

No more transit fare hikes in NYC!

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 6, 2025



New York, April 21 - The Fare Ain't Fair campaign held a news conference demanding a rollback in subway and bus fares. SLL photo

New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority wants to raise transit fares on buses and subways to \$3. That's 60 times what it cost in 1948, when the fare was a nickel. Meanwhile, the MTA provides \$2.8 billion in tax-free interest on its bonds every year to banksters. Struggle-La Lucha urges its readers to support the Fare Ain't Fair Coalition in fighting this robbery of poor and working people.

Aug. 1 Fare Ain't Fair Coalition Press Statement

On July 30, the MTA Board concluded its July meeting (which is open to the public but meets at 9:00 am when most working people are already on the clock) with the threat of a fare increase that would go into effect on Jan. 4, 2026. A decision such as

this could only come from an entity that is completely out of touch with the day-to-day experiences of the working and poor people of our city, as we struggle to survive an unprecedented affordability crisis that shows no sign of letting up.

The “Fare Ain’t Fair Coalition” – a group of working and poor New Yorkers fighting for affordable transit – demands the MTA Board cancel the 2026 fare hike and all future increases. The strength of our fight comes from our collective recognition that fares keep going up, rent keeps going up, and our paychecks do not! Our position is that any fare increase imposed upon us by the MTA Board would exacerbate the fundamental issue with our transit system: one in five New Yorkers is struggling to afford the fare. The affordability crisis will worsen if we continue to allow NYC agencies to extract from our shrinking pockets.

An incorrect analysis of our current situation is what leads the MTA Board to invest over \$1 billion/year on “fare evasion prevention” rather than investing those same dollars in the NYC Fair Fares program, which would directly alleviate some of the financial burden resulting in fare evasion. The root cause of fare evasion is not criminality; it is an inability to keep up with the rising cost of living that is outpacing the money we are bringing home.

To the MTA Board, our message is simple: The days of you making decisions that negatively impact the quality of life and safety of transit riders and workers without organized resistance are numbered. The “Fare Ain’t Fair Coalition” calls on all working and poor New Yorkers to join this campaign, as we continue to apply pressure, until our ability to access an affordable and quality public transit system is recognized as a human right. The fare ain’t fair and the poor won’t pay more!

To join the Fare Ain’t Fair Coalition and / or learn more about our work, contact us at fareaintfair@protonmail.com.



Standing together against ICE and police brutality in Baltimore

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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The phrase “juntos somos más fuertes,” meaning “together we are stronger,” encapsulates the message of the Peoples Power Assembly’s car caravan held on July 12.

The caravan of approximately 17 vehicles traversed Baltimore’s deeply segregated city, passing through predominantly Black neighborhoods like Sandtown-Winchester and predominantly Latine neighborhoods like Highlandtown.

The cars in the caravan led chants and played protest songs in both Spanish and English. As the cars drove past, residents of Baltimore peered out their windows and stopped on the sidewalks to wave or raise a fist in solidarity.

The chants of the caravan echoed the sentiments of the talks given at the parking lot before the procession: With solidarity, we can stand up to the violence used by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and police that terrorize our community.

The struggles of the Black and Brown communities are not separate; the police brutality against the Black community and the violence that ICE uses to abduct and deport members of the migrant community are the same tactics.

The speech from an organizer with the Peoples Power Assembly that kicked off the event is presented here:

I want to thank you all for coming out and showing up for the community. Today, I will be providing a brief update on Kilmar Ábrego García as well as speaking about the other racist actions the government has taken against the Latinx community.

As you may know, Kilmar Ábrego García was wrongfully arrested by ICE and deported to CECOT, the mega-prison in El Salvador that is notorious for human rights violations. His deportation was hasty and did not allow time for any sort of due process. After the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the U.S. government needed to facilitate Mr. Ábrego García's release from CECOT and his return to the States, the Trump administration claimed it had no power to do so.

However, the federal government magically found the authority to bring Kilmar back to the U.S. in June so they could put him on trial for alleged human trafficking, based on a traffic stop in Tennessee in 2022. Mr. Ábrego García pleaded not guilty to these charges.

