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Protest high cost of housing, food, fuel Inflation = wage theft!

By Sharon Black

Today the federal minimum wage is \$7.25! Let that sad fact sink in. Right now you can barely buy a gallon of gas in some parts of the country with that little cash.

July 24 will mark the anniversary of the last increase that took place in 2009. In 13 years the capitalist government in the United States has not raised the minimum wage even a nickel. And this is in the wealthiest

country in the world. Well, wealthiest for the wealthy!

Labor Department data for 2021 shows that approximately 250,000 people still earned \$7.25 and, to add insult to injury, domestic, farm, student, disabled, and restaurant workers can be paid less than \$7.25 an hour. It's called a "subminimum wage" — it's legal and it implies that these workers are considered subhuman by their bosses.

The majority of low wage workers

are Black, Brown, immigrant, women and young.

It is such a disgrace that some states and local municipalities have been forced to pass minimum wage increases on their own — but only as a result of concerted struggle by groups like "Fight for \$15" labor unions and community groups.

But still close to 52 million workers — 32% of the workforce — earn less than \$15. And when you factor in the large number of workers who can

only find part-time work, or do gig work, the situation is even more dire.

Of course, any worker can tell you that \$15 is a barely, barely, barely enough to get by wage.

A September 2021 broadcast on CBS Money Watch reports that the "minimum wage would be \$26 an hour if it had grown in line with productivity."

What the broadcast says in plain language is that workers are work-

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Behind the escalating attacks on trans people

By Melinda Butterfield

Thirty-one members of the white supremacist Patriot Front from across the U.S. were detained after preparing an assault on a Pride festival in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, June 12.

On the July 4 weekend in Camden, Ohio, Noah Ruiz, a trans man, was beaten by four men after being forced to use a women's restroom at a campsite. The victim was arrested by the police and spent the night in jail. It took legal action by Ruiz to force the cops to arrest one of his attackers on July 18; the other three have not been charged.

In Pensacola, Florida, July 18, Alisabeth Lancaster, a candidate for the Santa Rosa County School Board declared that doctors who provide gender-affirming care to trans youth "should be hanging from the nearest tree," to applause from the audience. The video of Lancaster's lynching threat went viral on social media.

Lancaster was echoing Florida's state government, headed by notorious homophobe Ron DeSantis, which is preparing to ban gender-affirming care for minors and defrauding adult Medicaid recipients while laying the groundwork for a complete ban on trans health care. Activists around the state are organizing to intervene at a hearing on the proposed ban Aug. 5.

During Pride month in Baltimore, four houses burned and three people were hospitalized after bigots set fire to a rainbow flag on a resident's porch. In Boston, the construction site of an LGBTQ2S-friendly affordable housing project was vandalized with hate speech and threats on the weekend of July 9.



LGBTQ2S activists and anti-fascists defend a drag brunch from neo-nazis, July 10.

In Texas, where the governor has ordered child protective services to investigate parents and health-care providers for "abuse" if they support trans children, families are uprooting their lives and fleeing to other states. That includes Kai Shappley, an 11-year-old trans girl who in 2021 testified about the importance of gender-affirming care at the state capitol in Austin.

From the San Francisco Bay area to Chicago, drag queen story hours and drag shows have been threatened and attacked by Proud Boys and other neo-nazis, often aided and abetted by local cops. Increasingly, communities are organizing to resist these attacks, as they did in Houston July 10, where defenders shamed down the bigots.

(Drag performers and trans peo-

ple are not the same, though the ultra-right conflates the two groups and smears both with false claims of being "groomers" and "pedophiles.")

These are just a few examples of what are now daily attacks on queer communities from coast to coast, especially targeting and scapegoating trans people.

SCOTUS, gov't, cops & nazis

These vicious assaults — some spontaneous, but often planned and organized — cannot be separated from the nationwide political attack on trans rights and abortion rights.

From the dozens of state legislatures that have enacted or plan to enact restrictions on trans lives and women's lives, to the highest court in the land, the right to control one's

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Tent City, Maricopa County, Arizona in 1997 stood 10 minutes south of downtown Phoenix.



