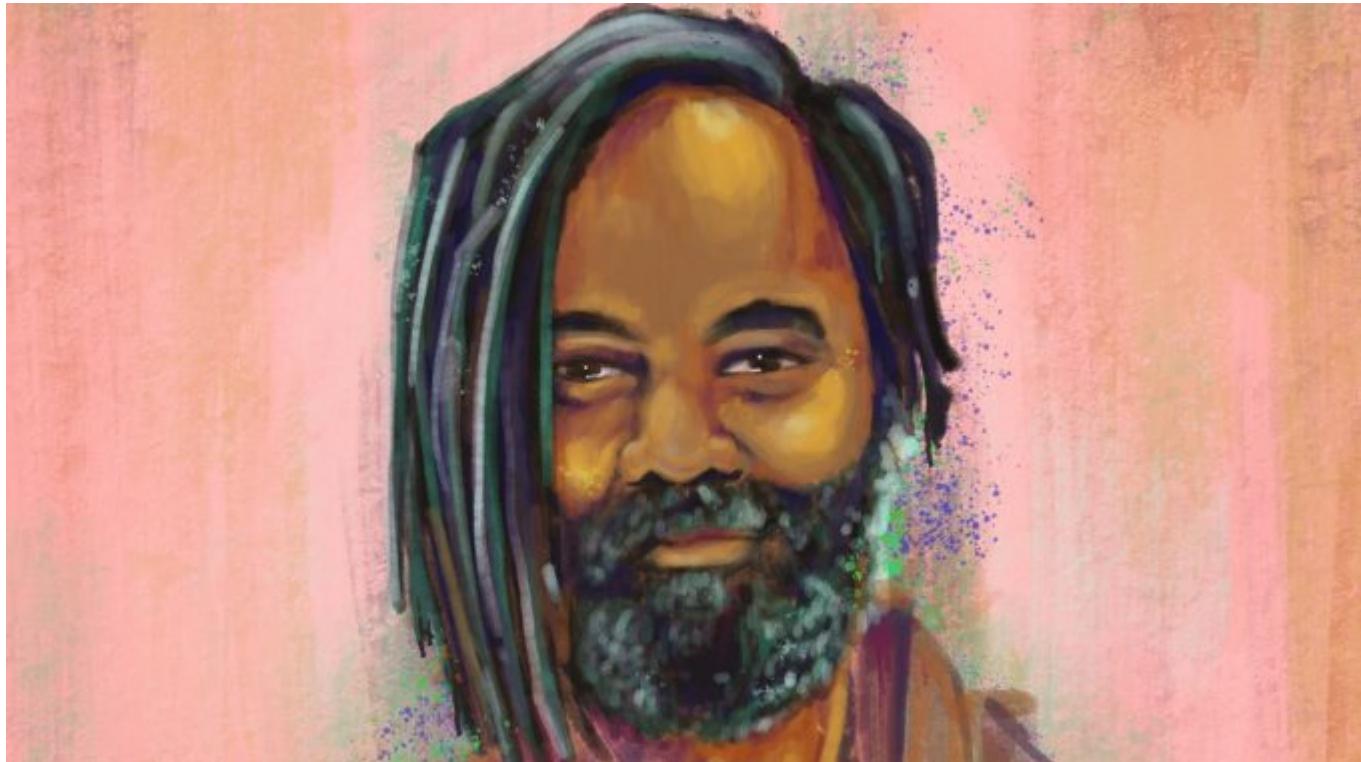


Mumia Abu-Jamal health alert & action

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 1, 2024



Mumia underwent a **double bypass heart surgery** on April 19, 2021. His doctor **prescribed a cardiac diet and regular exercise** for recovery. To date, almost 3 years later, the prison has failed to provide Mumia the required cardiac diet and opportunities for exercise. The outside yard is often closed, and he has been prohibited from walking in the day room. Mumia is extremely vulnerable. His severe skin condition has flared up, causing him great discomfort including painful itching 24/7. His heart and overall health is severely affected. The prison diet and limited exercise are in **violation of the standards of cardiac care and doctor's**

orders. Keeping elders in prison is a human rights violation.

TAKE ACTION! It's time we demand a heart-healthy diet that includes **fresh fruit and vegetables, whole grains and legumes, and limited highly processed foods**, and **we demand access for Mumia to do regular exercise every day**.

Death by incarceration (DBI) must be banned. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Please call and write these prison officials.

