

Reading Fanon in the age of ICE raids and Gaza genocide

written by Struggle - La Lucha
July 12, 2025



A women's section of the National Liberation Army (ALN), an armed branch of the National Liberation Front (FLN) during the Algerian War, 1962.

"Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying

the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it.” – Frantz Fanon, “The Wretched of the Earth”

The attacks on the past, as Fanon puts it, are also attacks on the history, culture, and very way of life of oppressed people.

Algeria had been occupied by the French since 1830. In the country, the French tried to secure their domination over the people through dismantling the cultural norms of Algerian society and maintaining an air of absolute violence on anyone who attempted to resist.

In colonial Algeria, infrastructure was named after famous settlers, colonists or military figures of the occupation.

In its colonial crusade to erase Islam from Algeria, France relied on deceit, intimidation, and brute force to replace Algerian Islamic culture with French, European, and Christian norms. Mosques were closed or converted into Catholic churches. Quranic schools were shut down or replaced with French-language Catholic schools.

Regarding news and media, French or colonial-friendly newspapers and radio stations were the main source of information and music that could be found in colonial Algeria.

Finally, the separation of the Algerian villages and towns from the cities and metropolises of the French colonists and settlers was maintained by military checkpoints and a deep culture of racism.

Committed to decolonization

In Fanon's writings during the period, he details how the Algerian people,

committed to liberation, were able to fight the French. The Algerian people were committed to decolonization, both physically with the removal of French troops and settlers and also culturally through destroying the idea of supremacy of Western values and destroying the divisions between people living in Algeria.

Women played a crucial role in Algeria's War of Independence (1954-1962). Their contributions were vital to the success of the National Liberation Front (FLN) and the broader revolutionary movement.

Algerian women who joined the struggle used the French arrogance and chauvinism against them. Western-dressed women were able to move more freely across checkpoints, taking with them all sorts of material and equipment that could aid the revolution. Veiled women hid weapons, equipment or money under their wardrobes.

Women and men fought together. In cities, women were lookouts, guides and partners to their male counterparts, doing whatever was needed to beat back French occupation. Out in the mountains and countryside, women were armed to the teeth, carrying weaponry and heavy equipment to engage the French military.

Women and men not only fought side by side to achieve liberation, but the addition of women in the struggle on all fronts saved the very revolution itself.

Rejected French-friendly media

French domination was also challenged in the information space. The Algerian population rejected Radio Algiers and other French-friendly stations. These stations did nothing but affirm the colonial rule of the French in the region and normalize their genocidal strategy of occupation and suppression.

It was the "Voice of Fighting Algeria" that brought the news to the masses. This station was a direct lifeline to tap into the struggle for liberation. It was broadcast in many different languages, to include the entirety of Algeria's diverse population.

Also, newspapers began to spring up that directly challenged the written word of the colonial administration, with the written testimonies of revolutionaries and survivors of French atrocities. The masses were able to tune into these new channels of information, gaining insight and guidance on the struggle and the path the new nation was now on. Also, through these new media outlets, organizing to disrupt the colonial war machine became easier.

Against kidnappings and torture in L.A. (and Gaza)

In the spirit of the revolutionary women of Algeria, indigenous and immigrant women in the United States are leading the struggle out West against the kidnappings and torture of their friends, family and coworkers. This is especially evident in Los Angeles, where women fill the ranks and largely lead organizations like the Community Self Defense Coalition. They do everything from creating literature, scouting for ICE, training new members, to actively alerting areas about ongoing ICE operations. They do everything they possibly can to disrupt this repressive machinery.

It is Black mothers and sisters who lead in the calls for justice against police brutality and terror, organizing their neighborhoods and communities to take action.

In today's information sphere, corporate and state media are constantly challenged by independent reporting and smaller, more community-driven outlets.

In occupied Palestine, the Zionist entity is unable to destroy the ability of the Palestinian resistance to communicate to the outside world. Outlets like the Resistance News Network are able to get the word out about Palestinian victories over the Zionist enemy while also revealing the truth about Israeli massacres of civilian populations all around the Gaza Strip.

People in Palestine and Los Angeles (and worldwide) are recording police as they attack peaceful demonstrations and also recording atrocities against civilians to share with the world, destroying narratives that normalize genocide and occupation.

Fanon's teachings are applicable on any scale of struggle, from labor struggles to wars of national liberation. His teachings on anti-imperialist and anti-colonial resistance provide strategies for survival and resistance against the capitalist system.

