

Struggle □ La Lucha PDF - March 24, 2025

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March 23, 2025
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► Orden ejecutiva para la independencia de Puerto Rico

STRUGGLE ★ **LA LUCHA**
for Socialism por el Socialismo

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Struggle for Socialism Party

Partido de la Lucha por el Socialismo

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2025

Attempted trans genocide is a warning to the whole working class

By Melinda Butterfield

Talk given by Melinda Butterfield of the Struggle for Socialism Party at the International Women's Day March and Teach-In in Baltimore on March 8, 2025.

Hello friends, comrades and siblings. Happy International Women's Day.

Thank you to the organizers for inviting me to speak today. I admit that I really struggled with what I would say. On an important occasion like this, I'd like to give an inspiring, hopeful message about historic victories women have won and the battles ahead.

But as a trans woman living in Donald Trump's United States, it's hard to find anything positive to say. All of our communities are being attacked. The whole working class is under siege.

My immigrant sisters are subject to ICE terror and deportation, with their families being ripped apart. My Palestinian sisters are engulfed in ongoing genocide in Gaza, despite the ceasefire agreement, with Israel not only making military attacks, but cutting off food, medicine and electricity. My Black sisters here in Baltimore are mourning spouses and children murdered by police or jailed.

And right now, transgender people hold the distinction of being targets for eradication.

Let me say it again: The fascists running the government plan to eradicate us.

It's taking a toll.

About 10 days ago, an Indigenous trans woman from out west, someone I respect and admire, posted a suicide note on social media. She'd been targeted for months by white supremacist groups. They hung "wanted" posters with her photo in her neighborhood calling her a "groomer." She was exhausted from fighting so hard for so long, she wrote. She was simply done.

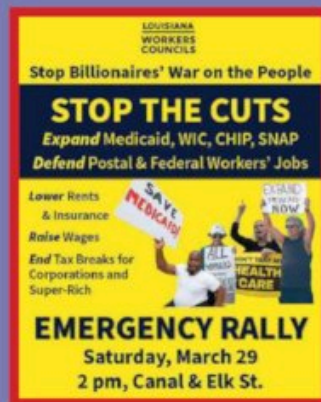
My heart ached for her, for our community's loss if she went through with it. But I understood. I've felt the same way more times

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SL1 Photo: Melinda Butterfield

Oppressed genders lead march to Baltimore women's jail on International Women's Day, March 8, 2025.



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Pentagon downplays Elon Musk

visit for secret China war plans

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 23, 2025

In a rare public denial from the highest levels of government, the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, and President Donald Trump all swiftly responded to reports that tech billionaire Elon Musk was scheduled to receive a classified briefing on U.S. war plans for China.

On March 20, both the New York Times and Wall Street Journal independently reported that Elon Musk, CEO of SpaceX and leader of the Trump administration's DOGE (Department of Government Executions ... of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, Education and so on), was set to receive a top-secret briefing on operational plans for potential conflict with China at the Pentagon. According to these reports, the briefing was scheduled for March 21 in the Pentagon's secure conference room known as "the Tank," typically reserved for high-level military discussions.

The reports triggered immediate responses from multiple government officials. President Donald Trump took to his Truth Social platform to declare, "Elon is NOT BEING BRIEFED ON ANYTHING CHINA BY THE DEPARTMENT OF WAR!!!" The emphatic denial, complete with all capital letters, underscored the issue's sensitivity.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth contradicted the reports on social media platform X, writing: "This is NOT a meeting about 'top secret China war plans.' It's an informal meeting about innovation, efficiencies, and smarter production." This characterization attempted to reframe the meeting as focused on Musk's expertise in technological innovation rather than military strategy.

Pentagon says he's 'just visiting'

Adding to these denials, Pentagon spokesperson Sean Parnell issued a statement describing Musk's Pentagon visit simply as "just visiting," a characterization that seemed deliberately vague given that the visitor was Elon Musk, owner of SpaceX, the [most valuable \(on Wall Street\) defense contractor](#) in the world.

According to Reuters, Musk did indeed visit the Pentagon. He reportedly met with Secretary Hegseth in his office rather than in the secure "Tank" facility mentioned in the original reporting.

Media coverage has primarily focused on the controversy surrounding Musk's access to classified information rather than the detailed operational war plans against China being developed at the Pentagon. The real issue here is the existence of such advanced military planning rather than who might be briefed on it.

The Pentagon's possible sharing of its most sensitive and closely guarded operational war plans regarding China with Musk underscores how advanced war preparations have become.

The Trump administration has publicly stated, through Defense Secretary Hegseth, its intention to shift from the conflict in Ukraine to China.

In February, Hegseth articulated this position by explaining that "stark strategic realities prevent the United States of America from being primarily focused on the security of Europe." He emphasized that the administration is instead prioritizing possible war with China in the Pacific.