An assistant director of ICE, Thomas Giles, testified that if Kilmar is released on bond from Tennessee, he will be detained by ICE and deported to a third country: either Mexico or South Sudan. Ábrego García's legal team is asking for a 72-hour notice before deportation if he is released from jail and detained by ICE. Right now, we are awaiting the Judge's ruling.

Let's be clear: ICE arrested and deported Kilmar to what is essentially a torture facility because of his skin color, and they have him awaiting a criminal trial now to

cover up their mistakes. We need to act and make our voices heard for Kilmar and for the members of our community targeted.

Speaking of deportations to South Sudan, ICE deported eight men there: seven of the men are from Cuba, Laos, Myanmar, and Mexico, while only one is from South Sudan. These men were held in a shipping container in Djibouti before being sent to South Sudan, where they are now in the custody of the government in South Sudan.

As seen by the mass arrests and deportations by ICE, Kilmar's story is not an exception. ICE is targeting people based on skin color and has arrested citizens and people with residency. The racist arrests and deportations are not stopping; this "Big Beautiful Bill," which should be called the "Big BS Bill," expands funding for immigration enforcement to \$170 billion.

This includes \$45 billion to build new detention facilities, like the facility known as "Alligator Alcatraz," \$47 billion for "border wall construction," and increases ICE's yearly budget to \$30 billion. Trump has also promised 10,000 new ICE agents, making a total of 30,000 ICE agents. That makes one ICE agent per 11,000 people in this country.

The new detention facilities planned will be like the inhumane facility known as Alligator Alcatraz, which is a concentration camp made of tents in the Florida Everglades and is not fit for human beings. This horrific facility has already flooded, serves spoiled food, has fluorescent lights on 24/7, and lacks water for bathing. We need to continue to be out in the streets and keep our voices loud until our community members are no longer abducted and sent to inhumane camps to wait for deportation.



I don't know if you guys have seen the new music video Bad Bunny released on the 4th of July, but the video ended with a black screen and the phrase, "juntos somos más fuertes," meaning, "together we are stronger."

This phrase is true. I know what's happening now is demoralizing, but we need to remember that together, we are strong and have the power to fight for our community. We need to keep talking about what's happening. Do not let Kilmar be forgotten. We must keep raising our voices until these racist attacks on community members end.

To get our energy going for our demo today, we're going to do a classic chant where we say, "el pueblo unido, jamás será vencido," which roughly translates to "the people united will never be defeated."



Capitalism's vampires: How WNBA and MLB owners exploit player labor

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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As the summer has worn on, tensions between player unions and team ownership in the world of professional athletics have risen higher and higher - and for good reason.

Both the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) and Major League Baseball (MLB) are facing potential work stoppages due to continued ownership greed. The fundamental issue at the core of struggles between the players' unions and league ownership is how the revenues of the WNBA and the MLB are distributed.

Marx's vampire metaphor and sports capitalism

In 1867, Karl Marx wrote about the capitalist system: “Capital is dead labor, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labor, and lives the more, the more labor it sucks.”

This may seem a strange quote for the opening of an article about professional athletics in the United States. However, at its most fundamental, all professional sports leagues in capitalist society, no matter their relative size or wealth, manifest a relationship between labor and capital.

To this point, the WNBA and MLB ownership play the role of vampires in Marx’s metaphor. The respective league ownership is fanatically committed to sucking all the profits they can from the players’ blood, sweat, and tears while paying those players as little as possible.

Now, in both leagues – but particularly the MLB – the players’ union is often criticized for what is perceived as “millionaires fighting billionaires.” However, in both cases, the players should not be analyzed as being of the same class as the owners. While many professional athletes are paid well, some even earning hundreds of millions of dollars, they are ultimately still workers. Even for the players paid in the millions, their salaries pale in comparison to the profits raked in by billionaire team ownership — the players’ labor produces super profits.

The vast majority of professional athletes don’t remotely become millionaires. This is especially true for a league like the WNBA that is younger, subsidized by the men’s National Basketball Association, and already faces a base [gender pay gap](#), as do all women workers in the United States.

WNBA growth vs. stagnant player compensation

Recent years have shown a huge growth in the popularity and financial value of the WNBA. However, player salaries have remained [woefully low](#).