It is capitalism that tears communities apart to make room for profits, capitalism that pits communities against each other, capitalism that strangles human rights for the sake of the dollar, capitalism that enables the oppression of women and other oppressed people, capitalism that normalizes genocide for the creation of markets, and finally capitalism that nurtures the rise of fascism.



Feminicidios en la colonia

written by Struggle - La Lucha
July 12, 2025



La violencia en esta colonia arropa todos los sectores de la sociedad. Desde las muertes diarias en las carreteras debido a la velocidad extrema con que automovilistas conducen sus vehículos como si fueran armamentos de guerra, hasta las muertes causadas por el narco cuando se pelean por los puntos de venta de droga.

Esta semana, ha causado un gran revuelo en las redes sociales y en los medios, cuando un hombre de 60 años mató a sangre fría, al agresor de su hija. Aunque ella no murió, tuvo que ser hospitalizada con graves heridas. Pero, ¿y por qué el revuelo?

Aquí los feminicidios han aumentado y según el informe anual del Mapa Latinoamericano de Feminicidios publicado por la organización MundoSur, Puerto Rico ocupa el segundo lugar luego de Guatemala.

Y aunque hay varias organizaciones feministas que por años, han estado urgiendo al gobierno que se atienda esta terrible incidencia, ninguno de los gobiernos de turno ha acogido sus propuestas con el rigor necesario. La más importante de estas propuestas, por su carácter preventivo, es la enseñanza con perspectiva de género en las escuelas. Pero tal parece que los sectores religiosos fundamentalistas, quienes rechazan contundentemente esta visión educativa, tachándola de “ideología de género”, tienen secuestrado al gobierno que no se atreve a retarlos.

Mientras tanto, mujeres, niñas, personas trans y de la comunidad LGBTQ, quedan presas de una violencia impune.

Por eso, cuando al padre que asesinó al agresor de su hija le impusieron una fianza de más de \$100,000 dólares, alguien comenzó una campaña para recaudar fondos a través de la aplicación GoFundMe, y a las pocas horas, ya el pueblo había donado, con pequeñas cantidades, la totalidad del dinero requerido para la fianza. Sentían que tenían que defender a ese padre porque era lo único que podría llevar justicia a su hija. Eso es lo que opinan del gobierno, que son unos corruptos que no responden al pueblo.

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



Annual 1967 Newark Rebellion Commemoration March and Rally

written by Struggle - La Lucha
July 12, 2025



People's Organization for Progress

1967 NEWARK REBELLION COMMEMORATION MARCH AND RALLY 58TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UPRISING



SATURDAY, JULY 12, 2025

12:00 NOON

**REBELLION MEMORIAL, 250 Springfield Avenue
(between Hayes Street & Irvine Turner Boulevard)
Newark, NJ**

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: 973-801-0001

MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING PROTOCOLS ARE ENCOURAGED

Dear Friends:

Please attend the People's Organization for Progress (POP) annual 1967 Newark Rebellion Commemoration March and Rally in observance of the 58th Anniversary of the uprising.

It will take place Saturday, July 12, 2025, 12:00 NOON, beginning at the Rebellion Monument. The monument is located in Rebellion Park on Springfield Avenue between Hayes Street and Irvine Turner Boulevard, Newark, NJ.

We will march from there to the 1st Police Precinct (old) currently the City of Newark Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery & Museum, 10 17th Avenue which is now and back. The precinct is where the 1967 Newark Rebellion started.

Please make every effort to attend this march. This is a very important event. Arrive early if possible. This will help us to start on time.

It is free and open to the public. All are invited. If you have any questions, please call (973) 801-0001. Masks and social distance protocols are encouraged. Thank you.

Long Live The Spirit of The 1967 Newark Rebellion!!!

Power to the people!!!

Lawrence Hamm

Chairman

People's Organization For Progress



What to the Political Prisoner is the Fourth of July?

written by Struggle - La Lucha
July 12, 2025

[Jay Burton is a political prisoner.](#) At just 16 years old, he was ensnared by the predatory neo-Nazi [Lynwood Vikings](#) deputy gang within the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department — a white supremacist gang that federal courts have condemned as engaging in “terrorist-type tactics” and “racially motivated violence” against Black and Latine communities. For 36 years, Burton has been buried alive in California's prison system for a murder he did not commit. This commentary was first published by Struggle-La Lucha.

As we commemorate July 4th, a day traditionally associated with freedom and independence, I ask: What does this celebration truly mean for someone like me, Jay Burton, who has been incarcerated for 36 years, since the age of 16?