1) Superintendent, Bernadette Mason: 570-773-2158

Email: bmason@pa.gov

SCI Mahanoy PA Department of Corrections, 301 Grey Line Drive, Frackville, PA 17931

2) Secretary of PA Dept of Corrections, Laurel Harry: 717-728-4109

Email: ra-crpadocsecretary@pa.gov

Message this form: py-forms-prod.powerappsportals.us/DOCCContactUs/

1920 Technology Parkway | Mechanicsburg, PA 17050.

3) Acting Deputy Secretary Eastern Region, Morris Houser 717- 728-4122 ext. 4123

Email: mhouser@pa.gov

Sample Script (can also use for letters and emails):

I am calling because Mumia Abu-Jamal #AM 8335 and other incarcerated elders diagnosed with heart disease are being prevented by the prison from getting what they medically require for their health.

Mumia Abu-Jamal #AM 8335 had double bypass heart surgery. He needs:

- 1) A CARDIAC DIET three times a day that includes fresh vegetables and fruit, whole grains, legumes, and limited sugar, salt, and highly processed foods;
- 2) He must have access to do sufficient cardiac rehab every day. Thank You.

Cc: your letter to info@prisonradio.org

<https://bit.ly/mumia-fund> <https://www.bit.ly/mumia-action>

Source: [Prison Radio](#)



Saturday, March 2: Rally for Palestine!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 1, 2024

MARCH 2 RALLY FOR PALESTINE

NEW ORLEANS



**HANDS OFF RAFAH
CEASE FIRE NOW
STOP THE GENOCIDE**

**MARCH 2 • 4 PM • JACKSON
SQUARE**

Rally for Palestine!

Saturday, March 2, 4 PM

Jackson Square, New Orleans

Join us and millions of people across the world on Saturday, March 2, as we take to the streets to demand liberation for Palestine.

Rally for Palestine!

End the Genocide

Lift the Siege on Gaza Now

Cut All US Funding of Fascist Israel

From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!



Nex Benedict's death must be a turning point in the fight for trans lives!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 1, 2024

Nex Benedict, a 16-year-old transgender Choctaw student, was brutally beaten in an Owasso, Oklahoma, high school bathroom on Feb. 7 and died the next day. The school did not call an ambulance for Nex even though he couldn't get up after the assault. (Earlier Nex was widely reported as being nonbinary, but those close to him say that he preferred he/him pronouns.)

We stand in solidarity with Nex's family and community, with Owasso students who walked out of their classes in protest on Feb. 26, and with those who have come out to vigils across the country to demand "Justice For Nex."

The murder of Nex Benedict comes nearly a year after the Oklahoma state

legislature passed a ban on trans students and teachers using restrooms that align with their gender. It's a completely predictable result of the statewide and nationwide legislative assault that demonizes trans people, including children.

Besides bathroom bans, state legislatures have passed bans on gender-affirming health care, participation in sports, book bans, drag bans, "don't say gay or trans" laws, and more. Nex's death also reflects the centuries-long war of the racist state and federal governments against Indigenous peoples, which often includes suppressing traditions with a more diverse view of gender and sexuality.

Since the story of Nex's death made national news, local police have attempted a cover-up, implying that Nex's death was caused by drug use rather than the violence inflicted on him (exposed thanks to Nex's family and independent journalists). Oklahoma Republican state senators held a public forum where they labeled LGBTQ+ people "filth" and teachers "terrorists." Prominent corporate media outlets have given whitewashing interviews to bigoted Oklahoma Department of Education Superintendent Ryan Walters and social media terrorist Chaya Raichik ("Libs of TikTok"), who last year instigated bomb threats aimed at a trans teacher at Nex's school.

But Walters, Raichik, and the rest are mouthpieces for wealthy capitalists and big corporations - the real forces behind the anti-trans panic. Of the 47 sponsors of the Oklahoma bathroom bill:

- 35 took money from energy or oil/gas companies
- 28 took money from the finance industry
- 22 took money from the health care industry

Other major contributors include the agriculture and construction industries. Many others are "self-funded" through their own wealth - they're capitalists or executives themselves.

The deluge of anti-trans hate is meant to distract people from the deepening economic crisis, low wages, exorbitant rents, austerity measures, and genocidal wars that the politicians refuse to address. These industries profit off of the destruction of the environment, super-exploitation of workers, raising the prices for medicine and hospital visits, and the overall misery and fear of the people. They need a scapegoat for people's suffering, and they have chosen trans people as one of their primary targets. They know that if they make us hate each other, we cannot unite against them.

The Biden administration and the Democratic Party, most of whom are in the pockets of war profiteers and oil companies, demand the votes of LGBTQ+ people. But Biden has done nothing to protect trans youth through the last three years of legal and extralegal attacks. In fact, while thousands were coming out to remember Nex Benedict, Biden's Department of Veterans Affairs ruled that trans veterans would not be eligible for gender-affirming surgeries.