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SUMMER OF RAGE: Women sit in at White House

By Sharon Black

Washington, D.C. – Thousands of mostly young women marched in pouring rain from 14th and I streets to the White House July 9 as part of the "Summer of Rage" called by the Women's March. When the group reached the White House, a sea of green bandanas with "Bans Off Our Bodies" written on them were tied to the White House fence.

In defiance of park rules at Lafayette Square, hundreds of protesters sat down in front of the White House preparing for arrest. While no arrests were made, the charge against the Biden administration was very clear: Not enough is being done to protect abortion rights.

The group is calling for President Joe Biden to declare a national emergency which would provide additional funds for abortion and health care. This includes access to abortion pills and the leasing of federal land to abortion providers.

Many protesters proclaimed that the White House and mainstream Democratic Party politicians are not doing enough and that "we cannot wait until the elections."

On July 8, protesters organized by the Louisiana Abortion Rights Action Committee took over the streets in front of the Civil District Court in New Orleans where a hearing about Louisiana's anti-abortion "trigger laws" was being heard.



Washington, D.C., July 9.



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Join the National Week of Civil Disobedience to Restore Abortion Rights

WOMEN'S LIVES ARE AT STAKE

Call for a National Week of Civil Disobedience to Restore Abortion Rights, Sept. 18-24

► Higher Wages ► Workers' Rights ► Full Funding for Childcare ► Healthcare ► Education
► No to Militarism and War ► Fight the Right! ► No Business as Usual!

Initiated by: Workers Voice Socialist Movement, Socialist Unity Party, Louisiana Abortion Rights Action Committee, Women In Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha, Louisiana Workers Councils

Sign on to the call:
Louisiana4AbortionRights@gmail.com

All Cities, All Organizations, United

It took a mass, militant movement coast to coast, north and south, to win Roe v. Wade – not politicians or the conscience of Supreme Court "justices." We have had to fight for abortion rights every day of the almost 50 years since—not only against the openly extreme right wing but against the Democratic Party, which has supported anti-abortion judges and laws, including the hideous Hyde Amendment that took away the right of poorer women to get abortions.

Emboldened by the overturning of Roe, the right wing

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Supreme Court Coup Demolishes Rights: Mass resistance can stop them!

By Melinda Butterfield

On June 24, the U.S. Supreme Court by 6 to 3 overturned the right to abortion established almost 50 years ago in the Roe v. Wade decision. Over half the states had abortion bans ready to enact or will soon.

Based on the precedent set by this ruling, the court also threw into doubt the future of same-sex marriage, bodily autonomy for trans, nonbinary and gender-nonconforming people, the right to contraception, and the right to love who you want, free of laws banning queer and interracial relationships.

The theft of a fundamental, popular right from women and other people who can become pregnant – more than half the population – garnered the most attention. But in the last two weeks of June the court unleashed an avalanche of reactionary decisions repealing the rights of workers and oppressed people:

- Police are no longer required to inform suspects of their Miranda rights against self-incrimination;
- Two major blows against the separation of church and state, allowing government funding for religious schools and school staff to lead prayer in public schools;
- Undermined the sovereignty of Indigenous nations established in treaties with the U.S. government;
- Severely limited federal agencies' authority to regulate corporate polluters, effectively gutting the federal government's ability to mount any response to climate change;
- In a "shadow docket" case, the court upheld the right of right-wing state governments to gerrymander voting districts to minimize Black and Brown voters;
- Additional rulings supporting police brutality, limiting the rights of prisoners to challenge



'Abortion bans = war on the poor': Baltimore Pride March, June 25.

SLL PHOTO: ANDRE POWELL

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Queer Liberation Marchers vow to fight back

By Struggle-La Lucha
New York bureau

On Pride Sunday, June 26, many thousands flooded the streets of lower Manhattan for the 4th annual Queer Liberation March. The theme of this year's march was "For Trans and BIPOC Freedom, Reproductive Justice and Bodily Autonomy." Coming just two days after the reactionary Supreme Court ruling overturning the right to abortion, the marchers were angry and determined to smash the mounting attacks on queer peoples' and all peoples' rights.