My case involves the KNOWN Los Angeles Sheriff's GANG, the Lynwood Vikings, and raises questions about what justice and accountability mean today. I am

seemingly condemned to a new form of slavery, AmeriKKKa's "New Jim Crow" as Professor Michelle Alexander called it.

As Sister Assata Shakur said: "(Prison in the United States) is a new form of Plantation."

I am living proof of the ills of today's criminal (In)justice system.

Meanwhile, we have (false, manufactured) leaders like President Donald Trump leading the AmeriKKKan Empire! He has been convicted of 34 felony counts yet remains free to actualize his most twisted fantasies! I have remained in chains for over 36 years for a crime I did not commit.

This highlights the complexity of freedom.

Frederick Douglass's powerful question, "What to the slave is the 4th of July?" resonates deeply in this context.

It prompts us to consider the multifaceted nature of freedom, including the mental and psychological barriers that exist in inner-city communities and the ongoing struggles for freedom and justice in various parts of the world, such as Palestine, Sudan, the Congo, and Ukraine.

While stuck in the belly of the beast, the celebration of freedom feels distant — the only fireworks here are the harsh realities of life, where sharpened metal often pierces the flesh of men in hopes of taking their lives.

Where sometimes relief comes at a terrible cost, and freedom is lost and in some cases given forever.

Behind the wall, business is business; there is no holiday from this violence. ...

For me, freedom is a simple yet profound desire: to be free of these chains and shout

#FreeJayBurton with my family and supporters, to show love without the interference of the state, and to enrich the next generation for the struggles to come.

I want #FreeJayBurton to be read as a demand and grassroots call to action so that it becomes a message of hope to The People!

Remember my name!!!

Jay Burton will be Free.

These Bars cannot restrain my Revolutionary Spirit.

Come be part of the solution and reach out to me through social media at: @freedom4jayburton. If you feel called to do so, please donate to my legal fees via Cash App at \$mayag8 or my [gofundme](#). Contact the [Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice](#) for more information and action steps. Be a part of the Revolutionary change we want to see in our communities, where youth won't be degraded and thrown away as urban waste.

#FreeJayBurton

#FreeJayBurton

#FreeJayBurton!!!



The Wretched of the Earth: Fanon's anti-colonial manifesto lives on in Yemen, Palestine, Sahel states

written by Struggle - La Lucha
July 12, 2025

In the spring and summer of 1961, as Algeria bled through its seventh year of war against French colonial rule, a dying Frantz Fanon poured his revolutionary vision into words. Too weak to write, he dictated “The Wretched of the Earth” — a book that would ignite liberation movements across the globe — to Josie Fanon, his life companion and fellow anti-colonial fighter. Around them, the struggle for independence raged; inside their exile in Tunisia, a manifesto for the oppressed was being forged.

The Algerian people waged a guerrilla war against French colonial and allied right-wing forces. The war took a tremendous toll on Algerian fighters, workers, and peasants.

Fanon was battling leukemia, a disease that would claim his life on Dec. 6 of that year. Just months after his death, 1962 witnessed the triumphant conclusion of the Algerian War, as the liberation forces achieved victory and secured the complete withdrawal of French colonial rule. This hard-won independence became a beacon of hope for liberation movements worldwide — a legacy that continues to inspire oppressed resistance across the globe.

Beginning at the outbreak of the war in 1954 and until he was exiled for his nationalist politics, Fanon served diligently as a physician and psychologist at a French Hospital in Algeria. For years, he treated not only Algerian people tortured by French authorities but also French soldiers traumatized from carrying out acts of torture and murder against the Algerian people.

This gave Fanon a critical perspective into the brutality and inhumanity at the center of any colonial regime. The same brutality Fanon observed in French colonial rule in Algeria can be seen today in the Zionist apartheid state and the U.S. military assault on Yemen.

In “The Wretched of the Earth,” Fanon analyzes the crippling long-term impacts of colonial repression on colonized people. Due to Fanon’s political beliefs, he did not stop at psychology. Fanon actively encouraged the oppressed masses of African people to rise up and take back their culture, their society, and their lives by any means necessary – and particularly through armed struggle.

Fanon’s legacy of anti-colonial resistance resonates powerfully today in Africa and the West Asia region. In the [Sahel states](#), Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger have expelled French-backed regimes, seeking to reclaim their nations’ resources and wealth for their own people rather than enriching billionaires in Paris.

Similar defiant resistance against imperialist domination can be witnessed across West Asia, particularly in [Yemen](#) and Palestine, where populations have

courageously confronted vastly superior military powers. Despite the immense sacrifices these struggles have demanded, the resolve of these peoples remains unbroken, embodying the same revolutionary spirit that Fanon championed decades ago.