This strategic reorientation is not new. It began in 2011 with Barack Obama's Pivot to Asia, a Cold War-style containment policy. The Pivot to Asia was primarily a military operation.

The military component of the Pivot began with the Obama administration reorienting U.S. military power toward Asia, moving Naval assets to the Pacific. This

included stationing a full Marine task force in Australia, deploying combat ships to Singapore, and positioning MV-22 Ospreys in Japan.

However, [by 2022](#), the United States still had more troops in Europe than it did in 2011, and high-end military systems continued to be routinely deployed to the Middle East and Ukraine rather than Asia.

SpaceX: A critical military contractor

Billionaire Elon Musk is both Donald Trump's co-executive through DOGE and the owner of SpaceX, a company deeply integrated into U.S. military and intelligence operations.

SpaceX has emerged as one of the Pentagon's most critical contractors, particularly in two key areas. First, its Starlink satellite network provides global high-speed data communications that military personnel rely on for worldwide operations. According to the New York Times, the company "has been paid hundreds of millions of dollars by the Pentagon that now relies heavily on SpaceX's Starlink satellite communications network for military personnel to transmit data worldwide."

Second, SpaceX has established near-monopoly status in orbital launch capabilities, accounting for approximately 90% of mass launched into orbit in 2024. This dominant position makes the company indispensable for military and intelligence satellite deployment. The New York Times reported that "in 2024, SpaceX was granted about \$1.6 billion in Air Force contracts," not including classified spending by intelligence agencies like the National Reconnaissance Office, which has contracted SpaceX to build "a new constellation of low-earth orbit satellites to spy on China, Russia, and other threats."

The nature of Pentagon war plans

The alleged briefing would have involved highly classified operational plans, known

in military terminology as “O-plans.” The New York Times described these as “among the military’s most closely guarded secrets,” explaining that the specific briefing prepared for the China war plan consists of “about 20 to 30 slides that lay out how the United States would fight such a conflict.”

Such plans typically cover the full spectrum of potential conflict, “beginning with the indications and warning of a threat from China to various options on what Chinese targets to hit, over what time period, that would be presented to Mr. Trump for decisions.”

According to the initial reports, senior military leadership including Defense Secretary Hegseth, Acting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Christopher W. Grady, and Indo-Pacific Command head Admiral Samuel J. Paparo were set to present these details to Musk.

The underlying significance of this incident extends beyond the immediate question of whether Musk received classified information. The controversy highlights the dominant role of the military-tech-industrial complex and the high-tech billionaires.



Orden ejecutiva para la independencia de Puerto Rico

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 23, 2025

El problema central que tenemos en Puerto Rico es nuestra falta de soberanía por ser una colonia de los Estados Unidos. Impide que desarrollemos una economía que sostenga al pueblo de una manera digna y consistente con nuestra naturaleza sin ser cautiva de los caprichos del imperio del norte.

Después de siglos de dominación española junto a Cuba y Filipinas, la Guerra Hispanoamericana vino a sellar el próximo cautiverio, esta vez a manos de EUA. Pero no sin antes de que PR tuviera Autonomía, aunque fueron apenas unos meses antes de que las tropas gringas nos invadieran en 1898. Así que, al final de esa guerra, el Tratado de París firmado entre España y EUA, que cedía PR a los gringos, lo que formalizó fue el robo de una incipiente nación libre.

Y desde entonces se continuó la lucha por la independencia, esta vez contra el norte. Una lucha diversa, con armas, con huelgas, y con mucha represión que ha costado

vidas como la que conmemoramos este pasado 21 de marzo, la Masacre de Ponce en el 1937 donde la policía acribilló a 19 boricuas y dejó 150 heridos. Por años se han tratado casi todas las estrategias, incluyendo plebiscitos y elecciones tipo alianzas, pero hasta el momento todo ha sido infructuoso.

Ahora, con la nueva administración gringa de Trump, quien ha estado firmando órdenes ejecutivas a diestra y siniestra cambiando la realidad política de los EUA, un grupo de boricuas, mujeres y hombres dignos, independentistas expertos en varios campos, abogacía, derecho internacional, economía, ciencias sociales, profesores universitarios y comunicadores, han sometido un borrador, un documento a la Casa Blanca como una orden ejecutiva para la independencia de PR. Responden a la gran crisis que enfrenta nuestro país, y aprovechan la ejecutoria del presidente gringo para adelantar de este modo la liberación de PR.

Esto ha suscitado una avalancha de críticas por parte del gobierno local y sus secuaces corruptos que por décadas han desangrado nuestro país. Pero también ha puesto en la palestra pública el tema tan importante de la Independencia. Ya van dos semanas de discusiones públicas, incluyendo algunas serias y reflexivas.