Trans people can no longer accept the argument that we must support the "lesser evil" Democratic administration when, with its silence and inaction, it is facilitating the Republicans' deadly attacks on trans lives.

We call on all workers — transgender and cisgender — to stand against these attacks. We must not turn away from the killing of Nex Benedict. This must be the moment when we stand together in opposition and resistance.

We have seen for decades now how anti-trans bills end up hurting everyone, whether it is cis women harassed in bathrooms for not appearing feminine enough, cis children harassed for being better at sports, cis parents under threat of losing their trans children, or intersex people who are harmed by these laws. If we do not unite against these attacks, the violence against trans youth and all trans people will snowball, and the attack against all workers will escalate as well. The forces of hate and oppression will not stop with trans people — a unified movement is our only

hope.

There is a direct line between the rise in anti-trans laws of the last decade and the escalation of violence against trans people. Last year saw more reported murders and violent deaths of trans people than ever; suicide rates among trans people, especially trans youth, are alarmingly high.

Last October, the [Coalition to Protect Trans Lives](#) organized a National March to Protect Trans Youth in Orlando, Florida, and participants joined a lawsuit against Florida's bathroom ban. We are working to build an independent fight-back movement nationwide, in the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement, the Stonewall Uprising, and 1980s AIDS activism, to link arms with Indigenous nations, Black and Palestinian people, migrants, and other communities resisting the far-right onslaught. As we prepare for bigger and bolder actions in 2024, we ask you to get involved.

The trans community doesn't need any more martyrs. We call on all who are outraged by the death of Nex Benedict to stand against the assault on trans lives across the U.S.

Rise up and organize for trans lives!



Honor Aaron Bushnell, free Palestine!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 1, 2024

AARON BUSHNELL

(1999 – 2024)

¡PRESENTE!

“I am about to engage in an extreme act of protest. But compared to what people have been experiencing in Palestine at the hands of their colonizers, it’s not extreme at all. This is what our ruling class has decided will be normal.”



**SOCIALIST UNITY PARTY
STRUGGLE-LA-LUCHA.ORG**

Statement of Peace and Freedom Party congressional candidate John Parker.

U.S. Air Force soldier Aaron Bushnell self-immolated on Feb. 25 in Washington, D.C., to protest the U.S.-Israeli war on Gaza. He did so in front of the embassy of the apartheid state that occupies Palestine.

“I wish someone as courageous, honorable and human as Aaron Bushnell did not have to die. The tragedy we’re seeing in Gaza is a horror that is so painful for the

world that many in solidarity will do all they can to make it stop," announced John Parker, socialist candidate in California's 37th Congressional district.

"Aaron Bushnell was so frustrated by this genocide that he felt the only way to make it stop was to take his own life while wearing his uniform, to make the world pay attention to U.S. complicity in Israel's crimes. He felt so deeply about the more than 10,000 children murdered by U.S.-made bombs and shells," Parker explained.

"Joe Biden's \$14 billion assistance to further Israel's genocide increases his war crimes and the complicity of the United States, as was clarified in the International Court of Justice decision in the case brought by the South African government.

"That money adds on to the trillions already stolen from the wealth that we working people create, and leaves no room for basic necessities that we need here, leaving us with nothing but poverty, war and genocide. So Biden is not welcome here in South Central Los Angeles," said Parker.

"Aaron Bushnell's commitment to stop the killing in Palestine makes the upcoming March 2 demonstration at Los Angeles City Hall all the more important," said the socialist candidate. "Join me at City Hall starting at 1 p.m. to stop the U.S.-Israeli war on Gaza. Palestine will win!"

John Thompson Parker is a member of the Socialist Unity Party who has helped organize many demonstrations in solidarity with Palestine. He's running on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket in the March 5 primary in the 37th Congressional district, which includes South Central Los Angeles and much of Culver City and Inglewood. Early voting has already begun.



Ukraine continues attacks on civilians after capture of Avdeevka

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 1, 2024

Feb 21 — “The reality of Donetsk,” Alexander Kots, a correspondent for Komsomolskaya Pravda, wrote yesterday in the city after his visit to the recently captured town of Avdeevka. “In cafes there are almost always free seats near the windows. The population prefers not to sit there. If there is a bombing, there is a risk of being hit by broken glass,” he explained, adding that “in general, it is better to go to places with a basement. Even in the city center.”

The false normality in which the capital of the Donetsk People’s Republic (DPR) lived during the years of the Minsk agreements, in which Ukrainian bombings from the surroundings of towns such as Avdeevka, Peski or Marinka only reached the periphery, is already a vague memory of the past. Today the city lives in a dynamic of constant worry about where and when artillery shells will impact.

