

Special message of thanks to our readers & supporters

written by Struggle - La Lucha

December 25, 2021

We are taking a break for the next week, through Monday, January 3, 2022.

As this year ends, Struggle for Socialism □ La Lucha por el Socialismo would like to give a heartfelt thank you to our readers and supporters — and to your friends, family, and loved ones.

Together we have struggled against capitalist violence in all its many ugly forms: whether it has been white supremacy and fascist mobilizations; imperialist war, sanctions, and occupations; violence against women, LGBTQ2S people, immigrants; or the continuing COVID pandemic that has illustrated the failures of for-profit medical care.

We have celebrated the Black Lives Matter uprising; the ongoing Palestinian struggle; the courage of the Amazon workers; Striketober; the eradication of poverty in China; Cuba's resistance to the U.S. blockade; women rising to defend the right to control their bodies; and so much more.

But most of all, we continue to have optimism and hope for revolution and socialism as urgent and necessary goals to save our planet.



Struggle ☐ La Lucha sends our love and warm embrace to each and every one in this holiday season.

Hasta la victoria siempre,

From all of us with Struggle for Socialism ☐
La Lucha por el Socialismo

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Indict Amazon for murder!

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December 25, 2021

The death of six workers at an Amazon warehouse in Edwardsville, Illinois, during a Dec. 10 tornado didn't have to happen. Workers died because Jeff Bezos is too cheap to build safe buildings.

The Amazon founder has a [\\$202 billion](#) fortune. A day after the Edwardsville tragedy Bezos had one of his Blue Origin rockets lift off the launch pad.

Bezos is spending a billion dollars a year on his [space toys](#). Workers' safety is another matter.

The Edwardsville facility, located 25 miles northeast of St. Louis, was built in a tornado alley. Between 1991 and 2011 four storms roared through the area with speeds of at least 136 mph. The Dec. 10 tornado was just as severe.

Like many warehouses — as well as Walmart, Home Depot and Target stores — the big box buildings are fabricated using [“tilt-up wall construction”](#) to save money. Concrete panels weighing dozens of tons are held together by the roof.

But if the roof is blown away the panels will fall and crush anyone underneath. That's what happened [in 2014 to a Home Depot](#) in Joplin, Missouri, where eight people were killed. The same thing occurred in Edwardsville.

The only emergency shelter available to workers in the Amazon warehouse were the bathrooms. Concrete blocks fell in one of them and crushed a worker to death. The warehouse employees received virtually no emergency training.

[Larry Virden](#), one of the workers who died, texted his partner that "Amazon won't let us leave." He left behind four children.

Lack of concern for workers' health and safety is a company tradition. Fifteen workers collapsed during a 2011 heat wave at an Amazon warehouse in Breinigsville, Pennsylvania, 11 miles from Allentown.

The company [knew of the health dangers](#) but refused to reduce the line speed. Amazon instead parked ambulances outside the door.

The Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Alabama — where Bezos spent millions to stop a union organizing drive — is another potential deathtrap. It too sits in a tornado alley.

Candle factory deathtrap

On the same day that six workers died in Edwardsville, another tornado killed eight workers in Mayfield, Kentucky. They made candles at the Mayfield Consumer Products factory.

Some of the workers who were rescued were found buried alive. Survivors are furious that the company didn't cancel the evening shift despite warnings that tornadoes were likely to strike the area.

Starting wage at this sweatshop located in Western Kentucky is \$8 per hour with forced overtime. Workers are hired for 10-hour and 12-hour shifts.

Many of the workers are immigrants. Seven employees on the evening shift [were prisoners](#) from the local jail.

Survivors filed a class-action lawsuit because they were threatened with firing if they left work early because the tornados were coming.

Factory worker Elijah Johnson told CNN that he was told by a foreman that he would be fired if he left.

“I said, ‘Man, you’re going to refuse to let us leave, even if the weather is this bad and the tornado’s not here yet?,” [recounted Mr. Johnson](#). “He was like, ‘If you want to decide to leave, if you want to leave, you can leave, but you’re going to be terminated. You’re going to be fired.’ “

Behind the death of eight workers at the Mayfield factory are chain stores like Bath and Body Works that purchase the candles. To these criminals the Christmas rush is more important than human lives.

Chairman emeritus of Bath and Body Works is the billionaire Leslie Wexner, who was a close associate of the late sexual predator Jeffrey Epstein.

Capitalism = death

To capitalists profits come first before safety. In 1869, 110 mostly Irish coal miners were burned alive at the Avon Mine in Plymouth, Pennsylvania. The owners refused to build a second entrance that would have allowed the miners to escape.

In 1911, Italian and Jewish young women jumped to their deaths at the Triangle Shirtwaist factory rather than be burned alive. One hundred forty-six workers were

killed because the owners locked the doors in the building at Greene Street and Washington Place in Manhattan.

In the early 1930s, hundreds of mainly Black workers were killed by silicon dust in building the Hawks Nest tunnel for Union Carbide in West Virginia. Fifty years later a leak at Union Carbide's pesticide factory in Bhopal, India, killed as many as 8,000 people.

In 1991, 25 workers choked to death in a Hamlet, North Carolina, chicken plant whose owner locked the doors.

Capitalist global supply chains kill more workers. In 2013, some 1,134 workers died when their garment sweatshop collapsed in Dhaka, Bangladesh. That's eight times the number of workers who were killed at Triangle Shirtwaist.

None of these disasters had to happen. They were all the result of capitalist greed.

The best way to remember those who were killed in the recent tornadoes is to organize. If the Amazon and Mayfield workers had a union to protect them, they could have walked off the job to save their lives.



What right does the Supreme Court have to rule?

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On Dec. 1, the U.S. Supreme Court heard the arguments from U.S. state attorneys supporting Mississippi's 15-week abortion ban.

A state law was passed in Mississippi in 2018 that would make most abortions illegal after the first 15 weeks of pregnancy — including those caused by rape. The Mississippi law hasn't yet been enforced due to a legal challenge by Mississippi's only abortion provider, the Jackson Women's Health Organization.

The Supreme Court is now considering the case.

The most conservative judges — including Donald Trump-appointed anti-woman bigot and serial abuser Brett Kavanaugh — pressed forward to raise the stakes to possibly overturning *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 decision that established a constitutional right to abortion.

Another Trump appointee, Justice Amy Coney Barrett, [stated her position](#) during the hearing: Why was abortion necessary, when women who do not want to be mothers can simply give their babies up for adoption? Thereby, Barrett was arguing for cruel legislation that bans abortion for those who have been raped, whose health or the baby's health is at risk or a myriad of other legitimate issues, the most primary being control over one's own body.