While attendance, team value, and media profits have all skyrocketed, player pay has remained stagnant. Even now, the average WNBA player salary is just over \$100,000 a year. For comparison, the average value of a WNBA team is \$269 million. The total value of the league is over \$3.5 billion.

Beyond salaries, there is also the issue of revenue-sharing payments. In the NBA, players receive 49% of all revenue, above and beyond their income. These payments are based on the level of profits made by each team. [In the WNBA, players receive only 9% of the league's revenue](#). That's right, a measly stinking disgraceful 9%.

Adding insult to injury, the WNBA just signed a \$2.2 billion media deal with ESPN, a deal that will inject \$200 million a year into the league. Yet, as [contract negotiations](#) between the WNBA Players' Association began, suddenly these billionaires pleaded poverty.

No game without the players - 'pay us what you owe us'

It is for that reason that star players like Kelsey Plum, Napheesa Collier, and Caitlin Clark donned ["Pay Us What You Owe Us"](#) t-shirts at the recent All-Star game.

Union President Nneka Ogwumike spoke out on the issue: "The business is booming - media rights, ratings, revenue, team valuations, expansion fees, attendance, and ticket sales - are all up in historic fashion. But short-changing the working women who make this business possible stalls growth."

Without these players and many others, there is no WNBA. This same formula can be applied to any industry. Without the workers who actually create the product that gives the industry or enterprise value - there is no industry or enterprise.

This reality has not stopped the billionaires from waging war on the entirety of the working class, including relatively well-paid professional athletes.

MLB's looming salary cap battle

Major League Baseball is no exception. The collective bargaining agreement between the MLB players' union (MLBPA) and the MLB is due to expire in 2026. The players expect that in the new contract negotiations, the League will attempt to impose a salary cap, or a limit on the total amount each team can dedicate to payroll.

Salary caps are an old tool, currently in use by the NFL, the NBA, and the NHL. By limiting the dollar amount each team can pay its players, league ownership guarantees a certain level of profits and escalates the already exploitative conditions.

The imposition of a salary cap would be no less than catastrophic for all MLB players. Capping payroll will lead to an overall lower average salary for players and severely limit earning potential for star and non-star players alike.

Historical stakes

It is for this reason that Phillies superstar Bryce Harper told MLB commissioner Rob Manfred to "[get the f*** out](#) of [the Phillies'] clubhouse when Manfred attempted to meet with the players in their locker room about contract negotiations.

For baseball to adopt a salary cap would not only be a slap in the face to the current players, but it would all but destroy the legacy of players like [Curt Flood](#). In the 1970s, Flood took on the entire MLB establishment over the reserve clause, which bound players to their teams for the entirety of the players' careers. The stand on behalf of the players essentially ended Flood's career, but his fight directly led to the formation of the MLBPA and a significant increase in player wages.

A salary cap would undo that struggle in the same way continued pay inequity in the WNBA would undo the years and years that mostly Black women invested into the

league to make it viable and culturally sustainable. This moment in the United States is a moment of escalated fascist attack across the front of society. This is no different in the field of professional athletics.

Payers and their unions must be supported as they continue their respective fights. These fights expose a direct conflict between the contributions of labor and the fact that under capitalism, workers are paid far less than the value of the labor they contribute. As always, the wealth should be in the hands of the workers. In this case, the players are the workers, and we wish them the strongest of victories.



Baltimore hospital nurses make history with first-ever strike

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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On July 24, nurses at Ascension St. Agnes Hospital walked off the job in a powerful one-day strike organized by National Nurses United. Over 50 nurses took to the picket lines in the city's first-ever nurses' strike, demanding the working conditions

they deserve and the patient care standards the community needs.

The Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly joined the striking nurses on the line, along with many supporters from across the city.



The nurses at St. Agnes are fighting battles familiar to health care workers everywhere: dangerously low staffing levels and growing workloads. This has led to a deterioration in patient care that is unacceptable to the nurses at St. Agnes. Ascension is a multi-million dollar private Catholic health care system that has consistently prioritized profits over patient care and worker safety.

The striking nurses chanted “Hey Ascension you can’t hide! We can see your greedy side!” and “Up up with the nurses! Down down with the bosses!”