This year will be the 100th anniversary of Fanon's birth on July 20. The best way to honor Fanon's commitment to decolonization is to support the continued struggles of colonized and oppressed people across the planet, from Yemen to Palestine to the Sahel.



After 43 years in jail, Mumia Abu-Jamal is still innocent

written by Struggle - La Lucha

July 12, 2025

Philadelphia, July 5 — Over a hundred people demonstrated for Mumia Abu-Jamal's freedom here today. Forty-three years ago, on July 3, 1983, the Black revolutionary

was convicted after being framed for killing a Philadelphia cop.

Abu-Jamal was sentenced to death and would be kept on death row until 2011. Pennsylvania authorities are still trying to kill him by medical neglect.

People rallied in West Philadelphia's Malcolm X Park on 52nd Street. Among the speakers were Ramona Africa and Mama Pam.

It was pointed out that the freeing of American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier after nearly 50 years in prison shows that the power of the people can free Mumia Abu-Jamal as well.

One of the streets adjoining Malcolm X Park is Osage Avenue, where, further west, the FBI and police dropped a bomb on the MOVE organization's house on May 13, 1985. Six adults and five children were killed.

Ramona Africa was the only adult survivor. She was imprisoned for seven years while enduring extensive burns.

After the rally, people marched up 52nd Street, a center of West Philly's Black community. They were greeted by striking members of AFSCME DC 33 at the Lucien E. Blackwell library.

Despite over 40 years of lies being told about Mumia Abu-Jamal by the corporate media, there's widespread support for Mumia's freedom. Drivers passing by waved or honked their horns in support.

The workers at the library are part of the 9,000 city workers who have been on strike since July 1. Speakers at the Malcolm X Park rally declared their support for the striking workers.

#FreeMumiaAbuJamal



‘We need groceries, not gun-slissing police’: Baltimore cops execute beloved Arabber ‘BJ’ Abdullah

written by Struggle - La Lucha
July 12, 2025

In the wake of Bilal “BJ” Abdullah’s execution at the hands of the Baltimore Police Department, organizers with the Baltimore People’s Power Assembly spoke with members of the community who knew BJ and had spent their entire lives in the neighborhood where the cops executed Bilal. PPA Organizer Joy B grew up just around the corner from the Upton metro station, where the deadly police shooting occurred.

Abdullah was 36 years old and well-known in the community due to his profession as an “Arabber,” or fruit and vegetable vendor. The Black neighborhoods of Northwest Baltimore are infamous for being food deserts, with little access to fresh produce

due to the lack of supermarkets in Sandtown-Winchester, Upton, and Reservoir Hill. Arrabers like BJ are some of these communities' only thread to fresh produce.

Commonly known in the neighborhood as "the fruit man," BJ was well-liked in the community directly around the metro station where he was killed. The Upton neighborhood has long suffered from neo-Jim Crow policies like redlining, white flight, and racist police terror. The people who live in the neighborhood understand this reality. They know that instead of corruption, poverty, and police murder, this country's resources should be invested in health care, education, and jobs.

Issues in the community

Joy B. and Lev Koufax spoke to two street vendors and community leaders in Upton at length about the issues in the community, including the police killing of BJ. One of the men we spoke to was named Twin, the other Archie. Both are lifelong Baltimoreans and were on the block when the cops fired 38 shots, killing BJ.

Both men lamented the death of BJ as part of a bigger problem of complete disinvestment in the community, except for a foreign occupier police department. Mr. Archie spoke to the need for large-scale investment in the neighborhood's historic Avenue Market. The market served as the commercial and social hub of a thriving Black community from the late 19th to the mid-20th Century. Due to capitalist disinvestment in Black business and social programs, the conditions in the neighborhood have deteriorated into poverty, crime, and widespread drug addiction.

Mr. Archie commented on this, saying, "Now that the Avenue has seen a winding down in investment, it's not an entrepreneurial strip. It's a drug strip. It's what I call a Skidrow strip. Yes, back in the day, the Avenue was the Avenue. ... but now there is like a dark cloud on the Avenue. Whatever is here within walking distance is all we can utilize because a lot of people don't have the luxury of transportation."

Mr. Archie emphasized that if the community is going to get back on its feet, then the market needs to be reconstructed and renovated, and the profits from that new market should be invested back into the Black community. Mr. Archie expanded on this, wondering why money paid in taxes isn't invested back to the people:

"When you have so much money allocated in the government's [budget], what are you doing with it?" He went on, "I'm looking to the ones that are spiritual witnesses in high places, who have the money and the allocations to change this mess!"