Although Russia has not been able to coherently present many of the objectives for

which it began its special military operation, these are the objectives with regard to Donbass: reaching the administrative borders of the former regions of Donetsk and Lugansk. For this objective, it was essential for Russia to overcome Artyomovsk, in the same way it was to capture the Ukrainian forts on the first line of defense around Donetsk.

However, in this sector of the front, Moscow's need to begin moving the front, and with it the firing positions, away from the Ukrainian troops has played a particularly important role. This is the reason for the local offensives against Peski, captured in the fall of 2022 after a tough battle; Marinka, from whose ruins Ukraine ended up withdrawing last December; and Avdeevka, taken this past weekend.

Russian sources, who have presented the capture of Avdeevka as an important step in the double objective of advancing towards the administrative limits of the Donetsk region and the attempt to improve the security of the population of its most populated area, have also insisted that the Ukrainian evacuation from the city was not going to be an automatic solution. In the days since the confirmation of the Ukrainian withdrawal from Avdeevka, Ukraine has wanted to make clear both that it has the means to continue threatening Donetsk and that it persists in its intentions.

Donetsk library attacked again

A year ago, on Feb. 19, 2023, Ukrainian artillery attacked the center of Donetsk, specifically the regional library, located on Artyom Street, the city's main avenue. Yesterday, Ukrainian troops again attacked the same place in the most central part of the capital of Donbass, causing material damage and injuring two women.

Shortly before, a bombing on the outskirts of the city had cost the life of a resident in one of the continuous Ukrainian bombings that never appear in the news unless they cause a high number of victims. However, their indiscriminate nature makes them the main danger for the population of Donetsk, whose security is not

guaranteed at any time or in any place, without this situation having created any reaction among Ukraine's partners, whose expressions of concern are limited to the Ukrainian civilian population residing on the "correct" side of the front.

Yesterday was not an indiscriminate bombing but a directed attack carried out with weapons much more precise than the 155mm artillery or the Grad of Soviet origin. According to local authorities, Ukraine used its U.S. HIMARS [multiple rocket launchers] to attack the most central street of the most populated city in Donbass. Whether the identification of the weapon is correct or not, it is long-range heavy artillery, used on two occasions against a library building. One of the bombs, which exploded next to the building, created a huge crater deeper than a grown man. The second, in the backyard, destroyed all the windows in the building.

The library, which bears the name of [Soviet revolutionary] Nadezhda Krupskaya, perhaps one more symbolic element that has made it a desirable target for the artillery of Ukraine trying to eliminate all traces of the Soviet past, is one of the cultural centers of Donetsk, where all types of events, meetings and events are held. Even in war, life and culture must continue, as long as the artillery allows it - despite those words of [former Ukrainian President] Petro Poroshenko in which he stated that Donbass children will sit in basements while the Ukrainians continue their lives and ended by stating that it would be like this because they do not know how to do anything.

Attacks on civilians continue

The bombings of recent days have a clear message: Ukraine not only continues to have positions close to the capital of Donbass, but it also has long-range ammunition for which it does not need to be at close range. Moving the front away from the city of Donetsk continues to be an objective necessity given the intentions demonstrated by yesterday's bombings and those that have occurred since the weekend, when part of the Ukrainian troops were busy withdrawing from their main fort.

Ukraine has fiercely defended its positions in Avdeevka or Marinka, where fierce battles occurred even during the low-intensity war years of the Minsk ceasefire, because maintaining some control over the city of Donetsk depended on it.

The Ukrainian defeat in Avdeevka is not so much due to the loss of these privileged positions from which to condemn the population to eternal insecurity, but rather due to the demolition of the most important fort, with the weakening of the defenses that this implies. But in terms of attack, Ukraine now has ammunition and carte blanche to attack Donetsk and other cities located in its surroundings at will.

Removing Ukrainian troops from the urban points that they usually attack with the sole objective of punishing the population for their disloyalty to the country that declared an anti-terrorist operation against them and denied them salaries, pensions and even bank accounts, is essential to prevent Kiev from using its most basic artillery, that which requires closeness in order to act.

So Ukraine will continue to have long-range artillery and guided systems with which to attack targets, although the higher cost and lower availability of this ammunition should significantly reduce its use. However, Ukraine wanted to make it clear this week that, as long as it is materially possible, it will continue to use its weapons to shoot at civilian targets it deems appropriate, such as those named after historical figures linked to the Soviet Union.