Contingents celebrated the legacy of the Stonewall Rebellion against police repression that launched the modern lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer and two-spirit movement, remembered the lives of trans women of color stolen by violence; and demanded liberation for Palestine.

Supporters of the Socialist Unity Party carried a banner that read "Stonewall still means fight back!" and signs that said "Abolish the Supreme Court" and "Nazis and TERFs say get back, we say fight back!" Activists who distributed hundreds of copies of Struggle-La Lucha newspaper reported an enthusiastic response from the mostly young marchers.

The QLM was established in 2019 on the 50th anniversary of Stonewall as an alternative to the traditional New York City Pride Parade: "No cops, no corporations, no bullshit."



SLL PHOTO: BILL DORES

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Attempted U.S. coup televised Voting rights still being eliminated

STRUGGLE-LA LUCHA STATEMENT

The public hearings of the House Committee to Investigate the Jan. 6 Attack have dramatically confirmed that Donald Trump, former president of the United States, attempted a coup d'état.

Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, head of the committee and member of the Congressional Black Caucus, said clearly: "Any legal jargon you hear about 'seditious conspiracy', 'obstruction of an official proceeding', 'conspiracy to defraud the United States' boils down to this: Jan. 6 was the culmination of an attempted coup."

Thompson added: "It represented Trump's last, most desperate chance to halt the transfer of power."

This is unprecedented. An overt coup attempt has not happened in any of the imperialist powers in the last century and exposes the bare threads of capitalist democracy in the U.S. The coup attempt also revealed the sharp instability in the U.S. ruling class.

The House hearings, however, conceal more than they reveal.

Pentagon played key role

The Pentagon played a key role in the Jan. 6, 2021, coup attempt, but the hearing has been silent on that.

The Pentagon was deeply involved. Members of the U.S. military, both active and veterans, as well as from numerous police forces across the country, were leading participants.

The "Insurrection Timeline – First the Coup and Then the Cover-Up," published at "Moyers on Democracy," details the central role played by Donald Trump and his new Acting Secretary of Defense Christopher Miller.

Miller had been put at the head of the Pentagon on Nov. 9, 2020, six days after the election, in a departmental "regime change" that embedded three fierce Trump loyalists as top Defense Department officials.

Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser asked Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy — who reports to Miller — for more federal help to deal with the mob that had broken into the Capitol. McCarthy and Miller denied the mayor's request and blocked deployment of the National Guard until hours later, after the insurrection had already been put down.

The New York Times reported: "President Trump initially rebuffed and resisted requests to mobilize the National Guard to quell violent protests at the Capitol, according to a person with knowledge of the events.

"In the end, it was Vice President Mike Pence, defense and administration officials said, who approved the order to deploy. It was unclear why Mr. Trump, who is still technically the commander in chief, did not give the order."

How then was it possible for Pence to deploy the troops, in opposition to Trump? That could only have been done if Trump had been secretly removed as commander-in-chief.

However, Trump and the Pentagon's coup attempt shows that a section of the ruling class supported a presidential dictatorship. This is confirmed by the fact that Trump's actions continue to have the overwhelming support of the Republican Party.

Promoting anti-Trump right wing

The House hearings on the Jan. 6 attack are a media spectacle through which they hope to restore some belief in the U.S. government.

The Democrats have presented a program that's primarily given voice to right-wing opponents of Trump. As one cartoonist put it, these hearings are biased; we've only heard from the Republicans.

At the head of the committee, side-by-side with Representative Thompson, is Wyoming Republican Liz Cheney, who sold out her lesbian sister, opposing gay marriage in order to win the Senate seat.

Previously Liz Cheney held a patronage post in the State Department where she promoted her father Vice President Dick Cheney's lies for invading Iraq.