Queda ahora saber cual será la recepción en Casa Blanca. Pero de todas formas, ya se ha avanzado en la discusión por el pueblo de la necesidad de independencia. Y esto de por sí, es un gran logro.

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



Executive Order for the Independence of Puerto Rico

written by Struggle - La Lucha
March 23, 2025

The central issue we face in Puerto Rico is our lack of sovereignty as a colony of the United States. This prevents us from developing an economy that sustains our people in a dignified manner, consistent with our identity, without being captive to the whims of the northern empire.

After centuries of Spanish domination alongside Cuba and the Philippines, the Spanish-American War sealed our next captivity, this time under U.S. control. Yet, just before this, Puerto Rico had briefly achieved Autonomy — though it lasted only a few months before USA troops invaded in 1898. At the end of that war, the Treaty of Paris, signed between Spain and the U.S., ceded Puerto Rico to the U.S., formalizing the theft of an incipient free nation.

Since then, the struggle for independence has continued, now against the North. This diverse fight has involved armed resistance, strikes, and severe repression that

has claimed lives, such as those we commemorated on March 21 — the 1937 Ponce Massacre, where police gunned down 19 Puerto Ricans and left 150 wounded. Over the years, nearly every strategy has been tried, including plebiscites and electoral alliances, but so far, all efforts have been fruitless.

Now, under the new U.S. administration of Donald Trump — who has been signing executive orders left and right, reshaping the U.S. political reality — a group of proud Puerto Ricans, *independentistas* with expertise in law, international rights, economics, social sciences, academia, and media, have submitted a draft document to the White House proposing an executive order for Puerto Rico's independence. They aim to address the profound crisis facing our nation and leverage the current president's approach to advance Puerto Rico's liberation.

This move has sparked fierce criticism from the local government and its corrupt cronies, who have bled our country dry for decades. Yet it has also thrust the critical issue of independence into the public spotlight. For two weeks now, serious and reflective debates have dominated public discourse.

The question remains: How will the White House respond? Regardless, the discussion among our people about the necessity of independence has already progressed. That, in itself, is a significant achievement.

From Puerto Rico, for Radio Clarín of Colombia, this is Berta Joubert-Ceci.



End the war in Ukraine, U.S./NATO out of Eastern Europe

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It seems impossible to have a discussion with those who insist on calling for more billions for weapons, training, and mercenaries for Ukraine even after U.S./NATO wars have destroyed so many millions of lives. The cheerleaders for the U.S. war in Ukraine are as misguided and indoctrinated by the Biden regime as the dupes who believe that Trump will bring us peace. Biden's minions, like Trump's, stake their position on a mountain of lies, lack of information, wishful thinking, and hatred of the other while invoking high-sounding words like sovereignty, democracy, and freedom. Many cling to the ridiculous idea that Putin somehow controls Trump. This idea is a fairy tale invented by war profiteers to channel the justified hatred of Trump into support for war against Russia. In reality, both Biden and Trump want to subjugate Ukraine and Russia to U.S. capitalist control. They have different strategies to accomplish a common aim — to conquer the world for U.S. capitalist markets, labor, and resources. Trump will continue to arm Ukraine and work with

the Nazi-led Ukrainian army, just as Biden did — if for no other reason than Chevron, Lockheed Martin, BlackRock, Amazon, and SpaceX demand it.

Military-Industrial-Banking Complex, enemy of all the people of the world, fully controls the White House and Congress

The first thing to admit is that both the Republican and Democratic parties have embraced the continuous buildup of the military budget, adding up to over \$1.2 trillion, plus \$952 billion in interest payments on a deficit that military spending caused. Not a word is spoken by the Democratic Party about this.

Secondly, we need to understand the real purpose of the military budget. On whose behalf do the president and Congress rule, regardless of administration? They rule on behalf of the major shareholders of the banks and war-profiteering firms that fund their campaigns. Whether by economic strangulation (so-called “sanctions”), invasions, coups, or bombardment, the foreign policy of the U.S. is aimed at enhancing the bloated profits of U.S. investment firms, banks, and conglomerates. Both parties pursue this mission regardless of the millions starved, maimed, or killed as a result.

There is not a single country in the world that has benefited politically, socially, or economically from a U.S. war, directly or by proxy. Certainly, the working class of the U.S. has no interest. In fact, militarism is destroying our lives.

Every year that the U.S. military budget has grown so has the power of the most reactionary sector of the capitalist ruling class. A large part of the wealth amassed by the Nazi Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, and JD Vance has come out of U.S. taxpayers' pockets as subsidies and government contracts to the war-profiteering corporations in which Musk, Bezos, and Vance are invested, including SpaceX, Blue Origin, Amazon, Palantir, and Anduril. The austerity and repression of all civil, economic, and academic rights occurring under Trump is directly tied to the buildup of the

U.S./NATO war budgets. In other words, Trump is a monster the Democratic Party helped to create.