As a member of the Indiana religious organization, [People of Praise](#), Barrett has served as a lay pastoral women's leader known as a "handmaid." Barrett is a millionaire — among the richest of rich justices, with a lush income from the Catholic Church's Notre Dame Law School—and this removes her from the concerns plaguing most peoples' lives.

One of three judges in the minority supporting women's constitutional rights, Justice Sonia Sotomayor asked whether the court would survive the stench of being considered a political institution, a point echoed by Justice Elena Kagan. Their attempt to defend a critical right to healthcare also implied support for the legitimacy of the Supreme Court.

What right does the Supreme Court have?

The U.S. Supreme Court was established 232 years ago by the U.S. Constitution with the passage of the Judiciary Act of 1789. At that time the U.S. Constitution did not extend equal rights to people kidnapped from Africa, the Indigenous population, oppressed genders or those without property — only white men with property.

The Court was set up as one of three branches of the emerging capitalist government, which included a president and a Congress made up of a House of Representatives and the Senate, reputed to be a balance of powers. However, during a dispute in 1805 it was determined that six appointed judges held supreme authority over the elected members of Congress and the president. (The U.S.

Constitution grants Congress the power to determine how many “justices” sit on the Court. The Court started with six, but the number has been between 5 and 10. Since 1869 the number has been set at 9.)

Fifty years later, in 1853, the Court affirmed slavery with the Dred Scott decision. If there was any doubt as to where the real power was, it was right there in affirming the rights of the slave owners as against a majority of the people opposed to slavery.

In the years following the Civil War to end slavery, there was a gradual democratization of the political process. The right to vote had previously been denied to the Native people, to Black people, to women, to the youth. But these groups have won voting rights through years of struggle. (See Sam Marcy’s “[A Marxist View of the Supreme Court.](#)”)

Supreme Court erodes rights

In the 2000 presidential election, the Supreme Court exercised its authority by selecting George W. Bush to be president. Bush appointed the conservative John Roberts who is currently Chief Justice.

Last June, the Court released a wave of decisions, as it does every year at the end of its session. Among them was a ruling giving the responsibility for decisions on partisan gerrymandering to state governments — a big attack on voting rights for Black and other oppressed peoples and all workers.

Along with reproductive rights other decisions currently on the courts docket include:

- **Gun control.** The political arguments surrounding this issue never take into account official U.S. policy of militarization or the violence of other armed wings of the state against Black people and other workers, employed and unemployed.

- **Religious freedom.** Under the guise of religious freedom the court is attacking public education by allocating funds to private institutions. This further infringes on the separation between church and state—an issue, we were taught, that laid the basis for the American Revolution.

- **State secrets.** This year, two lawsuits concern the kind of information the U.S. government can withhold in the interest of national security.

The first involves Guantanamo Bay detainee Abu Zubaydah, who is seeking information about U.S.-run interrogation torture sites and the Central Intelligence Agency contractors he is suing for allegedly torturing him.

The second is related to a suit from a group of Muslim men in California who allege the Federal Bureau of Investigation engaged in religious discrimination when it monitored members of their community for possible terrorism connections.

An area of concern: the Shadow Docket

The court has increasingly relied on what's been called an emergency "shadow docket" — these are short, frequently unsigned, opinions issued without full briefing and argument — used to take significant steps in a conservative direction with less opportunity for scrutiny.

Three recent examples of the "shadow docket" trend involve Supreme Court action on (1) the extremely restrictive Texas abortion law, (2) a Trump-era policy requiring asylum-seekers to stay in Mexico and (3) throwing out a presidential-ordered temporary moratorium on home evictions.

While the court's traditional rulings take months of work — from legal briefs to oral arguments to a decision — and this term's big cases probably won't be announced until May or June of 2022 — the shadow docket can unfold quickly and move in unpredictable directions.

In an article titled, "[Texas lawmakers: Why you gotta be so cruel?](#)" Gloria Verdieu writes about the Texas abortion law that the Supreme Court supported through the shadow docket: "'The Heartbeat Law' bans abortion after five-and-a-half to six weeks of pregnancy, before most women are aware that they are pregnant. The law threatens any individual or entity who 'knowingly engages in conduct that aids or abets,' including paying for or reimbursing the costs of an abortion through insurance or otherwise, with a civil lawsuit. Any civilian who sues that person will be awarded \$10,000 plus court costs and attorney fees."

Invalidating the rights the people

A clear majority of people in the U.S. support upholding Roe v. Wade, guaranteeing a constitutional right to abortion. According to an [ABC News/Washington Post poll](#), some 60% say Roe v. Wade should be upheld. Three out of four Americans say that the decision of whether or not a woman can have an abortion should be left to the woman and her doctor.

It's no accident that the power to make a legal decision on reproductive rights is ultimately exercised by the Supreme Court. It's the most reliably conservative, anti-democratic arm of the government, responsive only to those who have appointed them.

During the Depression the Roosevelt administration was forced to institute the National Recovery Act in order to save capitalism. It granted workers the right to organize — union rights — and established some forms of social insurance including social security and unemployment benefits, all under pressure from the working class actions countrywide.

As soon as it became clear that the capitalist recession was slowly ending, in one day the Supreme Court nullified this whole mass of legislation in the infamous Schechter case of 1935 and began to roll back the progressive legislation. To this day the

Supreme Court has upheld the anti-labor strike-breaking policies of the National Association of Manufacturers, of the multinational corporations and of the banks. The plight of labor today, at least from the point of view of legality, can be shown to come from this — that in the last resort the ruling class relies on the Supreme Court, an instrumentality that is as undemocratic as it is reactionary.

Concerning the court 's decision in the 1989 to upheld a Missouri law prohibiting the use of public facilities to provide abortion services and to restrict physicians who provided abortions, [Sam Marcy wrote](#): “The abortion decision confirms that whenever the bourgeoisie is in a crisis, they will let nine people, unelected, appointed for life, decide the most critical issues concerning life in the United States.”



How Congress loots the Treasury for the Military-Industrial-

Congressional Complex

written by Struggle - La Lucha

December 25, 2021



Despite a disagreement over some amendments in the Senate, the United States Congress is poised to pass a \$778 billion military budget bill for 2022. As they have been doing year after year, our elected officials are preparing to hand the lion's share - [over 65%](#) - of federal discretionary spending to the U.S. war machine, even as they wring their hands over spending a mere quarter of that amount on the Build Back Better Act.