The hearings have exalted Mike Pence, William Barr, Judge J. Michael Luttig and other Republican operatives.

What about voting rights?

The hearings are about a coup attempt. But they do not confront the grave issue of voting rights that the coup attempt played upon and which continue to be under assault.

Jan. 6 was at root an attempt to

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John Parker's U.S. Senate campaign declares success

By Sharon Black

Los Angeles — With 94% of the vote tallied, John Parker for U.S. Senate won over 97,600 votes in the California primaries on June 7. Campaign workers and the candidate declared this a major victory.

Parker ran openly as a socialist on the Peace and Freedom Party ballot, representing the Socialist Unity Party.

Election results are still being tallied. June 14 is the last day for mail-in ballots to be counted, and voting results will be certified on July 15.

At this writing, Parker is listed in 8th place among 23 candidates. The top two candidates compete in November's general election.

Supporters of John Parker's campaign were elated that so many voters chose to support a revolutionary socialist. This despite the fact that Parker interrupted his campaign for over two weeks for an urgent anti-war fact-finding trip to Donbass and Russia, which made the results all the more outstanding.

Campaign organizer Maggie Vascasseno explained: "We were worried on two levels: first for John's safety at the front line in Lugansk; and second that he took time away from vital local campaign work to travel to Donbass and Russia. But he insisted on the importance of being able to bring back the truth of what was taking place in the U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine."

John Parker stated: "The issues in California, such as runaway inflation, evictions and homelessness, the outrageous cost of gas and food, even racism and police terror, are linked to the war. The Biden administration is spending \$80 billion to continue the destruction abroad while people are suffering here at home."



John Parker (center) speaks with visitors to the Socialist Unity Party table at the People's Summit in Los Angeles.

"What I was able to see with my own eyes and document is the role of fascists and neo-Nazis in the U.S./NATO war against the people of the Donbass region. Nazi propaganda is being proliferated by the fascist forces in Ukraine."

"The Azov Battalion's symbol of the black sun was also used by the racist Buffalo shooter, who said that his inspiration came from a person in New Zealand who was in touch with those forces in Ukraine. This is what the imperialist West is propping up in a war not only against the people in Donbass but also aimed at Russia and then China," proclaimed Parker.

Campaign organizers continue to meet with groups and individuals who were inspired by the campaign. Parker and the Socialist Unity Party plan a national speaking tour about his trip this summer and fall.

The campaign still needs your support and donations to cover campaign costs and the upcoming speaking tour. Readers can contribute here: <https://joinparkerforus senate.org/donate/>.



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From Buffalo to Uvalde: Racism, violence come from the top

By John Parker

From Buffalo, New York, to Uvalde, Texas,
it all comes from the top.

It comes from the top and trickles down to us in bullets and death. That's the reality in a capitalist country that glorifies murder by drone of people we've never heard of, diminishing life into a decision of U.S. corporate interests.

War is a game that all of the Democrats and Republicans are playing – all who voted for more high-tech weapons of death sent to Ukraine, where many will land in the hands of those whose ideology promotes killing in the name of white supremacy.

And the games continue in Somalia, where more African lives will be sacrificed to the weapons carried by U.S. troops being sent there now – more racism at work and, as U.N. research shows, more extremists created, a byproduct of Pentagon terrorism.

The almost \$100 billion sent to Ukraine since 2004, first for regime change, now for war with Russia, has made it a manufacturing plant for Nazi propaganda by the likes of the Azov Regiment and Right Sector.

According to an in-depth article by Die Zeit in Germany, neo-Nazi and white supremacist international networks are growing and becoming more dangerous, and Ukraine has become their center. Their Black Sun symbol was not only on the white supremacist shooter in Buffalo, but can be seen tattooed on cops here as well.

2021 was a record year for deadly police shootings since the Washington Post started keeping track in 2015. The disproportionate number of Black and Brown victims tells another story of white supremacy spread through state bodies of repression.

Those who fall victim at an impressionable age to an ideology that makes them feel powerful and provides an outlet to blame others for the problems of capitalist alienation and economic despair are watching and listening. And some will act.