Those who clamor for more NATO bases, more weapons, and ever younger Ukrainian conscripts have no right to decry the rise of right-wing governments in Europe, which are slashing social benefits and brutally repressing protest. This is what happens when war profiteers are allowed to raid government treasuries for ever higher profits.

History without lies: Zelensky and Biden plundered Ukraine, bombed and terrorized the Donbass

For years — especially since the U.S.-orchestrated coup in 2014 — foreign capitalists have plundered Ukraine of its public assets and impoverished its people. By 2020, Ukraine had become the poorest country in Europe, mainly due to the privatizations and cuts to public services dictated by the U.S.-controlled International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is no accident that the U.S.-sponsored buildup of openly Nazi forces like the Azov battalion coincided with the rapid decline in Ukrainians' living standards. Austerity requires repression abroad and at home.

The looting of the economy and the vicious scapegoating and persecution of ethnic Russians and other minorities led the people of the Donbass and Crimea to rebel. In 2014, the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics were formed as a defense against the dictatorship of the U.S.-backed Petro Poroshenko, the Ukrainian president who declared that "our children will go to school, to kindergartens - their children [in the Donbass] will sit in cellars." Poroshenko made this speech as the Ukrainian National Guard was shelling apartment buildings in the Donbass with U.S.-made artillery. Since 2014, U.S. training, funds, and arms have enabled the Ukrainian military to kill tens of thousands of people who have resisted Kiev's program of Nazism and austerity. Until this day, the Donbass has suffered most from the war, where battles still rage daily.

Like the eventual secession of the republics of the Donbass and Crimea, the special military operation declared by the Russian Federation in 2022 is also an act of self-defense. Few Americans fully appreciate that the people of the Soviet Union lost 27 million people in the fight to defeat the German Nazis and their collaborators, such as the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), whose members were supported by the CIA for decades after WWII. The more than 100,000 U.S.-armed and trained soldiers amassed at the border of the Donbass on February 23, 2022 were flying the flags and shouting the slogans of the OUN. Imagine if open Nazis were approaching your border with tanks and rocket launchers.

U.S. Bases Near Russia



Dozens of military bases have encircled Russia in the last two decades despite a 1990 promise by the U.S. to cease the NATO buildup along Russia's Western Border. Many of these bases are armed with nuclear weapons. Just this month, Poland's right-wing president Andrzej Duda called on the U.S. to deploy nuclear warheads to Polish territory.

The 2015 Minsk agreement between Ukraine and Russia was worked out to cease hostilities and afford the Donbass republics some autonomy, but the U.S. and Ukraine tore it up. Ukrainian violations of the ceasefire skyrocketed in the days leading up to the February 24, 2022. In other words, Biden initiated the current war against Russia using Ukraine as a proxy.

Zelensky: Dictator and thief, servant to BlackRock

“We have already managed to attract attention and have cooperation with such giants of the international financial and investment world as Black Rock, J.P. Morgan and Goldman Sachs. Such American brands as Starlink or Westinghouse have already become part of our Ukrainian way. Your brilliant defense systems – such as HIMARS or Bradleys – are already uniting our history of freedom with your enterprises... everyone can become a big business by working with Ukraine.”

—Volodymyr Zelensky in a January 23, 2023 address to [U.S.] National Association of State Chambers [of Commerce]

Far from being a hero, the embezzler-in-chief Zelensky has facilitated the plunder and destruction of Ukraine while enriching himself by as much as \$400 million, according to a report by Seymour Hersh. His government has canceled union contracts for 70% of the country’s workers, and he’s made it legal for companies to increase the work week from 40 to 60 hours. Civilians are routinely grabbed off the street for the army or are shot when they resist. Detention camps for political prisoners are now widespread throughout the territory under Kiev’s control. Press freedom has been crushed, and opposition parties are banned. The Zelensky government is now openly threatening to execute political prisoners like the Kononovich brothers, who are persecuted solely for opposing the U.S./NATO war.

While condemning thousands of Ukrainians to death on the frontlines, Zelensky has

signed away Ukraine's sovereignty to BlackRock. This U.S. investment company controls \$10 trillion worth of the world's resources and has controlling shares in most U.S. war-profiteering corporations. BlackRock is the same company that oversaw the corporate bailouts at the beginning of the COVID pandemic as millions died. They also got billions from the 2008 bank bailouts while millions of working people lost homes, jobs, and pensions.

BlackRock loots U.S. and NATO-member government treasuries to boost the profits of the weapons, fuel, logistics, and tech companies under its control. The bulk of the \$100 billion in so-called U.S. 'aid' to Ukraine is dispersed to these companies through government contracts. As hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians and Russians have lost lives and limbs, profits have soared. Chevron, Lockheed Martin, Palantir, and SpaceX (which includes Musk's Starlink) have also profited from the U.S./Israeli genocidal assault on Gaza.