L.A. boycott of Home Depot over ICE partnership

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“It is our Duty to fight for Freedom!!! It is our Duty to Win!!!” - Assata Shakur, Veteran of the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army

On July 3, a coalition of diverse organizations announced a boycott of the Home Depot, challenging the company's collaboration with the discriminatory and unjust targeting of workers and immigrants by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). With the Home Depot at Western Ave. and Slauson Ave. as the backdrop, this coalition announced the boycott campaign and made the following demands:

1. STOP the immigration raids NOW! Stop the militarized assault on Los Angeles NOW!

2. Home Depot must prohibit all federal immigration agencies from accessing its stores and parking lots.
3. Protect day laborers NOW!
4. Justice for impacted families NOW!

Coalition Members had the following to say:

- “We are robbed of empathy if we only fight for a comfortable position in capitalism. We have to resist getting comfortable within capitalism. We have to hold onto our humanity and imagination. Capitalism does not inspire innovation; it leads to competition that limits our potential as a society. When we only create things for profit, our needs cannot be fully met and we are left in a cycle of exploitation. How we spend our money is a powerful statement, and as a collective that power becomes exponentially stronger. To come together to make a political statement against ICE, through the boycott of Home Depot, is to stand up against two entities that clearly do not care about workers,” Nicole, organizer, The Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice
- “The Home Depot makes billions of dollars from the labor of migrant workers, and they thank them by allowing the kidnappers to use their facilities to abduct them. All people of conscience should support the boycott to pressure the Home Depot to not allow ICE operations on any of their properties,” Ron Gochez, organizer, Unión del Barrio

Analysis

The toxic military apparatus of the U.S. empire is on full display in Los Angeles streets: collaboration between the LAPD, FBI, the National Guard, U.S. Marines, and increased ICE activity. The fascist show of force in MacArthur Park on July 6 would be another prime example.

In Los Angeles alone, over 500 individuals have been kidnapped from their communities, with 17 reported deaths in custody.

Let that sink in.

The ice cream cart of a vendor in my neighborhood was found after ICE kidnapped him. A snapshot of fascist dystopia clawing at the self-determination and sanctity of our communities.

And what's the response to our neighbors being racially profiled and swept up as criminalized waste?

I don't have all the answers. This is not a "holier than thou" article.

But I did learn something from Malcolm X's example and teachings. Even as a young child, he learned that if he wanted something, **he had to make noise.**

Today, People Power is alive and well in Los Angeles. Resistance thrives under the California sun, distinct from the propagandized entertainment industry.

This is not a time for complacency and tacit acceptance of injustice.

Instead, the organizations announcing this boycott have chiseled a line in concrete for The People to join and support.

We must make our neighborhoods into our nation-states when fascism and authoritarianism rear their ugly heads.

This requires organization.

This requires demands.

This requires investments of time, resources, and effort.

The battle against ICE has necessitated the actions of this coalition. Let's not forget the horrors and poison of the capitalist AmeriKKKan system that put a target on the backs of workers, immigrants, and our neighbors alike.

Another organizer asked me recently: "How would you want someone to show solidarity with you?"

I would want them to join my fight. Dignify my reality. Contribute to changing the material conditions that made the AmeriKKKan battlefield what it is.

This coalition has picked up the gauntlet to directly resist the combined forces of capitalism, xenophobia, greed, and injustice in Los Angeles and beyond.

Choosing to be a beacon of resistance on a hill of darkness.

Today's press conference echoed how the resistance to the Trump administration must continue to evolve to meet the moment.

Fighting for Freedom requires strategy.

Now it is The People's choice whether to join this righteous fight.

"The true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love," Che Guevara

Let Revolutionary Love be the root of our actions for our neighbors.

BOYCOTT HOME DEPOT.

MELT ICE.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE.



The largest wealth heist in U.S. history: Trump's bill sacrifices lives for billionaires

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 6, 2025

Trump's "One Big Beautiful Bill" is now law. It's big, but there's nothing beautiful about it.

We're about to see the [largest upward transfer of wealth](#) in U.S. history. It's also going to be the largest cut to health care in the history of the U.S. The "Big Bill" includes over \$1 trillion in cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, and the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

About 66 million people in the U.S., or 20% of the population, live in rural areas. They will be especially hard hit. Rural hospital access has been declining for a long time, with Medicaid being the only thing that has saved many hospitals. (This is

proof you don't have to be on Medicaid to benefit from the program.)