The U.S. military's incredible record of systematic failure—most recently its final trouncing by the Taliban after twenty years of [death](#), [destruction](#) and [lies](#) in Afghanistan—cries out for a top-to-bottom review of its dominant role in U.S. foreign policy and a radical reassessment of its proper place in Congress's budget priorities.

Instead, year after year, members of Congress hand over the largest share of our nation's resources to this corrupt institution, with minimal scrutiny and no apparent fear of accountability when it comes to their own reelection. Members of Congress still see it as a "safe" political call to carelessly whip out their rubber-stamps and vote for however many hundreds of billions in funding Pentagon and arms industry lobbyists have persuaded the Armed Services Committees they should cough up.

Let's make no mistake about this: Congress's choice to keep investing in a massive, ineffective and absurdly expensive war machine has nothing to do with "national security" as most people understand it, or "defense" as the dictionary defines it.

U.S. society does face critical threats to our security, including the climate crisis, systemic racism, erosion of voting rights, gun violence, grave inequalities and the corporate hijacking of political power. But one problem we fortunately do not have is the threat of attack or invasion by a rampant global aggressor or, in fact, by any other country at all.

Maintaining a war machine that outspends the [12 or 13](#) next largest militaries in the world combined actually makes us less safe, as each new administration inherits the delusion that the United States' overwhelmingly destructive military power can, and therefore should, be used to confront any perceived challenge to U.S. interests anywhere in the world—even when there is clearly no military solution and when many of the underlying problems were caused by past misapplications of U.S. military power in the first place.

While the international challenges we face in this century require a genuine commitment to international cooperation and diplomacy, Congress allocates only \$58 billion, less than 10 percent of the Pentagon budget, to the diplomatic corps of our government: the State Department. Even worse, both Democratic and Republican administrations keep filling top diplomatic posts with officials indoctrinated and steeped in policies of war and coercion, with scant experience and

meager skills in the peaceful diplomacy we so desperately need.

This only perpetuates a failed foreign policy based on false choices between economic sanctions that UN officials have compared to [medieval sieges](#), coups that [destabilize](#) countries and regions for decades, and wars and bombing campaigns that kill [millions](#) of people and leave cities in rubble, like [Mosul in Iraq](#) and [Raqqa in Syria](#).

The end of the Cold War was a golden opportunity for the United States to reduce its forces and military budget to match its legitimate defense needs. The American public naturally expected and hoped for a “[Peace Dividend](#),” and even veteran Pentagon officials told the Senate Budget Committee in 1991 that military spending could [safely be cut](#) by 50% over the next ten years.

But no such cut happened. U.S. officials instead set out to exploit the post-Cold War “[Power Dividend](#),” a huge military imbalance in favor of the United States, by developing rationales for using military force more freely and widely around the world. During the transition to the new Clinton administration, Madeleine Albright famously [asked](#) Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell, “What’s the point of having this superb military you’re always talking about if we can’t use it?”

In 1999, as Secretary of State under President Clinton, Albright got her wish, running roughshod over the UN Charter with an illegal war to carve out an independent Kosovo from the ruins of Yugoslavia.

The UN Charter clearly prohibits the [threat or use](#) of military force except in cases of [self-defense](#) or when the [UN Security Council takes military action](#) “to maintain or restore international peace and security.” This was neither. When U.K. Foreign Secretary Robin Cook told Albright his government was “having trouble with our lawyers” over NATO’s illegal war plan, Albright crassly [told him](#) to “get new lawyers.”

Twenty-two years later, Kosovo is the [third-poorest](#) country in Europe (after Moldova and post-coup Ukraine) and its independence is still not recognized by [96 countries](#). Hashim Thaçi, Albright's hand-picked [main ally](#) in Kosovo and later its president, is awaiting trial in an international court at the Hague, charged with murdering at least 300 civilians under cover of NATO bombing in 1999 to extract and sell their internal organs on the international transplant market.

Clinton and Albright's gruesome and illegal war set the precedent for more illegal U.S. wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and elsewhere, with equally devastating and horrific results. But America's failed wars have not led Congress or successive administrations to seriously rethink the U.S. decision to rely on illegal threats and uses of military force to project U.S. power all over the world, nor have they reined in the trillions of dollars invested in these imperial ambitions.

Instead, in the upside-down world of [institutionally corrupt](#) U.S. politics, a generation of failed and pointlessly destructive wars have had the perverse effect of normalizing even [more expensive](#) military budgets than during the Cold War, and reducing congressional debate to questions of how many more of each useless [weapons system](#) they should force U.S. taxpayers to foot the bill for.

It seems that no amount of killing, torture, mass destruction or lives ruined in the real world can shake the militaristic delusions of America's political class, as long as the "Military-Industrial-Congressional Complex" (President Eisenhower's original wording) is reaping the benefits.

Today, most political and media references to the Military-Industrial Complex refer only to the arms industry as a self-serving corporate interest group on a par with Wall Street, Big Pharma or the fossil fuel industry. But in his [Farewell Address](#), Eisenhower explicitly pointed to, not just the arms industry, but the "conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry."

Eisenhower was just as worried about the anti-democratic impact of the military as the arms industry. Weeks before his Farewell Address, [he told](#) his senior advisors, “God help this country when somebody sits in this chair who doesn’t know the military as well as I do.” His fears have been realized in every subsequent presidency.

According to Milton Eisenhower, the president’s brother, who helped him draft his Farewell Address, Ike also wanted to talk about the “revolving door.” Early drafts of his speech [referred to](#) “a permanent, war-based industry,” with “flag and general officers retiring at an early age to take positions in the war-based industrial complex, shaping its decisions and guiding the direction of its tremendous thrust.” He wanted to warn that steps must be taken to “insure that the ‘merchants of death’ do not come to dictate national policy.”

As Eisenhower feared, the careers of figures like Generals [Austin](#) and [Mattis](#) now span all branches of the corrupt MIC conglomerate: commanding invasion and occupation forces in Afghanistan and Iraq; then donning suits and ties to sell weapons to new generals who served under them as majors and colonels; and finally re-emerging from the same revolving door as cabinet members at the apex of American politics and government.

So why does the Pentagon brass get a free pass, even as Americans feel increasingly conflicted about the arms industry? After all, it is the military that actually uses all these weapons to kill people and wreak havoc in other countries.

Even as it loses war after war overseas, the U.S. military has waged a far more successful one to burnish its image in the hearts and minds of Americans and win every budget battle in Washington.