Now that the billionaire owners of BlackRock have nearly exhausted Ukraine's supply of soldiers, they want controlling shares of Ukraine itself: 50% "of all relevant Ukrainian Government-owned natural resource assets...and other infrastructure relevant to natural resource assets," per the draft of Trump's "minerals deal," signed by the U.S. Treasury and Ministry of Economy of Ukraine.

It's never been about Putin

The U.S. invasion of Iraq had nothing to do with Saddam Hussein. The U.S. invasion of Panama had nothing to do with Manuel Noriega. Just like Putin, Hussein, and Noriega were once U.S. allies. It was not until these countries declared that they would not allow the U.S. to dominate them economically and steal their resources that the U.S. turned and waged war against them. Putin was only judged to be "criminal" by the U.S. when his government resisted the takeover of Russian state oil and gas companies by foreign hedge funds. But, to mask their real aims, every imperialist war requires a bogeyman, even if it means the demonization of a once-

faithful client.

As for their real aims, look to Libya whose people enjoyed the highest standard of living in Africa until their country was destroyed by U.S./NATO bombs. The same U.S./NATO cheerleaders that demonized the Pan-African leader Gaddafi and celebrated his lynching by U.S.-backed forces fail to mention that the Libya of today is a country torn apart by warlords, complete with open slave markets. Or look to Syria. The Biden administration never missed a chance to condemn Bashar al-Assad even as the U.S. imposed an economic blockade on Syria and occupied as much as a third of its territory in the oil-rich northeast. Now that Assad has been replaced with the 'help' of U.S. Special Forces, the government of Abu Mohammad al-Julani (aka Ahmed al-Sharaa) is mass executing its political opponents and selling off Syrian state property to foreign capitalists.

Democratic Party politicians cry about Putin's 'authoritarianism' but give standing ovations to Benjamin Netanyahu as he carries out genocide in Palestine. They wine and dine Saudi monarchs while political dissidents in Saudi Arabia are punished with crucifixion. Supporters of the war in Ukraine decry the rule of "oligarchs" in Russia while five U.S. billionaires own more wealth than 170 million Americans, and the Nazi billionaire Elon Musk dictates U.S. policy. It's worth remembering that before Musk was sieg-heiling at the presidential podium, he was getting billions in contracts with the Biden administration. We ought to deal with our oligarchs and let Russians deal with theirs.

All the hypocritical cries about Putin are cover for the capitalists who want Russia to be just like their neocolonies in Eastern Europe. With "their [Ukrainian] blood and our bullets," as the war criminal Oliver North put it, U.S. capitalists want to use the Ukrainian military as a battering ram to achieve their conquest.

Trump may have reason to believe that he can more effectively carry out the imperialist takeover of Russia by bribery and extortion rather than open war. For

one, Trump hopes that Putin can convince a sector of the Russian capitalists to sell out their country to Goldman Sachs. He is also trying to take advantage of Russia's desire for peace to win them away from an alliance with China, the center of the imperialists' crosshairs. We hope that, for the sake of all the people of Russia and China, Putin will not fall into this trap.

Destroying U.S. workers' lives to attack China - Biden and Trump unite

While the call to tax billionaires is right, it means nothing if U.S. tax revenue continues to be sucked up by the war machine.

Through the investment banks, the war-profiteers have infiltrated of almost every sector of production in the U.S.. Their influence has spread like a cancer to every corner of economic and social life. To facilitate the continued looting of the treasury by the war-profiteers, governments cut non-military spending. To block resistance to the cuts, they destroy unions and progressive social organizations.

It's not only that Musk and Trump are rotten to the core or that they pursue bad policies. They represent the historical outcome of capitalism as it has developed in the U.S. towards increasing militarism, austerity, and repression. Like any other capitalist government that turns toward fascism, the state relies increasingly on open white supremacy, gender oppression, anti-immigrant persecution, more police and prisons, and the destruction of all civil rights in order to keep profits flowing.

More than ever, it's guns or butter, warfare or healthcare. That means that supporting the foreign policies of either capitalist party as they back war or sanctions against Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, etc., is tantamount to supporting cuts, repression, and poverty at home.

You cannot stand against the cuts to education and health care, national parks, the VA, postal service, and disaster relief while echoing the call for war in Ukraine and

against Russia. The people of Russia can conduct their struggle where they are. Our struggle is here. We can start by demanding U.S./NATO out of Eastern Europe.

Source: [Workers Voice](#)



Stand with South Africa's fight against the racist Musk-Trump regime - NYC, March 21

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65th COMMEMORATION OF THE SHARPEVILLE MASSACRE.....