At least [338 rural hospitals](#) are at risk of closing right now. That means grandparents who have heart attacks will die because there's no hospital to take them to. Children with allergies will die from anaphylactic shock because they can't get to the ER.

All so the billionaire oligarchs can steal even more of the people's money. Much of it will be stuffed into the coffers of the weapons manufacturers and private prison contractors. Those who wrote and voted for the bill know it's going to kill people, and they don't care.

The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy [analyzed](#) data from the Congressional Joint Committee on Taxation, along with other sources, to assess who will win and who will lose because of this bill. They said their analysis "suggests that a tiny sliver of affluent families — the top 1% by income — will receive tax cuts totaling \$1.02 trillion over the next decade. For comparison, the bill's cuts to the Medicaid health care program will total \$930 billion over the same period."

Meanwhile, an [analysis](#) by researchers at Yale University and the University of Pennsylvania predicted that the House version of the budget bill would lead to 51,000 excess deaths in the U.S. annually. They were just looking at the medical side of things: health care coverage and things like that. They weren't even considering other areas like food access or rising prices.

They sent letters about these findings to Senate leaders, but even if they hadn't, these politicians know very well that their policies kill people. These same politicians were unbothered by over 1 million people dying from COVID-19 in the U.S., and millions more dying globally. In U.S. politics today, they scarcely mention these deaths anymore.

The ruling class and their Washington minions just don't care. In fact, they applauded as they cast their votes in favor of this bill that would result in so much death. The oligarchs rule. It's time to throw them out and replace them with an equitable socialist system.



'We need groceries, not gun-slinging police': Baltimore cops execute beloved Arabber 'BJ' Abdullah

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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In the wake of Bilal "BJ" Abdullah's execution at the hands of the Baltimore Police Department, organizers with the Baltimore People's Power Assembly spoke with members of the community who knew BJ and had spent their entire lives in the neighborhood where the cops executed Bilal. PPA Organizer Joy B grew up just

around the corner from the Upton metro station, where the deadly police shooting occurred.

Abdullah was 36 years old and well-known in the community due to his profession as an “Arabber,” or fruit and vegetable vendor. The Black neighborhoods of Northwest Baltimore are infamous for being food deserts, with little access to fresh produce due to the lack of supermarkets in Sandtown-Winchester, Upton, and Reservoir Hill. Arrabers like BJ are some of these communities’ only thread to fresh produce.

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

Issues in the community

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

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

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

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

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

Capitalist greed

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

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

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

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

Mr. Twin also echoed Mr. Archie's disgust at the lack of community engagement and investment from the government that employs brutal racist police instead of medical care, education, grocery stores, and union jobs. Mr. Twin specifically said, speaking about several Baltimore police and government officials, "They need to come through here! They need to see what is happening every day!"

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

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

#JusticeForBJ #BlackLivesMatter #EndPoliceTerror



Slavery and the fourth of you lie

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Black soldiers need not apply

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Philadelphia traitor

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

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

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

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

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

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

New York’s worse record

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



No to a \$3 transit fare!

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 6, 2025

New Yorkers say the 'fare ain't fair'

New York, June 25 — Activists rallied this morning in front of the Metropolitan

Transportation Authority's skyscraper headquarters in lower Manhattan. They protested the MTA's plan to hike the Big Apple's transit fare to \$3 on Aug. 1.

That's 60 times what it cost to ride a bus, streetcar or subway back in 1948. It amounts to a weekly \$30 transportation tax for workers just going to and from their jobs five days a week.

The action was called by the Fare Ain't Fair campaign initiated

by the December 12th Movement. Speakers from D12, the New York Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, the Party for Socialism and Liberation, and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper attacked the \$3 fare as another cutback for poor and working people.

They pointed out that MTA is a cash cow for banks and wealthy investors, who are slurping up \$2.8 billion in tax-free interest annually. It's estimated that by 2028, the MTA will be [\\$60 billion](#) in debt.

It's to protect these bondholders that thousands of cops are in the subways, arresting poor people for allegedly jumping turnstiles.