The complicity of Congress, the third leg of the stool in Eisenhower’s original formulation, turns the annual battle of the budget into the [“cakewalk”](#) that the war

in Iraq was supposed to be, with no accountability for lost wars, war crimes, civilian massacres, cost overruns or the dysfunctional military leadership that presides over it all.

There is no congressional debate over the economic impact on America or the geopolitical consequences for the world of uncritically rubber-stamping huge investments in powerful weapons that will sooner or later be used to kill our neighbors and smash their countries, as they have for the past 22 years and far too often throughout our history.

If the public is ever to have any impact on this dysfunctional and deadly money-go-round, we must learn to see through the fog of propaganda that masks self-serving corruption behind red, white and blue bunting, and allows the military brass to cynically exploit the public's natural respect for brave young men and women who are ready to risk their lives to defend our country. In the Crimean War, the Russians called British troops "lions led by donkeys." That is an accurate description of today's U.S. military.

Sixty years after Eisenhower's Farewell Address, exactly as he predicted, the "weight of this combination" of corrupt generals and admirals, the profitable "merchants of death" whose goods they peddle, and the Senators and Representatives who blindly entrust them with trillions of dollars of the public's money, constitute the full flowering of President Eisenhower's greatest fears for our country.

Eisenhower concluded, "Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals." That clarion call echoes through the decades and should unite Americans in every form of democratic organizing and movement building, from elections to education and advocacy to mass protests, to finally reject and dispel the "unwarranted influence" of the Military-Industrial-Congressional

Complex.

Medea Benjamin is cofounder of [CODEPINK for Peace](#), and author of several books, including [Inside Iran: The Real History and Politics of the Islamic Republic of Iran](#).

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Who gets to claim self-defense?

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How did Kyle Rittenhouse justify killing anti-racist activists Anthony Huber and Joseph Rosenbaum, as well as wounding Gaige Grosskreutz in Kenosha, Wisconsin? This white racist vigilante who worships Trump and the police claims that he was merely defending himself.

The right of self-defense was also claimed by Kenosha cop Rusten Sheskey for shooting Jacob Blake seven times on Aug. 23, 2020, leaving him paralyzed. The shooting of Blake, a Black father of seven children, led to the anti-racist protests in

Kenosha.

Kenosha County District Attorney Michael Graveley refused to press charges against Shesky. U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland declined to prosecute.

Four New York City police officers claimed self-defense when they fired 41 bullets at Amadou Diallo. The unarmed African immigrant was killed in the Bronx on Feb. 4, 1999. New York Gov. George Pataki moved the trial out of the Bronx to assure the cops' acquittal.

Sean Bell was killed by police on what was supposed to be his wedding day on Nov. 25, 2006, in the New York borough of Queens. After firing 50 shots at the unarmed Black man, the police claimed self-defense.

They were acquitted in a non-jury trial by Judge Cooperman.

Judge Schroeder in Rittenhouse's trial might as well have been his defense attorney.

Self-defense was the excuse for Cleveland cop Timothy Loehmann for killing 12-year-old Tamir Rice. The Black child was carrying a toy gun.

So was 13-year-old Nicholas Naquan Heyward Jr., who was playing cops and robbers in Brooklyn's Gowanus Houses on Sept. 27, 1994. Officer Brian George saw the toy gun and killed the honor student. The cop wasn't even indicted since this too was allegedly "self-defense."

Even the vigilantes who killed the Black jogger Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia claimed to be acting in self-defense. It was only because the Black community mobilized that these lynchers were convicted.

No right of self-defense for oppressed

Every legal system admits that people have the right to defend themselves. This

right was never meant to apply to the oppressed.

Those who were enslaved didn't have the right to defend themselves against their slave masters. Serfs didn't have the right to self-defense against serf owners.

Celia was a 19-year old enslaved African who was continually raped by the Missouri slave master Robert Newsom since she was 14. Her two daughters were born because of these rapes.

Newsom crawled into Celia's cabin one last time on June 23, 1855. Celia defended herself with a stick, killing Newsom. Celia was indicted for murder for defending herself while she was pregnant.

Circuit Court Judge William Hall instructed the all-white jury that "if Newsom was in the habit of having intercourse with the defendant who was his slave and went to her cabin on the night he was killed to have intercourse with her or for any other purpose and while he was standing in the floor talking to her she struck him with a stick which was a dangerous weapon and knocked him down, and struck him again after he fell, and killed him by either blow, it is murder in the first degree."

The jury found Celia guilty and the judge sentenced her to be hanged. Celia escaped but was recaptured. After her child was born stillborn, [she was hanged](#) in Fulton, Missouri, on Dec. 21, 1855.

One hundred twenty years later, [Joann Little was acquitted](#) of killing the white prison guard who attempted to rape her in North Carolina. The imprisoned Black woman took Clarence Alligood's ice pick and defended herself with it.

Even though Alligood's body was found naked from the waist down, Little, who had escaped, was declared an "outlaw." This allowed police to kill her on sight. The prosecutor claimed Little had lured Alligood to her cell.

Like the mobilization to secure justice for Ahmaud Arbery, it was only because people organized that Joann Little was declared not guilty. This was the first time that a woman was found not guilty on grounds of self-defense for defending herself against rape.

Never forget Sammie Osborne!

No Indigenous person was ever given the right to defend themselves against the U.S. government that was committing genocide against them. President Abraham Lincoln had 38 members of the Dakota Sioux Nation hanged on Dec. 26, 1862, in Mankato, Minnesota.

Killer cops always claim that they had to make split-second decisions to save their lives. On the Sunday morning of Aug. 17, 1941, the Black sharecropper Sammie Osborne had to make a split-second decision in Barnwell County, South Carolina.

The day before his white landlord, William Walker, had forced him to work at gunpoint despite Osborne having an injured foot. Now, the drunken Walker barged into the shack where Osborne had been sleeping.

He beat the 18-year-old sharecropper with a stick that he held in one hand while holding a .32 caliber pistol in the other. Seeing that his life was in mortal danger, Osborne grabbed a shotgun and killed Walker.

There was no right to self-defense for Sammie Osborne. According to the 1940 census, Barnwell County had a 64% Black majority population. But a jury of 12 white men found Osborne guilty.

Sammie Osborne was sentenced to death by Strom Thurmond, who later became South Carolina's governor and ran as the presidential candidate of the States' Rights Party in 1948.