**STAND WITH SOUTH AFRICA'S FIGHT
AGAINST THE RACIST MUSK-TRUMP
REGIME**



Friday, March 21st, 2025 @ 1pm Rally

US Mission to United Nations
45th St. & 1st Ave.



- Protest the Trump Administration's expulsion of South African Ambassador for standing up against racism
- South Africa defends their land reform policy from the attacks of Elon Musk
- Remember that South Africa took Israel to International Criminal Court for genocide against the Palestinians
- Pan-Africanism is Our Duty



March 21st, 1960
Sharpeville Protests



Thousands in NYC protest the genocidal bombing of Gaza

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 23, 2025

March 18 — Thousands marched through the streets of midtown Manhattan tonight to protest the genocidal bombing of Gaza. An estimated 400 Palestinians, including 175 children, were killed by the Zionist apartheid state using U.S.-made bombs and planes.

The action was called on short notice by the Shut It Down 4 Palestine Coalition. People rallied in Times Square, carrying Palestinian flags and hundreds of signs and chanting, “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!”

A short message was read from Mahmoud Khalil, a Columbia University graduate student who was kidnapped by ICE Gestapo agents and taken to Louisiana. He was singled out because he helped organize protests in defense of Palestine.

On March 15, at least a thousand people marched in Manhattan to free Mahmoud

Khalil.

Columbia University refused to defend Khalil, a Palestinian, and his family, who were subjected to death threats. Instead, the Ivy League school has expelled, suspended, or fired students who protested. Some had their diplomas retracted.

One of those fired, Grant Miner, spoke at Times Square. He's the president of United Auto Workers Local 2710, representing Columbia University's student workers.

Other speakers included representatives from the Palestinian Youth Movement; PAL-AWDA, The Palestine Right to Return Coalition; Neturei Karta, an anti-Zionist group of Orthodox Jews; the Party for Socialism and Liberation; and The People's Forum.

Free Palestine!



European Court rules Ukraine

guilty in Odessa massacre

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 23, 2025

On March 13, the [European Court of Human Rights](#) delivered a scathing ruling, holding Ukraine responsible in the massacre of scores of anti-Maidan activists in Odessa on May 2, 2014.

This ruling has received limited coverage in Western media outlets, as it confirms the Ukrainian regime's support of the neo-Nazis through its inaction and refusal to take any measures against the killers.

On that day, nearly 50 anti-fascists were massacred. Activists were attacked by a racist neo-Nazi mob and driven into the House of Trade Unions, which was then set afire. Some anti-fascists were burned alive; others were shot or beaten to death as they tried to escape the blaze. The youngest victim was just 17.

(For more on the Odessa massacre, see the [interview with massacre survivor Alexey Albu](#) conducted by Struggle-La Lucha co-editor Melinda Butterfield in Simferopol, Crimea, in September 2014.)

The Court ruled that there had been “violations of the right to life/investigation on account of the authorities’ failure to ... prevent the violence in Odessa and to ensure timely rescue measures for people trapped in the fire.”

The Court decision makes clear that firefighters were instructed not to respond to emergency calls from people trapped in the city's House of Trade Unions when it was set ablaze. The Maidan coup regime actively wanted these people to die.

The 2014 Maidan coup

In February 2014, a U.S.-backed coup overthrew the elected government of Ukraine and installed a far-right regime representing Western imperialist interests, local oligarchs and neo-Nazis. It's known as the [Maidan coup](#), which refers to the central square in Kiev, Maidan Nezalezhnosti, where pro-NATO rallies were staged.

Many Ukrainians resisted the Maidan coup, particularly in the working class. In the Maidan civil war, fascist gangs emerged as a force for the coup. Resistance to the coup was strongest in the eastern section of the country. In Odessa, a neo-Nazi pro-Maidan gang targeted the Odessa House of Trade Unions, near the center of the resistance. The building was firebombed and at least 46 anti-fascists and labor activists were burned alive.

The resistance to the Maidan coup has continued from 2014 to today. The independent Donetsk People's Republic and Lugansk People's Republic were created when the people there voted overwhelmingly (89% and 96%) to secede from the Maidan regime. They have been subjected to continuous attack since then, particularly by the Ukrainian National Guard's Azov regiment, a neo-Nazi stormtrooper-like operation. More than 14,000 were killed in Ukraine's war on Donetsk and Lugansk before Russia's special military operation to stop the neo-Nazi war on these independent republics.

The U.S. had orchestrated the 2014 Maidan coup, seeking to seize control of Ukraine's resources and to dominate the region, particularly targeting Russia. After years of bloodshed, their plan failed.

Rare earth minerals

Now, Trump wants to stop the massive military campaign against Russia (estimated cost so far is \$183 billion since 2022) to focus on a bigger target: China. Don't mistake Trump's tactics as a pursuit of peace. Trump is demanding a massive price for ending the proxy war against Russia: Ukraine's mineral wealth — said to be

worth \$13 trillion total.