Mike Quill — the founder of the Transport Workers Union — once called for the fare to be free. Activists are hoping that NYC mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani, who is campaigning to freeze rents, will also demand a rollback in transit fares.

Later that day, MTA Chairman Janno Lieber announced that the [fare would not be increased](#) on August 1, as originally planned, but would take effect later in the year. Lieber — whose salary was [\\$400,999](#) in 2023 — doesn't have to worry about paying any fare.

This shows that the MTA fears the power of the people. It's time to increase the pressure. The fare ain't fair!



The rising tide of resistance against capitalism and state oppression

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 6, 2025

Many forms of resistance needed

As the capitalist class continues its assault on the working class and oppressed communities (both overseas and abroad), it is only natural that protest and resistance increase. This resistance takes many forms.

It can be marches in the street joined by all people able and willing to attend. It can be civil disobedience aimed at disrupting the status quo. It can also be a direct confrontation with the state. Obviously, there are many other forms. The point is that resistance exists on a spectrum.

Resistance rises to meet the oppression that created it. Because of this, there is no room for cherry picking the form of resistance that deserves support. Historically, it has always been a combination of different forms of resistance that drove results

and expanded the struggles of liberation for workers and oppressed people.

Palestinian, Iran and Yemen

For nearly two years, the world has watched the Palestinian resistance fight against the Zionist occupation by any means necessary - a fight for the survival of their people. Since that time, Yemen has also militarily confronted Israel and the U.S. directly with the stated goal of ending the genocide in Gaza.

More recently, Iran has found itself in a position of military resistance against U.S. imperialism and Zionism. Similar to the fight of the Palestinian people, Iran is fighting for its survival in the face of an imperialist world order that wants to see it crushed.

However, the resistance to U.S. imperialism is not limited to the armed struggle. There has also been the Gaza Freedom Flotilla, the March to Gaza, the Global Conscience Convoy, and the Soumoud Convoy. All of these actions were / are aimed at defying the Zionist entity and breaking the siege of Gaza through the delivery of humanitarian aid. Whether it is fighters ambushing IOF soldiers in the hollowed remains and rubble of the Gaza Strip or everyday people doing whatever they can, this is all resistance, and it should all be supported to oust the oppressive and genocidal U.S.-backed Zionist state.

Parallels between Gaza and Warsaw Ghetto

Varied resistance in the face of apartheid and genocide is not new. Oppressed and colonized people have commonly and historically embraced whatever tactic required for survival, let alone victory. Ironically, one of the most famous examples of resistance in the face of genocide was in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943. The word "ironic" is appropriate here because the children and grandchildren of the Jewish radicals and militants who rose up against Nazism in Warsaw are now waging a

genocidal campaign on Palestine.

However, the uprising of 1943 was not the only method of resistance that the Jewish community embraced during the horrific implementation of the ghetto system. A year prior, a group of Jewish doctors performed a study of starvation inside the ghetto. The public health and nutrition situation in the Ghetto at the time was stunningly similar to present-day Gaza. Food could only be obtained through soup kitchens that were themselves the targets of the Nazi occupiers. Vaccines, antibiotics, and other crucial medications were all withheld from the Ghetto prisoners by the Nazis.

The Jewish doctors' stated purpose was to track the impact of genocidal policies on a community in order to help future generations of oppressed people be prepared. To this day, it is the most extensive study of starvation carried out. The 28 Jewish doctors who conducted it were themselves starving. All of these doctors but one died from malnutrition or were executed by the Nazis - but not until they completed and ensured the security of their work. This was certainly as much an act of resistance as the armed uprising in 1943.



Struggle in U.S. now

In the present-day U.S., the same spectrum of resistance to fascism by various oppressed communities can be observed. Across the U.S. in 2025, racist police and fascist ICE agents hunt, jail, and deport immigrant communities. These attacks on immigrants have been going on under both Democratic and Republican presidents. This shows that it is the ruling class, the millionaires and billionaires, the prison industrial complex and military industrial complex that stand to gain from the

oppressive crackdown on immigrant communities within the U.S.