Thurmond spent 48 years in the U.S. Senate as its most notorious racist. His friend, Joe Biden, spoke at his memorial service.

After being resentenced to death by another judge, the now 20-year-old Sammie Osborne was strapped in South Carolina's electric chair on Nov. 19, 1943. As the electrodes were placed on his head, [Osborn's last words](#) were, "I'm ready to go because I know that I am not guilty."

The next year, 14-year-old George Stinney Jr. was burned to death in the same electric chair.

The acquittal of Kyle Rittenhouse gives a license to kill for every other white racist vigilante. All those who defend Rittenhouse, like Jimmy Dore or The Militant "socialist newsweekly," put themselves on the side of white supremacy.



Who killed Malcolm X and why?

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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"And we will know him then for what he was and is—a prince—our own Black

shining prince!—who didn't hesitate to die, because he loved us so." That was how the legendary actor Ossie Davis ended his [eulogy at Malcolm X's funeral](#).

Over a half-century later, two of the convicted assassins of Malcolm X, Muhammad Aziz and Khalil Islam, were exonerated on Nov. 18. They were framed in a 1966 show trial.

Justice delayed is justice denied. Muhammad Aziz, now 83 years old, spent 20 years in prison, while Khalil Islam served 22 years.

Both Black men survived years in solitary confinement. Khalil Islam, who died in 2009, never got to see his name cleared.

Muhammad Aziz, then known as Norman 3X Butler, and Khalil Islam, then known as Thomas 15X Johnson, were convicted with Mujahid Abdul Halim. Then known as Talmadge Hayer or Thomas Hagan, Halim confessed during the trial to killing Malcolm X but said his two co-defendants were innocent.

That didn't matter to the police and the courts. All three defendants were convicted and given life sentences by Judge Charles Marks.

The police were so disinterested in finding out who killed Malcolm X that they even didn't close off the crime scene. A dance was allowed to be held the evening of the assassination at the Audubon Ballroom with Malcolm's blood still on the stage.

All of the [physical evidence](#), including a sawed-off shotgun that was one of the weapons used to murder Malcolm X, has disappeared.

Judge Marks turned down a defense motion to reveal the police interviews with a hundred eyewitnesses. Why?

When Halim gave the names of four people who were his fellow assassins in two

affidavits in 1977 and 1978, Judge Harold Rothwax [refused to reopen the case](#). New York police and the FBI didn't investigate.

Both Muhammad Aziz and Khalil Islam had strong alibis. Aziz was at home suffering from thrombophlebitis in his right leg. Islam was also at his home when Malcolm X was killed, as confirmed by a neighbor who visited him.

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. apologized for the convictions of the two men. So why doesn't Vance announce an investigation into who assisted Mujahid Abdul Halim in murdering Malcolm X?

Vance refused to prosecute Dominique Strauss-Kahn, then head of the International Monetary Fund, for raping the Black hotel worker Nafissatou Diallo. The DA is the son of former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, who was a top Pentagon official during the dirty war against Vietnam and Laos.

FBI war against Black people

Black leaders have been targeted by the U.S. Government for over a century. The army considered Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to be a threat. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover wanted him dead.

Dr. King denounced the war against Vietnam. He declared at New York's Riverside Church that "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today (is) my own government."

Exactly one year later, Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis on April 4, 1968. The same day, eight Green Berets were in Memphis.

During World War I, the [Military Intelligence Division investigated](#) one of Dr. King's grandfathers for "subversive activity" because he gave a sermon against lynching.

The FBI had the Nation of Islam [under surveillance](#) since the early 1940s. During World War II, NOI leader Elijah Muhammad was sent to prison for four years on charges of urging his followers not to register for the draft.

The U.S. armed forces were then completely segregated. So was its blood supply, a Nazi-like practice.

In response, the Pittsburgh Courier started a “Double V” campaign, calling for victory over the Hitlers at home and abroad. Other Black newspapers joined the campaign and exposed racism inside and outside the military. With the support of President Franklin Roosevelt, J. Edgar Hoover wanted the Black newspaper publishers [tried for treason](#).

During the anti-communist witch hunt after the war, the FBI tried to destroy every progressive organization in the country. Hoover launched COINTELPRO, short for counterintelligence program. It sought to provoke dissension within groups and between organizations.

Along with the Communist Party and Socialist Workers Party, COINTELPRO targeted Black activist groups. These included the Southern Christian Leadership Conference led by Dr. King, the Nation of Islam and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, known as SNCC.

COINTELPRO later waged a war of extermination against the Black Panther Party. As shown in the film “Judas and the Black Messiah,” the FBI planted its informant William O’Neal within the Illinois Black Panther Party. O’Neal was crucial to Chicago police murdering Illinois chapter chairman Fred Hampton and fellow Panther member Mark Clark on Dec. 4, 1969.

J. Edgar Hoover [sent a telegram](#) to the New York City FBI office on June 6, 1964, demanding that they “do something about Malcolm X.” Eight-and-a-half months later

the Black shining prince was murdered in front of his family and an audience of 400.

Letting Malcolm X be murdered

Malcolm X was assassinated in the Audubon Ballroom on Feb. 21, 1965. Now called the Malcolm X & Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center, it's located in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan.

A week before, on Feb. 14, the home of Malcolm X and his family—at 23-11 97th St. in the East Elmhurst section of Queens—was firebombed. The police refused to investigate. They planted a bottle filled with gasoline in the house, implying Malcolm set the fire himself.

There were always at least a half-dozen cops in front of any place where Malcolm X spoke in order to try to intimidate people. Yet a week after Malcolm and his family were nearly killed, there was just one cop stationed at the Audubon Ballroom's entrance. Other police were kept hidden nearby.

The well-known journalist Jimmy Breslin [got a tip from the police](#) that he should go to the meeting at the Audubon Ballroom. Did the NYPD know what was going to happen?

[Cyrus Vance said](#), "that on orders from director J. Edgar Hoover himself, the FBI ordered multiple witnesses not to tell police or prosecutors that they were in fact FBI informants." In addition there were undercover cops in the audience belonging to the Bureau of Special Services (BOSS), the NYPD's Red Squad.

Several people shot at Malcolm. None of the dozen or so FBI agents and police inside the ballroom did anything to try to prevent the assassination. Nor were they responsible for arresting Talmadge Hayer (Mujahid Abdul Halim), the sole killer who was apprehended.

Hayer was wounded by Reuben Francis, an aide to Malcolm X, and then seized by members of the audience. The cop at the door and two officers who were driving by in a squad car arrested Hayer.