Translated by Melinda Butterfield

Source: [Slavyangrad.es](https://www.slavyangrad.es)



Hundreds rally in Jackson Heights: 'Bangladesh stands with Palestine'

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 1, 2024

Hundreds of people rallied for Palestine in the Jackson Heights section of Queens, New York City, on Feb. 24. They gathered in Diversity Plaza, the center of a South Asian community.

"Honor Our Martyrs" was the event's title. It commemorated the freedom struggles of both the Palestinian and Bengali peoples.

The rally was called by the Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence (CAAAV) and Bangladeshi Americans for Political Progress. Speakers included representatives from the Palestinian struggle; Bangladeshi Americans for Political Progress; Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence Astoria Tenants Union; New York Taxi Workers Alliance; The People's Forum; and the Party for Socialism and Liberation.

They denounced the U.S. paid-for murder of more than 30,000 people in Gaza.

Several spoke of the struggle to defend the Bengali language in the 1950s.

Flags from both Bangladesh and Palestine were carried. One of the signs read, "Bangladesh stands with Palestine."

Both Palestine and Bangladesh had been British colonies. British aristocrats looted trillions from South Asia.

The Biden administration has sent aircraft carriers to attack Yemen and shore up Benjamin Netanyahu's murderous assault on Gaza. Back in 1971, Nixon and Kissinger sent an aircraft carrier to try to intimidate the Bengali independence struggle.

The rally was also a mobilization against racist and bigoted violence. The Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence was founded in response to the 1982 racist murder of Chinese American Vincent Chin.

Six-year-old Wadea al-Fayoume was stabbed 26 times by his landlord last October, killing the Palestinian child.

A few blocks from the rally was where Julio Rivera was murdered by homophobic bigots in 1990. Jackson Heights is home every year to Queens Pride, the second largest Pride march in the New York City area.

From Bangladesh to Palestine, the people united will never be defeated!



U.S. soldier self-immolates outside Israeli embassy to protest Gaza genocide

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 1, 2024

'Free Palestine' the active-duty airman yelled before collapsing to the ground



An active-duty member of the U.S. Air Force set himself on fire outside the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C., on 25 February in an act of protest against Israel's campaign of [genocide](#) in Gaza.

"I will no longer be complicit in genocide," the man, identified as [Aaron Bushnell](#), said during a Twitch livestream. "I am about to engage in an extreme act of protest," he added before igniting himself.

"Free Palestine!" Bushnell yelled until he fell to the ground.

<https://twitter.com/mhdksafa/status/1761988854381150223>

Feb. 26 — Officers from the U.S. Secret Service extinguished the fire outside the embassy. Bushnell was rushed to the hospital on Sunday with "critical life-threatening injuries," where he reportedly passed away.

The U.S. Air Force confirmed the incident involved an active duty airman.

Bushnell is the second U.S. citizen since [December](#) to self-immolate outside an

Israeli diplomatic building in an act of political protest.

Near-daily [protests](#) have rocked major U.S. cities for the past several months as an increasing number of people in the West demand an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

At least 30,000 people have been killed by the Israeli army in Gaza since 7 October, most of them women and children. The genocide of Palestinians has been facilitated with military and political support from the White House.

International organizations have warned that famine and disease will send the death toll soaring as [Israeli protesters](#) continue to block the entry of humanitarian aid into the besieged enclave.

Source: [The Cradle](#)



Struggle ☐ La Lucha PDF - February 26, 2024

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 1, 2024

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Socialist Unity Party

Partido de Socialismo Unido

Palestinians barred from Al-Aqsa Mosque

Zionist regime targets Ramadan

By Lev Koufax

Every year during Ramadan, Muslim people from around the world travel to the occupied city of Jerusalem to make a pilgrimage to the Mosque Al-Aqsa. This sprawling religious site includes the iconic Dome of the Rock. Al-Aqsa is one of the most revered and significant sites in the Muslim faith.

This pilgrimage is viscerally sacred for all those who adhere to the Islamic faith. The journey should be peaceful, solemn, and bound in love. Unfortunately, the Zionist entity has for decades criminalized this pilgrimage for many Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza.

For years, Zionist shock troops

Continued on page 8



New York City protest on Feb. 16. See page 3. SLL photo: Stephen Miles

Crawfish in the coal mine: Climate disruption is here

By Gregory E. Williams

Last weekend, my partner and I ate at a local restaurant in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Crawfish season had clearly begun. People were crowded at the bar with trays piled with these "mud bugs."

It's a typical Louisiana scene. Crawfish boils are part of the

culture here, a time-honored ritual. From the rural parishes to New Orleans, people gather in backyards to cook and dine on crawfish – like at a barbecue. It's part of the Cajun, Creole, and even Vietnamese cuisine here.