Capitalist greed

As seen with the killing of BJ, the capitalist's response to the social problems that its own greed created is not compassion, or health care, or social investment - its response is pure brutal, racist apartheid. Instead of the required change and investment that Mr. Archie is talking about, the city and state governments confront social problems in the Black community with the end of a gun.

Mr. Twin knew BJ personally and also spoke to the issues highlighted by Mr. Archie. He spoke more specifically about the consistent racist conduct of the Baltimore police over the years and how this conduct always targets the Black community:

"[The cops] come through here any kind of way they want. Do what they want. They don't do that downtown, down in the Harbor, Fells Point, or Canton. Those neighborhoods have the resources we don't have."

The neighborhoods Mr. Twin references as being the places where the police don't treat the community poorly - Harbor East, Fells Point, and Canton - are all predominantly white and wealthy.

Mr. Twin also echoed Mr. Archie's disgust at the lack of community engagement and investment from the government that employs brutal racist police instead of medical

care, education, grocery stores, and union jobs. Mr. Twin specifically said, speaking about several Baltimore police and government officials, “They need to come through here! They need to see what is happening every day!”

Under this country’s capitalist system, the business-backed elected officials do not have the interests of the people at heart. As Mr. Twin is saying, this is why they refuse to really be in the communities that they supposedly represent. Instead of genuine engagement, the Black community is met with the murder of its beloved community figures, just like Bilal “BJ” Abdullah.

BJ Abdullah wasn’t a monster or a fiend. He was a person. He was a family man. He was a man of generosity, devotion, and faith. BJ’s humanity, and the humanity of all those under the gun of racist police terror – shouldn’t have to be stated, but in a system that constantly dehumanizes the Black community – it must be.

#JusticeForBJ #BlackLivesMatter #EndPoliceTerror



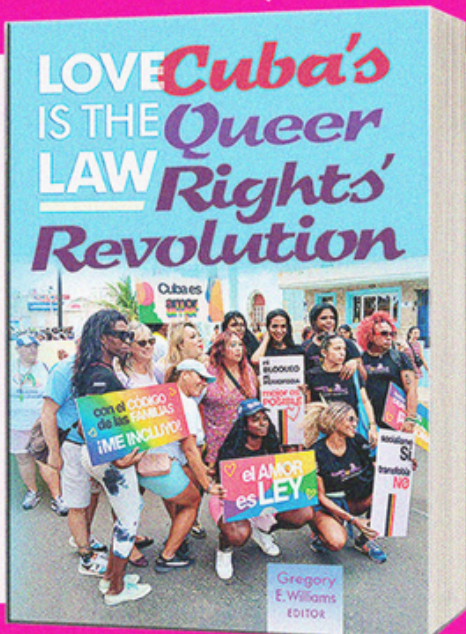
Love is the Law book launch - in Cuba, July 29

written by Struggle - La Lucha
July 12, 2025

BOOK LAUNCH in CUBA

LOVE is the LAW

Cuba's Queer Rights Revolution



**TUESDAY
JULY 29
2:30 PM**

**ICAP Friendship House
Havana, Cuba**

Presentation & dialog among LGBTQ+ activists from Cuba, the U.S., and more

In 2022, Cuba held a referendum for a new Families Code, a major overhaul to the country's constitution in regard to sexuality, gender, and family life. This code greatly expands the rights of women, queer and trans people, and ultimately all Cubans.

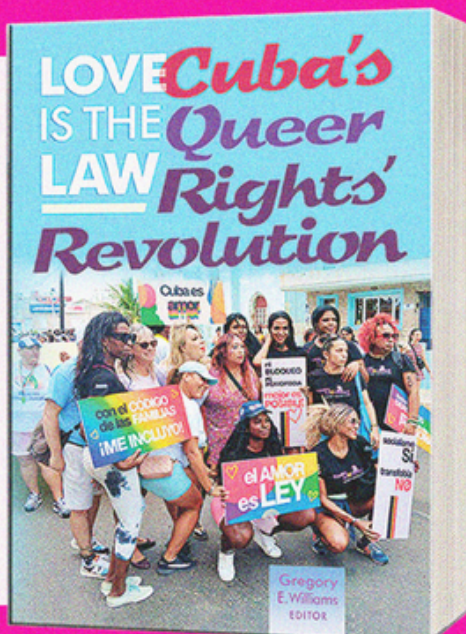
This book documents how Cuba's socialist revolution made this possible, with discussion about what LGBTQ+ communities can learn from Cuba's example, at a time when capitalist governments like the U.S. are trying to erase queer and trans people and push back all gains made by working-class and oppressed people.