The first edition of the old New York Herald Tribune carried Jimmy Breslin's article that stated two suspects were arrested. The "two suspects" were changed to one suspect in later editions of the Tribune and other New York City newspapers.

Who was this second suspect and why did the media and police have him disappear? ("The Assassination of Malcolm X" by George Breitman, Herman Porter and Baxter Smith)

Among the BOSS operatives present was Detective Gene Roberts, who wormed his way into Malcolm's security detail. Roberts can be seen in pictures next to the mortally wounded Malcolm X, whose head was cradled by Asian American activist Yuri Kochiyama.

"Brother Gene" later infiltrated the Black Panther Party. He gave lying testimony in the attempted frame-up of the Panther 21. One of the defendants was Afeni Shakur, the mother of Tupac Shakur.

It took the jury two hours to acquit the Panthers of attempting to bomb department stores and the Bronx Zoo. As fantastic as these charges were, they're not much different from the allegations used to jail Arabs and Muslims after 9/11.

Prosecutor Chris Christie used his [frame-up of the Fort Dix 5](#) to become New Jersey governor.

'Too much power'

The capitalist media has always insisted the murder of Malcolm X was the result of differences between himself and Elijah Muhammad. Malcolm X left the NOI in

March 1964.

What the media never mentions is that the FBI and local police departments were trying to destroy the Nation of Islam. Tens of thousands of Black people belonged to the NOI.

Los Angeles police attacked Mosque No. 27 on April 27, 1962. Mosque secretary Ronald X Stokes was shot in the heart and killed. Six other NOI members were wounded, including William X Rogers, [who was left paralysed](#). Like Kyle Rittenhouse, the police claimed “self-defense.”

Malcolm X came to Los Angeles and gave a eulogy for his friend Ronald X Stokes. Two thousand people attended the funeral. The atrocity was one of the sparks that led to the 1965 Watts rebellion.

New York police never forgave Malcolm X for 2,600 NOI members surrounding the 28th precinct in Harlem on an April night in 1957. They were demanding justice for Hinton Johnson, who was clubbed viciously by police.

The police were forced to send Johnson to Harlem Hospital. Upon Malcolm’s signal, the thousands of Muslims and their supporters dispersed.

A police officer told Amsterdam News editor James Hicks that “this was too much power for one man to have,” referring to Malcolm X. “He meant one Black man,” said Hicks. (“The Death and Life of Malcolm X” by Peter Goldman.)

That cop’s real employer — the super rich — felt the same way. Wall Street didn’t appreciate Malcolm X supporting Local 1199’s union organizing drive among New York City hospital workers.

And they sure didn’t like him saying “show me a capitalist and I’ll show you a bloodsucker.” The Black revolutionary declared, “We are today seeing a global

rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, the exploited against the exploiter.”

Did CIA try to poison Malcolm X?

Things happened to Malcolm X during the last year of his short life that were beyond the reach of any NOI member. In July 1964, Malcolm [nearly died of food poisoning](#) in Cairo and had to have his stomach pumped.

No one else eating with Malcolm fell ill. The CIA’s fingerprints are all over this attempted rubout. The world’s biggest terrorist network had its own poison department.

Its head was Sidney Gottlieb, who tried to kill Fidel Castro with toxins. [Gottlieb flew to Congo](#) in 1960 and delivered a poison kit to CIA station boss Larry Devlin. The intended victim was Patrice Lumumba, the first leader of the Democratic Republic of Congo. President Eisenhower authorized Lumumba’s assassination.

Although the CIA wasn’t able to poison Lumumba, the beloved African leader was murdered on Jan. 17, 1961.

Malcolm X spent months in Africa pointing out the oppression of Black people in the United States. He was a one-person truth squad that U.S. embassies couldn’t answer. With the support of African governments, Malcolm sought to present these violations of human rights to the United Nations.

Like Che Guevara, the Black leader visited Gaza and expressed his solidarity with the Palestinian people. Malcolm met with Che when he spoke at the United Nations in 1964.

Malcolm X was the only prominent Black leader in the United States to denounce the mass lynching of the followers of the slain Patrice Lumumba. Belgian paratroopers

and white mercenaries attacked Kisangani, then called Stanleyville, in November 1964, killing and raping thousands of Africans. President Lyndon Johnson supplied C-430 Hercules planes to transport these terrorists.

On Feb. 9, 1965, 12 days before he was assassinated, Malcolm X was stopped at the Orly airport in Paris and [deported from France](#). Malcolm had spoken in France before without incident. Many people thought that President Charles de Gaulle feared Malcolm X would be assassinated on French soil and didn't want to be blamed for it.

The Pentagon had special reasons to silence Malcolm X. In 1965 and 1966, one fifth of all U.S. combat deaths in Vietnam were Black soldiers and marines.

Racist officers forced Black GIs to carry out the [most dangerous tasks](#). Malcolm's friend, Muhammad Ali, risked going to prison because he refused to kill Vietnamese people.

The military brass must have feared Malcolm X leading a draft resistance campaign that would eventually find support not only from the Black community but also from Asian, Indigenous, Latinx and poor white people as well.

Malcolm's assassination was a tragedy for all working and oppressed people. Like Che Guevara, who was also murdered, Malcolm X became an inspiration for everyone struggling against capitalism and racism.

The exoneration of Muhammad Aziz and Khalil Islam demands an investigation into who were Mujahid Abdul Halim's fellow assassins and who allowed the murder to happen. The leading suspect is the U.S. government.

If the capitalist government refuses to investigate itself, the people must find the truth by any means necessary.



Their elections and our struggle

written by Struggle - La Lucha

December 25, 2021

What do the Nov. 2 election results mean for poor and working people?

In the Virginia governor's race, Republican Glenn Youngkin beat Democrat Terry McAuliffe by 80,000 votes. In New Jersey, the Democratic incumbent Gov. Phil Murphy narrowly defeated Republican challenger Jack Ciattarelli.

Joe Biden beat Donald Trump by 450,000 votes in Virginia and by 725,000 votes in New Jersey. A year later, Biden and the Democratic majority in Congress have done nothing that would inspire people to go to the polls.

No increase in the minimum wage. No expansion of Medicare and Medicaid. No cut in prescription prices. No subsidies for child care.

Congress is refusing to pass these items that are needed by people.

Biden could still issue an executive order to freeze payments on student loans. Over \$1.5 trillion is [owed by 43 million people](#). That's an average of \$36,510 of debt per

person.

Wall Street would howl. Forty-three million voters would feel some relief.