But this year, scenes like the one at that Baton Rouge restaurant will no doubt be less com-

mon and more expensive. LSU AgCenter experts have been making the rounds explaining the ongoing shortage.

The combination of winter cold fronts and summer heat and drought took a toll on crawfish, which are mostly grown in water-logged rice fields. 2023 was the hottest

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Unsustainable war machine: U.S. imperialism in crisis

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 1, 2024



[General Smedley Butler](#) said, “War is a racket.” Wikipedia explains that he was referring to the war profiteers and the “imperialist motivations for U.S. foreign policy and wars.”

A [Guardian headline](#) on Feb. 18 declared: “World’s largest oil companies have made \$281bn profit since invasion of Ukraine.” Below the headline was the teaser: “Global Witness says the five ‘super-majors’ are the ‘main winners of the war’ while many struggle to heat their homes.”

A [Wall Street Journal headline](#) on Feb. 18 declared: “How war in Europe boosts the U.S. economy.”

The U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine against Russia “is good for the U.S. economy,”

the WSJ reports. “Industrial production in the U.S. defense and space sector has increased 17.5.”

The report continues, “Biden administration officials say that of the \$60.7 billion earmarked for Ukraine in a \$95 billion supplemental defense bill, 64% will actually flow back to the U.S. defense industrial base.”

The WSJ adds that the \$95 billion military aid package also includes funds earmarked for Israel and Taiwan.

That’s war on three fronts.

The U.S. is in a steadily expanding military buildup of unprecedented proportions. But the economic basis for sustaining military expansion — for war on three fronts — is in virtual ruin.

After World War II, the United States was the world’s leading imperialist economic and military force. As the predominant imperialist power, the U.S. had unrivaled political and military dominance over its imperialist rivals in Western Europe and Japan, as well as over developing countries and oppressed peoples globally.

In the early 1950s, the United States accounted for over 50% of global economic production. In 2023, the U.S. has fallen to about 26% of global gross domestic product ([GDP](#)), with China, Germany, and Japan all rising, according to the IMF. China’s share of the global GDP surged from 2% in 1980 to 18% in 2021.

When adjusted for the cost of living (the IMF’s [PPP – purchasing power parity](#)), the U.S. per capita GDP now ranks ninth in the world.

The basic industries of the U.S. have declined after decades of [deindustrialization](#) that began in the late 1970s.

In terms of capitalist production for profit, which involves competition for capitalist markets and the acquisition of sources of raw materials, the U.S. has become tremendously weakened as a world power. For instance, in its current heated military expansion, the U.S. has access to a fraction of the world's total production over what it had in the 1950s.

Consider the supply chain crisis during the COVID shutdown. COVID restrictions and lockdowns, especially in China, a major global manufacturing hub, led to shortages of components and products. Factories and ports in the U.S. stalled. Global supply chains are interconnected and interdependent, with many companies reliant on just-in-time inventory and single sources for parts.

While the economic base of U.S. imperialism has been contracting, the drive for military expansion has increased.

"U.S. military spending is at an all-time high," writes John Feffer at the Institute for Policy Studies. "From 2017 to 2023, the Pentagon's base budget increased by over 50%. For 2024, overall U.S. military spending — which includes the allotment for the Pentagon, the budget for nuclear weapons at the Department of Energy, and a few other items — will be \$886 billion. With supplemental requests, like the current one for Ukraine and Israel, the total will approach \$1 trillion, the highest military spending since World War II."

In October 2023, President Joe Biden said that the U.S. must be "the arsenal of democracy," echoing [a 1940 call to arms](#) by Franklin D. Roosevelt. Biden was emphasizing the wars in Ukraine and Gaza and the U.S. arms buildup in Taiwan.

The biggest part of the U.S. war buildup in the Pentagon budget is aimed at China.

The [Modern War Institute at West Point](#) says, "The U.S. military is attempting to quickly replenish diminished weapons stocks in its largest production ramp-up in

decades. With an eye on its pacing threats and the risk of major conflict — with China, in particular — it is transitioning to modern platforms, including attack submarines, heavy bombers, and air defense systems, as well as new approaches to electric vehicles. Given its security assistance to Ukraine and recent military support to Israel, and conflict risks with China, it is simultaneously rearming with legacy munitions — 155-millimeter artillery, Javelin antitank missiles, and surface-to-air Stinger missiles.”

Crises of a declining empire

So, the Pentagon has launched a [military expansion](#) of unprecedented proportions, while the economic basis for sustaining such an unbridled military buildup has been severely eroded.

The U.S. capitalist system is facing multiple crises.

The global production decline should not be confused with a capitalist overproduction crisis.