LANZAMIENTO DEL LIBRO en CUBA

El AMOR es la LEY

La Revolución de los Derechos Queer en Cuba



MARTES
29 JULIO
14:30

Casa de la Amistad
La Habana, Cuba

Presentación y diálogo entre activistas LGBTQ+ de Cuba, Estados Unidos y más

Este libro fue **producido por activistas LGBTQ+ estadounidenses** que visitaron Cuba en 2023 para **aprender sobre el Código de Familias**.

Este libro documenta cómo **la revolución socialista de Cuba hizo esto posible**, con un debate sobre lo que las comunidades LGBTQ+ pueden aprender del ejemplo de Cuba, en un momento en que **gobiernos capitalistas como el de Estados Unidos intentan borrar a las personas queer y trans** y hacer retroceder todos los logros alcanzados por la clase trabajadora y las personas oprimidas.



Struggle □ La Lucha honored to announce a launch IN CUBA of our most recent book LOVE IS THE LAW: Cuba's Queer Rights Revolution.

Join us for an historic dialogue between LGTBQ+ activists from Cuba, the U.S., and more.

Tuesday, July 29

2:30 pm

ICAP Friendship House

Havana, Cuba

This meeting will be recorded and shared.

#####

Struggle □ La Lucha tiene el honor de anunciar el lanzamiento EN CUBA de nuestro más reciente libro EL AMOR ES LA LEY: La revolución de los derechos queer en Cuba.

Únase a nosotros para un diálogo histórico entre activistas LGBTQ+ de Cuba, Estados Unidos y más.

Martes 29 Julio

14:30

Casa de la Amistad

La Habana, Cuba

Esta reunión será grabada y compartida.



Slavery and the fourth of you lie

written by Struggle - La Lucha

July 12, 2025

The Declaration of Independence is Philadelphia's proudest claim to fame. It was written by the Virginia slave master and future U.S. president, Thomas Jefferson, who sold his own flesh and blood — the product of his rapes — upon the auction block.

Almost [three-quarters of the signers](#) of the declaration were enslavers. Using genocidal language, the document also describes Indigenous peoples defending themselves as “merciless Indian savages.”

The “unalienable rights” that Jefferson's original draft mentioned were “life, liberty and property.” This expression was lifted from the writings of John Locke, a philosopher of the English capitalist class.

Both John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, members of the declaration's drafting committee, knew that “the embattled farmers” who had “fired the shot heard round the world” weren't going to die for the rich man's property. So they changed this

phrase to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”



Frederick Douglass, who had escaped from slavery to become a leader of the Black struggle for freedom, told a Rochester, N.Y., audience in 1852 what “America’s national holiday” meant to millions of enslaved people:

“What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer: a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciations of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, and solemnity, are, to him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy — a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on this earth guilty of practices, more shocking and bloody, than are the people of these United States, at this very hour.”

Yet there would be one magnificent Fourth of July. Four score and seven years after the Declaration of Independence was signed, two big Confederate armies would be defeated at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania., and Vicksburg, Mississippi.

These great battles — which culminated on July 4, 1863 — constituted the turning

point of the U.S. Civil War. Interestingly, two of the four armies engaged in them were commanded by “Proper Philadelphians.”

Black soldiers need not apply

Gen. George Gordon Meade was the commanding general of the Union Army at Gettysburg. Meade came from a prominent Philadelphia family of merchants who had fallen on hard times. Born in Cádiz, Spain — where his merchant father “moved in the highest social circles” — Meade went to West Point because it was free.

In the summer of 1863, Robert E. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia invaded the North. While marching through Maryland and Pennsylvania, Lee’s troops kidnapped and enslaved African Americans.

If the Confederates could have seized the Pennsylvania Railroad bridge spanning the Susquehanna at Harrisburg, the East of the Union would have been largely cut off from the Midwest.

Diplomatic recognition of the slave masters’ regime by Britain and France would probably have followed. Large sections of the capitalist class in the North might have thrown in the towel as well.

While Lee and the Confederacy were playing to win, Meade was trying not to lose. Meade originally wanted to withdraw from Gettysburg. After the battle — despite pleas from other Union generals — Meade refused to pursue Lee’s army.

Meade’s unwillingness to go on the offensive wasn’t based on faulty intelligence. Information had been received about demoralization in Confederate ranks and that they had lost a good deal of their artillery. Nor was it a question of personal cowardice.