Republican candidates instead felt free to use racism and attacks on transgender people to win votes. That's what Glenn Youngkin did in Virginia.

Youngkin's campaign ran a TV ad featuring a white woman lamenting that her son was forced to read "Beloved" in school. The famous novel was written by the late Toni Morrison, the only Black woman to be awarded the Nobel Prize in literature.

Meanwhile, Fox News and Republicans across the country attacked immigrants. Yet it's the Biden administration that has sent refugees back to Haiti.

Both Youngkin and Ciattarelli attacked "critical race theory." That's teaching the truth about the African Holocaust and the Holocaust of Indigenous peoples.

It wasn't accidental that on the same election day, the Virginia counties of Mathews and Middlesex voted overwhelmingly to [keep their confederate statues](#).

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic helped Youngkin and Ciattarelli as well. Both candidates attacked the safety measures that are needed to defeat the coronavirus.

As racist as Youngkin's campaign appeals were, he also said he would abolish Virginia's sales tax on groceries. People have to pay a 2.5% tax on food.

A dozen other states outrageously tax food, [including Mississippi](#). The poorest state in the U.S. makes poor people pay a 7% tax on food.

When McAuliffe was governor he kept this awful tax. So did the other Democratic governors in Virginia.

Democracy for the rich

These elections proved once again that the United States has the best democracy money can buy. Youngkin poured \$21 million of his \$480 million fortune into his campaign. The Democrat McAuliffe had billionaire donors as well.

Youngkin was the co-CEO of the Carlyle Group, a Wall Street outfit that has [\\$16 billion in assets](#). He praised Virginia's union-busting "right-to-work" law and opposed a \$15 minimum wage.

New Jersey Gov. Murphy also made a fortune on Wall Street. The Democrat ran the Frankfurt and Hong Kong offices of Goldman Sachs, a bank with assets of \$2.1 trillion. Murphy poured in [\\$20 million of his dough](#) to win the 2017 Democratic primary.

Besides the Republican victory in Virginia, Republicans also defeated Democrats for several offices in Nassau and Suffolk counties in New York. Both counties are suburbs of New York City.

The Democratic Party establishment will use these defeats to attack the "Squad" and any other progressive member of Congress. This turns things inside out.

What were the Democrats doing running former Governor McAuliffe in Virginia? He was known for being a longtime fundraiser for the Clintons and chaired Hillary Clinton's 2008 presidential campaign when she ran against Barack Obama for the Democratic nomination.

McAuliffe also carried out the last three executions in Virginia. The state's death penalty was abolished under current Gov. Ralph Northam.

How was McAuliffe's record supposed to motivate people to vote? If the Democrats had run a Black candidate in the state that established slavery in 1619, it would have been harder for Youngkin to launch his racist appeals.

Organize!

Particularly painful was the defeat of India Walton, who was running for mayor of Buffalo, New York. Although the Black woman won the Democratic primary, Walton ran as a socialist with a progressive program against displacement and development for the rich.

Walton was defeated in the general election by the incumbent mayor, Byron Brown, who waged a write-in campaign. Millions of dollars were spent on ads attacking Walton.

The capitalist media is also emphasizing that a measure to abolish the police in Minneapolis and replace it with a Department of Public Safety went down in defeat. But [this measure won 62,813 votes](#), nearly 44% of the total.

Who would have thought a few years ago that an anti-police initiative would have gotten so many votes? George Floyd's death was not in vain.

The future can be seen in the socialist campaign of Cathy Rojas for mayor of New York City. The candidate of the Party for Socialism and Liberation got over 25,000 votes — 2.5% of the total.

Rojas and her supporters distributed leaflets and put up posters throughout the city. The campaign called for defunding the police and housing for all.

The racism and bigotry peddled by Glenn Youngkin and other reactionary candidates is dangerous. But it won't create jobs with decent wages or prevent inflation.

The future is struggle. Striketober is becoming Strikevember. We need to organize more than ever before.



Stop terrorist ‘no-knock’ police raids!

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Louisville, Kentucky, police with a “no-knock” search warrant broke down Breonna Taylor’s door after midnight on March 13, 2020, and started shooting. Six bullets struck the 26-year-old Black woman, killing her.

There were no Fourth Amendment rights against illegal search and seizure for Breonna Taylor. The police [didn’t even search the home](#) of the emergency room technician who helped save lives.

The Fourth Amendment didn’t apply to Alberta Spruill either. The 57-year-old city worker, a member of the Convent Avenue Baptist Church and AFSCME Local 1549, was looking forward to retirement. She liked to walk around her Harlem neighborhood and give candy to children.

Her life meant nothing to the dozen New York City police officers who had a no-

knock warrant. At 6:10 am on May 16, 2003, they threw a flash grenade into Spruill's apartment that stunned her. Two hours later [she died of a heart attack](#).

On Nov. 21, 2006, Atlanta police with a no-knock warrant broke down the door of 92-year-old Kathryn Johnson. The cops fired 39 shots, killing the Black senior. Johnson was handcuffed as she lay dying.

Detroit police with a no-knock warrant invaded the home of 7-year-old Aiyana Jones on May 16, 2010. The Black girl was [killed by a bullet](#) fired by cop Joseph Weekly using a MP5 submachine gun.

An A&E network crew accompanied the cops, filming for the network's police propaganda show, "The First 48." Killer cop Weekly was a frequent star on cop shows. He was later cleared of all charges in the death of Aiyana Jones.

Jose Guerena was shot 22 times on May 5, 2011—Cinco de Mayo—by a SWAT team with a no-knock warrant in Tucson, Arizona. The 26-year-old father of two children and Marine Corps veteran was killed.

He was sleeping at home after working a 12-hour graveyard shift at ASARCO's Mission copper mine. Cops [prevented medics from aiding Guerena](#) for an hour.

Rockefeller's police state laws

All these atrocities were war crimes in the war against Black, Latinx and all oppressed people. The killing of Breonna Taylor helped inspire 26 million people to take to the streets to declare "Black Lives Matter!"

No-knock raids are like the bloody U.S. "search and destroy" missions during the Vietnam War. Or the massacre of Lakota people at Wounded Knee.

There's never been a no-knock raid against the banksters who [stole over 7.8 million](#)

[homes](#) from families through foreclosure proceedings.

It was New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller who first demanded no-knock raids, which had been illegal. [Rockefeller signed these laws](#) that also authorized “stop and frisk” by police on March 3, 1964. Similar laws spread across the U.S.