Crises of overproduction are usually called cyclical capitalist events or simply recessions in the media. Capitalism has had economic crises periodically since 1825. Capitalism goes through a boom and bust cycle every 10 years or so. Marx identified these cyclical events as crises of overproduction.

Capitalists produce goods and services only for profit and not for need. Production is disrupted when commodities can no longer be sold at a profit. Capitalist production can be effectively expanded, but the markets respond slowly, if at all. The overproduction is relative; that is, it's not that more is produced than is needed. It's that more is produced than can be sold at a profit.

A cyclical recession looms over the U.S. economy. Recessions are sweeping the capitalist countries. Japan, Britain, Ireland, and Finland are now in what Wall Street

calls “technical recessions,” which means at least two successive quarters of GDP contraction.

“This is only the tip of the iceberg,” says one [report](#). Denmark, Luxembourg, Moldova, and Estonia were already in recession. Six countries — Ecuador, Bahrain, Iceland, South Africa, Canada, and New Zealand — reported shrinking GDP in October. And six more — Malaysia, Thailand, Romania, Lithuania, Germany, and Colombia — reported GDP contraction in December.

Debt around \$33 trillion

Heavy borrowing by the U.S. government has financed military expansion. The U.S. budget deficit doubled from 2022 to 2023. The overall debt now stands at around \$33 trillion. That’s the value of the combined economies of China, Japan, Germany, India and Britain.

Military spending is different than the capitalist market. Military spending goes to produce planes, tanks, missiles, and other defense systems.

These military products do not function like regular commodities. They do not compete with other commodities for buyers in the capitalist market. There is no concern about overproducing since they do not compete for buyers based on market demands.

Government loan-financed military spending raises industrial production but depresses the capitalist process of expansion. Capitalist production is not simply to meet consumer needs but to maximize surplus value (profits). A portion of the profits made are used to expand the means of production (machines, technology, infrastructure, etc.).

Military spending redirects production from expanded production of the means of production into producing the means of destruction. More capital is consumed than

is created.

The very goal of capitalist production is not meeting consumer demand or social needs but maximizing extraction of surplus value or profit from workers. Expansion is a key means to keep profits growing. Without expansion, profits fall.

The total product of the military-industrial complex is devoid of usefulness. The vast sums borrowed for the military budget have flooded the world with dollars of decreasing value due to military spending for which there has been no material return.

“Military spending has been crowding out other spending,” said Jason Furman, an economist at Harvard University. He noted that Vietnam War spending in the 1960s contributed to the soaring inflation at that time, which led to stagflation, the combination of high inflation and a slowing economy.

In the year 2000, the U.S. government debt was \$3.5 trillion, equal to 35% of the GDP. By 2022, the debt was \$24 trillion, equal to 95% of GDP. The single biggest source of this increase is military spending. According to the Watson Institute at Brown University, the cost of U.S. wars from fiscal year 2001 to fiscal year 2022 amounted to a whopping \$8 trillion.

Forbes magazine recently noted that when adjusted for inflation, the U.S. bank leases and loans showed zero growth at the end of 2023. The capitalist economy simply cannot grow without sustained loan and lease growth. Zero growth means a contraction of the economy. “In simple terms, if this trend doesn’t change, then we are most likely to see a recession,” Forbes says.

On top of the periodic economic recessions inherent to capitalism, an even more severe crisis is plaguing U.S. monopoly capitalism. The decline of U.S. production and GDP and the rise of China, Germany, and Japan reveal the so-called competitive

crisis: the loss of their competitive edge in the world market by significant elements of U.S. industry and finance.

The U.S. has slowly lost its dominant position in world trade and commerce.

Look at Boeing, a monopoly once dominant in the world aircraft industry in commercial and military production.

[Barack Obama](#) once quipped, “Other than — maybe — the CEO of Boeing, I don’t know anyone who’s done more to sell Boeing planes around the world than me.”

Then-President [Donald Trump](#) said during a 2017 visit to a plant in South Carolina: “God bless you, may God bless the United States of America, and God bless Boeing.” Boeing executive Patrick Shanahan was a Trump Secretary of Defense, the head of the Pentagon. Shanahan is also president and CEO of Spirit AeroSystems, which produced the defective parts for Boeing’s 737 MAX airline.

Capitalist monopoly retards technological development, discourages inventiveness and innovation, and prevents the normal renewal, retooling, and reequipment of the basic industrial apparatus. If profits can be made by jacking up prices as a result of monopoly rather than by plant renewal, retooling, or modernization, then it becomes plain that the ruling class as a whole will opt for industrial production based on obsolete plant and equipment so long as profits can be maintained at a high level.

At Boeing, production was maximized for profit at the cost of air safety. In the 1970s, Boeing commanded 66% of the world market; now it is 41%.