Even after two years of bloody warfare — and six months after the Emancipation

Proclamation was issued — Meade hesitated to destroy the Confederate Army. Along with much of his class, he was still hoping to strike a deal with the slave masters. Lee was allowed to retreat across the Potomac.

While white soldiers in the Union Army at Gettysburg were being slaughtered on Little Round Top and Cemetery Ridge, Black soldiers were not allowed to fight beside them. “A company of Black volunteers from Philadelphia who took the train to Harrisburg ... were turned back because of their color,” wrote history professor Allen B. Ballard. ([New York Times](#), May 30, 1999)

Jim Dwyer reported that the racist Bally Corporation didn’t want African Americans to buy their shoes. (New York Daily News, Nov. 17, 1996) Here was the United States government prohibiting Black soldiers from dying for it.

Yet Black soldiers and sailors were indispensable for the Union’s victory. Nearly 200,000 Black soldiers fought in the Union Army and a quarter of the Navy was Black. Just for this participation in rescuing the Union from the Confederacy, reparations are owed Black people.

This was also a case of the capitalists fearing their own revolution. For Meade-the-merchant as well as Lee-the-plantation-owner, Black soldiers with guns represented a slave insurrection that could threaten capitalist rule too.

Vince Copeland pointed out this contradiction in his introduction to “A Voice from Harper’s Ferry”:

“The Black regiments were revolutionary in that they struggled against their own and their relatives’ slavery. But their creation and existence was also a subordination of the Black freedom struggle to the discipline of the anti-slave master capitalist class. It was a subordination of the revolutionary Black soldier to the moderate or often only half-revolutionary white Northern officer.”

Philadelphia traitor

The other “Proper Philadelphian” commanding an army that Fourth of July came from a much richer family than Meade’s. Gen. John Clifford Pemberton was a descendant of Israel Pemberton II — the King of the Quakers — who along with Benjamin Franklin had founded the first fire insurance company in the country.

On July 4, 1863, General Pemberton surrendered his besieged Confederate Army to Ulysses S. Grant at Vicksburg. The Confederacy had been split in two.

Lincoln declared that “the father of waters flows unvexed to the sea.” But it took Black troops to help capture Port Hudson a few days later to put the entire Mississippi River in Union hands.

After the war, the traitor Pemberton was welcomed back into the folds of Philadelphia’s capitalist class. He “spent the rest of his life with his sisters and brothers in Proper Philadelphia’s most exclusive rural-suburb of Penllyn,” according to historian E. Digby Baltzell in his book, “An American Business Aristocracy.”

The descendants of these and other Philadelphia capitalist families put fascist Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo in City Hall as mayor from 1972 to 1980 and sent Mumia Abu-Jamal to death row. This class kept the MOVE 9 defendants in jail for 40 years — two of the MOVE 9 died in prison — and is still keeping Mumia incarcerated.

But at least during the Civil War the ranks of Philadelphia’s business elite included the anti-slavery abolitionist Matthias Baldwin, whose factories eventually turned out 50,000 steam locomotives.

New York’s worse record

New York City had a worse record than Philadelphia. Little more than a week after the Battle of Gettysburg, a pro-slavery insurrection broke out in New York City on

July 13, 1863. Two orphanages filled with Black children were set on fire. To this day, it's uncertain how many African Americans were lynched.

This pogrom in Manhattan was no more spontaneous than the protests would be in 1974 in Boston of racists trying to stop busing of schoolchildren to desegregate public schools. Both were the result of racist agitation supported by important sections of the capitalist class. Particularly vicious in 1863 was the New York Herald, the Fox News of its time.

At City Hall Park, New York Gov. Horatio Seymour actually addressed members of this lynch mob as “My Friends!” Behind Seymour — who would be the (pro-slavery) Democratic presidential nominee in 1868 — was a host of millionaires. Among them were the railroad lawyer Samuel Tilden, who later became the Democratic presidential candidate in 1876, and the banker August Belmont, an opponent of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Probably the most important figure on Wall Street at the time, Belmont was head of the Democratic National Committee. He was son-in-law of Louisiana senator and plantation owner John Slidell.

Slidell was described by Civil War historian Bruce Catton as “running” the just pre-Civil War administration of President James Buchanan. Usually considered the worst president in U.S. history, Buchanan’s administration practically turned over army bases to the slave masters.

Slidell also played a major role in setting up the Confederacy. When he was en route to Europe seeking diplomatic recognition for the slave masters, Slidell was taken off a British vessel by a U.S. Navy captain. War almost broke out between the two countries as a result.