As [John Helmer](#) reported, “Because the U.S. auto, aerospace, and artificial intelligence industries are heavily dependent for their supplies of lithium, titanium, and other rare earth minerals (REM) on two enemy states, China and Russia, they should be replaced as quickly as possible by a friendly source. ...

“The cheapest solution is to take over the Ukrainian sources of these minerals and metals at zero cost of acquisition — zero cost because Ukraine can be pressed to hand over its sources as payback for the U.S. financing of the war against Russia.”

Who proposed this solution to Trump? “It was Elon Musk,” Helmer reports.

“His Tesla company is the largest consumer of lithium and producer of lithium batteries for electric vehicles in the U.S., with his annual tonnage exceeding the four next largest producers combined. Musk also is a large consumer of titanium, both for Tesla cars and for his SpaceX company’s rockets.

“Also, in Musk’s plans for cornering the artificial intelligence (AI) market with his xAI company, rare earth metals (REM) are essential. In fact, these metals are not rare – it’s just that they exist in low concentrations, which are difficult and expensive to extract. They are crucial components of the semiconductors that provide the computing power that drives AI. They possess uniquely powerful magnetic qualities and are excellent at conducting electricity and resisting heat.”

Trump has won Zelensky’s agreement to turn over Ukraine’s rare earth minerals. But that’s not enough. The fact is (and this isn’t being reported in any U.S. media) about 53% of the titanium, lithium, and rare earth minerals that the Ukraine regime claims are located in the four regions annexed by Russia in September 2022 (Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson) This is where Russia began its special military operation against the neo-Nazi incursion by the Kiev regime headed

by Volodymyr Zelensky.



How a union's 1984 anti-apartheid strike shaped today's clash between Trump and South Africa

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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The Trump administration's expulsion of South Africa's ambassador from his post in Washington, D.C., is another outrage.

On March 17, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio expelled Ebrahim Rasool, South Africa's ambassador to the United States, in extremely undiplomatic language, calling him a "race-baiting politician." In a webinar at the South African Mapungubwe Institute, Ambassador Rasool characterized Trump as pursuing policies that were "a white supremacist response to growing demographic diversity in the United States."

The expulsion was deeply felt in San Francisco, where the predominantly Black members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 10, have special bonds with Rasool. That friendship is based on South Africa's recognition of the union's role in fighting apartheid and freeing Nelson Mandela.

Clarence Thomas, a Local 10 retiree and former executive treasurer, said, "I think that Rasool's removal by the Trump administration is a political act that had, in some degree, nothing to do with the ambassador at all. They used recent statements that he made to a think tank on the supremacist character of Trump's MAGA regime as the rationale."

Trump's reasons for breaking relations with South Africa

The expulsion occurred after Trump had already cut off all U.S. aid bound for the country and offered refugee status and a "rapid pathway to citizenship" for white farmers. He cited "unjust racial discrimination" against white Afrikaners, a reaction to a recent Expropriation Act that the South African government passed to address the issue of wealth inequality and eliminate some remnants of apartheid, in which 75% of the country's private land is still owned by the tiny 7% of white Afrikaners. It's a reform law that prioritizes land restitution to empower farm workers and the use of land for the public good.

Trump's DOGE chief, Elon Musk, has accused his former country of discriminating against white farmers in the land ownership laws. Musk, a white supremacist, who waved a Nazi salute at Trump's inauguration, calls the land appropriation act the "genocide of white people in South Africa."

More immediately, Trump's anger was aroused by South Africa's action in taking the Israeli government to the [International Criminal Court](#), specifically with the charge of genocide in Gaza. South Africa has been getting support for this intervention all around the world. The United States government, in support of the Zionist entity,

has made [threats against](#) the personnel of the International Criminal Court, including sanctions.

South Africa's international relations are also at odds with the Trump administration's imperial prerogatives. The country has trade ties with China and is a partner in the Belt and Road Initiative and the BRICS group of nations.

South Africa has also had a long-term friendship with socialist Cuba, a country that Trump, and especially Rubio, with his family's Cuban exile background, are trying to strangle with sanctions.

Ambassador Rasool's special friendship with ILWU Local 10

When Nelson Mandela gave his great speech at the Oakland Coliseum in 1990, he specifically acknowledged ILWU Local 10 for the 1984 action that it had taken in defying Taft-Hartley — defying its contract for 11 days and refusing to unload South African cargo. He placed Local 10 on the front lines of the struggle against apartheid.

In March 2013, there was a memorial for the rank-and-file leader Leo Robinson, one of the earliest organizers of the Anti-apartheid Movement in the U.S. Robinson first introduced a union resolution protesting apartheid to the membership of ILWU in 1976 after witnessing the massacre of Soweto students who were protesting the forced instruction in the Afrikaner language.