As communities came under attack by ICE across the nation, they all began to fight back in their own way. In Maine, residents of the state took to the streets demanding ICE leave their cities and towns. In Baltimore, there have been demonstrations protesting ICE and its brutal raids and attacks on immigrants around the city. There have also been anti-ICE groups who actively disrupt and bust ICE operations whenever possible. Many other cities have held massive demonstrations against ICE, and many other communities have confronted ICE directly during attempted raids.

Rebellion in LA

However, in California, there has been a rebellion in the streets. This rebellion formed to fight not only ICE's terror raids, but also the apartheid practices of the LAPD and the general military occupation of downtown L.A.

This occupation is a violent assault on the people by a hardline fascist federal security apparatus. This is a campaign meant to scare not just the people of L.A. and California, but all people who find themselves living in the United States. Trump and his allies want oppressed people cowering before his ICE stormtroopers. This fear is designed to force communities into political paralysis. However, through resistance (like that in L.A.) we see that the people *can* win.

As peaceful protest was met with tear gas, rubber bullets, flashbangs, pepper balls and pepper bombs, the struggle in the streets could only intensify. As residents were shot trying to get home or get the names and ID numbers of officers participating in the occupation, these same residents began to fight back. As more and more people witnessed parents, children, friends, family, and coworkers disappear to gangs of masked men, there came a point where peace could only slow them so much.

So, the people of Los Angeles began directly confronting the occupation of their city

to hinder or completely end the kidnapping of their people. They threw bricks, water bottles, chairs, plates and anything else they could get their hands on. The tear gas grenades that were tossed into crowds were tossed back at the fascist forces that threw them. When the community set police cars and ICE armoured vehicles ablaze, it was not a random act of destruction. It was an attempt to stop a brutal Gestapo force that was kidnapping people and breaking up families.

In Los Angeles, peaceful protests continue to be organized, coordinated ICE patrols still happen, petitions and calls continue to get local and higher government to reverse the occupation and ICE operations, and when violence is brought to the people, they are unafeard, willing, equipped and organized to fight back.

Each of these forms of resistance has played a role in the overall goal of combating ICE and ending the occupation. Government officials have gone on record saying that all this activity is hampering ICE's ability to operate in L.A. at the tempo desired by the ruling class.

Lessons from MLK and Malcom X

Corporate media wants the people to shame resistance. They want the working class divided so the capitalists can conquer. The media goes as far as invoking a false and racist narrative pitting the strategies of the Honorable Malcolm X versus Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in regards to protest and resistance against the state. They paint the resistance in L.A. in the same light as they painted the teachings of Malcolm X. The media wants the people to believe that Malcolm X was a rogue, a renegade who just wanted to see unwarranted violence erupt around the world.

In reality, Malcolm X was speaking of the importance of resistance to injustice. He was speaking of self-defence in the face of brutal racist state violence. In L.A., when pigs and police dogs and horses attack crowds - the crowds attack those pigs back. This is to be expected. The working class has not been known historically for

backing down from fascist assault.

The media and the state have whitewashed the legacy of Dr. King, leading people to believe that he was against violence and against resistance. Dr. King said “A riot is the language of the unheard, and “the price that America must pay for the continued oppression of the Negro and other minority groups is the price of its own destruction.”

Clearly, both men understood the importance of all forms of resistance. Both worked to achieve liberation, justice and equality for Black people, and the Federal government assassinated both men for their organizing. The capitalist system’s police cronies can commit violence whenever they deem it acceptable, but will go into overdrive to shame resistance to that violence.

In Los Angeles, the people are fighting back with any means necessary, just like in Baltimore following the murder of Freddie Gray in 2015. When faced with occupation and intimidation, school kids – unable to go home due to police blockades of bus stops and metro stops through riot police and crowd control weapons – the people fought back. Marches through the streets and into the heart of downtown, marches to police stations and city hall and marches through the affected neighborhoods. Both were forms of resistance to the police occupation, and both worked to bring empowerment and some justice to the people of Baltimore affected by police occupation.

The working class of Palestine, Yemen, Iran, Lebanon, Baltimore, Los Angeles, Baltimore – and wherever working people call their home – will continue to meet fascism and genocide with resistance. That fundamental resistance to racism and imperialism should be supported on all fronts and in all forms.

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