Rockefeller’s family is Big Oil. It controls ExxonMobil and Chevron. Nelson’s brother David was head of the Chase Manhattan Bank, now JPMorgan Chase, with \$3.68 trillion in assets.

Fifty years before Nelson Rockefeller signed the no-knock bills, his family had striking coal miners and their families in Ludlow, Colorado., killed with machine guns on April 20, 1914. Seven years after no-knock, Gov. Rockefeller ordered the Attica prison inmates slaughtered on Sept. 13, 1971.

There was immediate resistance to Rockefeller’s police state legislation. Hundreds of people came to a [Harlem rally on March 7, 1964](#), to protest. Among the speakers was Jesse Gray, who led a rent strike in Harlem.

Because of the Black Lives Matter movement, 28 states and 20 cities [have passed restrictions](#) on no-knock raids since the murder of Breonna Taylor. They should be abolished altogether.



New York Times on cybersecurity: More like war propaganda

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The New York Times loves “dog bites man” stories, especially if they can say that the dog might be named Russia.

In journalism, you may have heard, if a dog bites a man that’s nothing; but if a man bites a dog, that’s news, in the words of Charles Dana, editor of the New York Tribune in the 1850s.

So why would the [Times make any noise at all](#) about a “dog bites man” story? The dog, in this case, is somebody or a group of somebodies who are trying to do a simple cyber break-in. The target (the “man”) is a Microsoft cloud system.

The Times even says that U.S. officials consider this to be a routine, “unsophisticated, run-of-the-mill operation that could have been prevented if the cloud service providers had implemented baseline cybersecurity practices.”

The break-in attempt, as described by Microsoft, is a simple password phishing attack on user logins. This is the most common type of break-in attempt that is carried out tens of thousands of times daily across the internet.

The Times story says that Microsoft recently notified more than 600 organizations that they had been the target of about 23,000 attempts to enter their systems. Yawn, this is news?

What Microsoft adds to [its press release](#) is that they think the source of these attempts is a group based in Russia. No proof of this assertion is offered, and the Times gladly repeats this as if it were fact.

That's a stretch.

Weapons of mass distraction

The Times' writer is David Sanger, a sort of hired gun for war jingoism. Sanger, along with Judith Miller, created the legendary "weapons of mass destruction" reports on Iraq for the New York Times. All of it was fiction.

Sanger was also an originator and promoter of the false claim of a Russian hack of the Democratic National Committee and top officials in the 2016 Hillary Clinton campaign. That accusation was used as a distraction after it was learned that WikiLeaks was about to publish emails that showed how Clinton and the DNC had intervened to block Bernie Sanders.

Too many still believe the Russia hacking and Trump campaign conspiracy story. But, like the weapons of mass destruction, it never happened.

What is real news, which was ignored by Sanger, is that Microsoft admitted that its weak security policies meant that a break-in was possible.

Microsoft says: “The attacks we’ve observed in the recent campaign against resellers and service providers have not attempted to exploit any flaw or vulnerability in software but rather used well-known techniques, like password spray and phishing, to steal legitimate credentials and gain privileged access.”

Microsoft adds that it had updated its security requirements in September 2020 to reduce its vulnerability to “password spray and phishing,” but it had failed to enforce these policies. “We will [now] take the necessary and appropriate steps to enforce these security commitments.”

So why was the Times’ headline [“Russia Challenges Biden Again With Broad Cybersurveillance Operation”](#)? The only challenge was anonymous, not necessarily Russian, and the only target was Microsoft. And even Microsoft said it wasn’t a serious or significant challenge.

But as we’ve seen over the years, when the capitalists want war propaganda, truth is always the first casualty.



Supply chain crisis? There's more to that story

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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Fears of empty shelves and online shortages seem to dominate the daily TV news shows. The reports are completely overblown, as Barron's admits in a report that's blocked for common reading by a paywall. (Barron's is a Dow Jones & Company news magazine; they also publish the Wall Street Journal.)

Barron's notes that year-end shortages in the supply chain are nothing new. "Our conversations with retailers, manufacturers, shippers, and Wall Street forecasters indicate that businesses are learning to cope with bottlenecks," Barron's says.

Moreover, with the reports filling the news shows, toy sales have taken off. The toy industry is reporting that [sales have increased](#) by 15% over last year— to \$22.45 billion — and 28% over 2019. And, you may have noticed, toy prices are going up — allegedly because of "short supply."

Supply chain bottlenecks don't originate from COVID-19. The bottlenecks were introduced back in the 1970s by what is called "just in time" manufacturing. Manufacturers no longer have big inventories of parts. For global manufacturers, everything is now "off-shored." Everything from parts to completed products are made globally and then shipped to where they are needed.

With the anarchy of capitalist production, it's never known what will be needed or when — not overall for the whole economy. Of course, Ford Motor Co. knows what computer chips it wants and when it wants them for F-150 pickup production. But does that matter if more of Chrysler's Ram pickups are being sold and use the parts

that are most needed? That's the anarchy of capitalism.

Attack on longshore workers

Besides a chance to raise prices, there's another game hidden in the shipping bottleneck on the West Coast that's been the highlighted image on the TV news.

International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 President Trent Willis says that there is no backlog of ships at the Port of Oakland, the third-busiest port on the West Coast. Local 10 is an African American-led labor union that is world-renowned for its militant and just struggles, including stopping the loading and unloading of ships from apartheid South Africa and Israel.

"I want to make something absolutely clear: The supply chain backup on the West



Coast has been inaccurately reported," Willis said in a Labor Video interview.

"It's being inaccurately reported that this backup is all up and down the whole coast. Why are ocean carriers refusing to use the Port of Oakland to unload container ships with 70 to 80 ships backing up in the ports of LA?" Willis asks.

"They could be playing some kind of game, you know. We have our contract negotiations starting up in 2022."

And they want to gentrify the Port of Oakland. John Fisher, the multibillionaire,

right-wing, racist capitalist who owns the Oakland A's, the Gap and other enterprises, wants to build a baseball stadium, a condominium, a hotel, retail and commercial space there. This gentrification would compromise the Port of Oakland and the jobs of the dockworkers.

Meanwhile, in Los Angeles and Long Beach, the shipping backup is being used to force the dockworkers to go 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The big shipping operators have been demanding a 24/7 work schedule for years. The ILWU has resisted this, in part, because it creates a more hazardous work environment. Now they are being forced to accept it.

Even though the union has agreed to the 24/7 schedule, the shipping companies are still boycotting the Port of Oakland.