South African Consul General Cyril Ndaba and Ambassador Ebrahim Rasool came to Robinson's memorial in 2013 to honor his role in mobilizing workers to resist apartheid. They spoke on behalf of the people of South Africa to express gratitude by saying that without the ILWU under the leadership of Robinson, the end of apartheid may not have come so quickly, and Nelson Mandela would not have been freed as early.

Thomas stressed, "The anti-apartheid campaign was not initiated by the international union president. It was not done by the mayor of San Francisco or the governor of California; it was done by rank-and-filers. It really goes to show the power of the working class. Rasool was at Robinson's memorial to pay homage and respect not only to ILWU Local 10, but to the entire Bay Area who had become involved in the struggle.

Thomas explained: "There was an eight or nine-year period before the 11-day boycott of the South African ship, the Nedlloyd Kimberley, in 1984, when there was an educational campaign preparing for that historic action. When ships carrying South African cargo arrived, there were discussions with the longshore workers and the dispatchers regarding public demonstrations. The longshore workers who took those jobs knew that they would not receive a whole day's pay.

"It was during this period when Leo Robinson, Larry Wright, and others organized the Southern African Liberation Support Committee. They would invite members of the African National (ANC) to come to speak at Local 10. They showed videos explaining the horrors of apartheid in South Africa.

"I remember a worker by the name of Delmont Blakeney; he's passed on. He was a very bright guy, let's just say he was very street oriented. He said, to Leo Robinson, is this shit really gonna work - not working those ships? He lived to see that it did."



Imperialist puppetry exposed: HTS' 'New Syria' fuels sectarian massacres and Zionist collaboration

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The illusion has been quickly and violently shattered that the Western-backed Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) overthrow of the Syrian Arab Republic represented a genuine move towards democracy and sovereignty for the Syrian people.

For decades under the rule of the Al-Baath party, Syria enjoyed a secular culture where religious and ethnic minorities were explicitly protected in the constitution and policy. With the collapse of the Assad government and the Syrian Arab Republic more broadly, those secular protections have all but disappeared under HTS rule.

In fact, HTS has gone far beyond the end of legal protections. HTS and affiliated right-wing Islamist militias have launched a series of [massacres](#) against various religious and ethnic minorities in Syria. These vicious attacks have targeted Kurdish,

Alawite, Druze, and Christian minority communities in Syria. While the terror campaign began in the towns and villages along the [northwest coast](#), a region with a significant Alawite population, the violence has since spread across the country. HTS terrorists have targeted the [Alawite](#) community in particular not only due to their adherence to Shia Islam but also because Bashar Al-Assad, his family, and many of his supporters are Alawites themselves. The Christian community living in the same region has faced [violence and repression](#) as well.

HTS fighters have also murdered dozens of Druze people in southern Syria, [Kurdish](#) people in northern Syria, and have even [escalated](#) against Lebanese people living along Syria's border. The campaign against ethnic minorities in Syria has actually led to direct conflict between HTS and Lebanon's armed forces. Consequently, over [13,000 people](#) have already fled from Syria to Lebanon.

All the while, HTS has refused to lift a finger to stop Israel from its advances in southern Syria and its continued destruction of all military infrastructure left over from the Assad government. On the contrary, the so-called new democratic government of Syria under HTS has only expressed a desire to be friendly with the Zionist entity. Further, the HTS sham government has already banned public displays of "pro-Iranian" propaganda. All of these policies are clear indicators that HTS's Syria is a complete pawn of the West, meant to keep Syria divided and subservient to imperialism.

And even with all of these massacres against Syrian minority communities, [Zionist-backed Druze leadership](#) and [U.S.-backed Kurdish leadership](#) have still signed agreements to integrate their communities into the racist HTS government. While the Druze and Kurdish people should be free from persecution, this does not change the nature of deals where militia leaders sell out their communities in exchange for some limited political power inside a Western puppet government.

The terror campaign against Syrian minority communities has triggered organized

armed resistance from commanders and troops formerly affiliated with the Syrian Arab Republic. These forces broadly reject U.S. intervention in their country and receive organizational support from allies in Iran and Lebanon.

While progressive resistance to these massacres is a welcome sight, the situation is still regrettable. The imperialist playbook has unfortunately worked in Syria to devastating effect. Just like Libya before it, U.S. military investment in right-wing Islamist militias has spiraled the entirety of Syria into ethnic division, racist violence, and social chaos. All this in a country that was previously relatively stable, even under constant siege via Western sanctions and military intervention.

The tragedy unfolding in Syria highlights more than ever the need for genuine solidarity with progressive nationalist governments who refuse to bend the knee to imperialism.

Lev Koufax is an anti-Zionist Jewish activist.