A German-French-British consortium introduced the Airbus to compete with Boeing. Despite the occupying dominance of the U.S. and NATO, which has held Germany down by political and military means following the defeat of German imperialism in the Second World War, Airbus was mainly a German effort.

In 2019, Airbus displaced Boeing as the largest aerospace company by revenue due to the Boeing 737 MAX breakdowns.

German industrial engine stalls as U.S. guns and gas dictate terms

It's not an accident that Germany was the first casualty in the U.S./NATO proxy war on Russia.

In 2022, the European Union imported 40% of its gas from Russia. The primary route for gas from Russia was through the Nord Stream pipeline to Germany. Nord Stream 2 was built to at least double the capacity.

The U.S. opposed Nord Stream 2 since the pipeline's inception. Congressional efforts to block the pipeline imposed sanctions, with increasingly stringent sanctions legislation enacted in 2017, 2019, and 2020.

The Nord Stream 2 project was finished in September 2022 but was idle pending certification by Germany and the EU.

On Feb. 7, 2022, before any Russian military actions in Ukraine, President Joe Biden declared, "There will be no longer a Nord Stream 2. We will bring an end to it." (The U.S. Navy has since bombed and destroyed the pipeline.)

As the leading industrial economy in Europe, Germany had a heavy reliance on imported Russian oil, gas, and key minerals to fuel sectors like steel, chemicals, automotives, and complex machinery. This low-cost energy and raw material supply enabled the high productivity and exports behind Germany's economic preeminence.

Germany has been forced to replace low-priced Russian pipeline gas with high-priced U.S. liquified natural gas (LNG), making German industry less competitive.

Today, the U.S. is the top LNG exporter in the world and the biggest supplier of

crude oil to Germany and the entire European Union at a much higher cost.

Gary Wilson is the author of [War and Lenin in the 21st Century](#).



NNOC & BAP statement on AFRICOM airstrike killing 2 Cuban doctors

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 1, 2024



The National Network on Cuba, Black Alliance for Peace, and Lowcountry Action Committee strongly condemn the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) airstrikes in Somalia reported to have killed 2 Cuban doctors. We mourn the loss of their lives, and we demand the U.S. release all information about the bombing to Cuba and the victims' families.

Cuba has deployed more than 600,000 health workers to 165 nations over the last six decades on medical missions. Two Cubans serving in Kenya, Dr. Assel Herrera Correa, a specialist in general medicine, and Dr. Landy Rodriguez Hernandez, a surgeon, were kidnapped there in 2019 and held in Jilib, southern Somalia. Unofficial sources reported that a U.S. drone strike in Jilib on February 15 killed the Cuban doctors; an AFRICOM spokesperson confirmed the bombing but would not confirm any civilian casualties. Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Affairs approached the U.S. government through diplomatic channels on February 18, seeking information,

and has yet to receive a response. The President of Cuba's National Assembly is now traveling to Kenya to carry out urgent negotiations and confirm the status of the doctors' lives.

We call on the U.S. to cooperate with an investigation and to share all information about the attack with Cuba. This attack shows once again that Cuba's foreign policy is to save lives, while U.S. foreign policy is to occupy, bomb, blockade, and destroy lives. As Cuban leader Fidel Castro famously said, "Our country does not drop bombs on other peoples, nor does it send thousands of planes to bomb cities...Tens of thousands of Cuban doctors have provided internationalist services in the most remote and inhospitable places...Doctors, not bombs."

U.S. troops should not be occupying Africa in the first place, nor should they be in Cuba at Guantánamo Bay. Despite the disingenuous altruistic spin the U.S. puts on their stated purpose for AFRICOM, its real and only purpose is to use military power to impose U.S. control over African land, resources, and labor in service to Western finance capital. AFRICOM's drone operations in Africa have only caused violence, vicious anonymity, and "collateral damage." Primarily in Libya and Somalia, the numbers of confirmed [civilian deaths from drones](#) are as high as 3,200 in these two countries, and studies have shown these conditions "have inadvertently aided the growth of terrorist groups in the region."

We join the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Black Alliance for Peace in calling for an international "Zone of Peace" in the Americas. We stand in solidarity with all people facing imperialist violence, from Gaza to Guantánamo. Unblock Cuba, U.S. out of Africa and shut down AFRICOM, let Cuba live!

Statement Against US AFRICOM Airstrikes That Killed 2 Cuban Doctors

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Statement Against US AFRICOM Airstrikes Continued

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**NATIONAL
NETWORK
ON CUBA**

**THE
BLACK ALLIANCE
FOR PEACE**



Source: [U.S.-Cuban Normalization Committee](#)