None of this harmed Belmont’s reputation within the capitalist class. Belmont Park,

just east of New York City, and the Belmont Stakes, part of horse racing's "triple crown," are named after him. Belmont's son became head of New York City's first subway, the Interborough Rapid Transit Company — the I.R.T.

In 1992 — 129 years after the so-called "Draft Riots" — another racist mob gathered at City Hall Park. Ten thousand mostly drunken cops cheered Rudolph Giuliani as he denounced David Dinkins, the first African American mayor of New York City. These cops — and campaign contributions from Wall Street — would elect Giuliani as New York's mayor the following year. Giuliani imposed eight years of increased police terror and kicked a million New Yorkers off public assistance.



Artists speak up against genocide in Gaza at Europe's music festivals

written by Struggle - La Lucha

July 12, 2025

As Europe's summer music festival season rolls out, mainstream media and

governments are struggling to keep Palestine solidarity off the stage. In its coverage of Glastonbury Festival, the BBC focused on [censoring](#) the Irish rap group Kneecap over their staunch pro-Palestinian stance – only to be met by a wave of artists who used their platform to call for a free Palestine and to demand broadcasters share real news about the Israeli genocide in Gaza.

Among them was the British duo Bob Vylan, who led the crowd in chanting “Free, free Palestine” and “Death, death to the IDF,” denouncing war crimes committed by the Israeli army, including the [starvation of children](#) and the killing of civilians in [humanitarian aid lines](#). The BBC has since announced it would edit their performance on streaming platforms, [festival organizers](#) distanced themselves from the chant, and Prime Minister [Keir Starmer](#) labeled it hate speech. But the reaction among festivalgoers and artists has been starkly different.

Governments refuse to admit *status quo* has changed

Many artists insisted that the real issue is not on-stage speech but European governments’ complicity in genocide, echoing reactions to earlier attacks on Kneecap, who faced cancellations following their Coachella performance and outspoken solidarity with Palestine.

Australian band Amyl and the Sniffers condemned the backlash against Bob Vylan and Kneecap, saying authorities are attempting to frame these as isolated cases – “a couple of ‘bad bands’” – rather than acknowledging the growing anti-genocide anger among the public. “Trying to make it look like Bob [Vylan] and Kneecap are one-offs, instead of admitting that the *status quo* has shifted majorly and people are desperate for our governments to listen,” the band posted on [social media](#). Throughout the weekend, they pointed out, musicians raised their voices for Gaza, cheered on by audiences that waved Palestinian flags.

While [Kneecap](#) and [Bob Vylan](#) both face legal action over their expressions of

solidarity, their determination to challenge the *status quo* is unshaken. Watching what the music industry tried to do to Kneecap after Coachella, [DJ Toddla T](#) added, “has been like watching a lightweight boxer against a heavyweight, but holding it. Exhausted, but refusing to fall.”

“Kneecap represents community, which is why they can’t be taken down despite many attempts,” he added.

Taking the stage at Glastonbury, Kneecap voiced [support](#) for Palestine Action, a direct action group currently under threat of being banned under the UK’s anti-terror legislation. “Palestine Action is not arming the genocide and Israel – that’s Keir Starmer and the British government, who should be proscribed,” the group [said](#).

“Kneecap, along with many artists and celebrities and Parliamentarians of different stripes, have joined thousands of people across the country saying ‘We are all Palestine Action,’ showing how unworkable the government’s threat to ban Palestine Action is,” Palestine Action spokespeople [added](#).

“We just want to stop people from being murdered,” Kneecap members told [The Guardian](#) before the festival. “There’s people starving to death, people being bombed every day. That’s the stuff we need to talk about, not fucking artists.”

Liberating Europe from imperialism is part of the struggle

The genocide in Gaza was also front and center at other European festivals. At Zagreb’s InMusic Festival, bands like Fontaines D.C. and Massive Attack displayed Palestinian flags and screened footage from Gaza – images that were omitted from mainstream media coverage of the event. Other artists also emphasized the importance of linking global and local struggles in confronting Western imperialism.

During his performance, Nigerian musician [Seun Kuti](#) offered guidance to Europe’s

youth. “I know you want to free Palestine, free Congo, free Sudan, free Iran. It’s a new one every week,” he said. “Free Europe. Free Europe from right-wing extremism, from fascism, from racism. Free Europe from imperialism. When you do this job – as soon as you do this job – Gaza will be free. Congo will be free. Sudan will be free.”

Source: [Peoples Dispatch](#)