As tragic as those actions are, the racist institutions of the capitalist state will use them to continue their proliferation of violence and white supremacy.

Why are there no common-sense safety mechanisms in place that would make it harder to acquire assault weapons without some type of background check, evaluation, etc.? Because it gets in the way of profits and support from certain right-wing and racist forces. And it's the ruling class that supplies the racists, police forces nationally with the most dangerous assault weapons. Police and military weapons often find their way into the hands of white supremacists.

The indoctrination of youth into hate, violence and white supremacy is not an accident. It is a consequence of putting profits over society's responsibility to protect our youth from fascist propaganda that should not be allowed to build and recruit amongst those whom society has failed. There needs to be a financial and structural commitment to fighting racism,

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People in Buffalo, N.Y., march
on May 15 after racist murder
of 10 Black people.



Brooklyn, N.Y., march for Black Trans Lives, June 2020.

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The Socialist Unity Party/Partido de Socialismo Unido and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper salute the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirit community as we mark the 53rd anniversary of the heroic Stonewall Rebellion. The spirit of fightback exhibited at Stonewall is needed today as much as ever.

First of all, we offer our solidarity to the Black community of Buffalo, New York, where a white supremacist massacred 10 African American people on May 14. And we extend our hand to the Latinx community of Uvalde, Texas, where the grief from the tragic May 24 school shooting is compounded by Gov. Greg Abbott's attempt to exploit it for his anti-immigrant crusade.

As we enter Pride Month 2022, the United States is in the grip of a "trans panic." Like the "gay panics" that have come before, this is an attempt to divide workers and oppressed people at a time when the capitalist system is in crisis.

The anti-trans campaign is fueled by the rich and powerful, who are desperate to keep us divided by scapegoating the most vulnerable, by convincing those lacking in class consciousness that transgender, non-binary and gender-nonconforming people are the root of their problems – not the profit system that exploits us all.

Among them are "enlightened" oligarchs and companies like Elon Musk and Netflix, Jeff Bezos and Starbucks. They fear the movement of workers to unionize and communities to hold their empires accountable. Queer people play an important role in these struggles.

Trans panic = more violence

State legislatures across the country have taken up more than 300 anti-LGBTQ2S bills so far this year, most of them targeting trans people and especially trans children and youth.

Body autonomy, at the heart of trans people's ability to live under this system, is at stake, as courts and legislatures seek to turn back the clock to reinforce patriarchal capitalist norms that treat the bodies of women, children, people of color and LGBTQ2S people as the property of rich white cis men.

When Texas Gov. Abbott failed to get a law passed to criminalize gender-affirming care for trans kids,

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Fact-finding trip to Donbass: A front-line shelter in war zone

By John Parker

I had just left the Lugansk People's Republic, making my way to an interview in Moscow, when I saw a May 11 CNN story claiming Russia had targeted civilians in the Ukrainian city of Odessa. This was after the bombing of a hotel and shopping center there. When such structures are bombed, one assumes that they were filled with civilians.

Odessa was also the location of a massacre that took place after the 2014 coup, funded for years prior by the United States. The fascist element that was part of that coup burned the Odessa House of Trade Unions on May 2, 2014, killing progressives, socialists, trade unionists and anti-fascists.

My friend and guide during the Lugansk portion of my trip was Alexey Albu, who was inside that burning building and one of the few who escaped. At the time, Alexey was an elected member of the Odessa Regional Council. He was a former member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine and at that time the local coordinator of Union Borotba (Struggle). He and others were working on solving the contradictions created in society by the coup in a peaceful way through the still-existing legislative processes.

However, by May 2, time had run out.



John Parker in the Lugansk People's Republic. On the right, he's pointing to explosions visible in the distance.



SLL photo

The fascists who praised Nazi collaborators and pushed ultra-nationalism against the Russian population turned even more violent against any opposition. Political repression and jailings were on the rise by the coup government, and six days after the massacre, Alexey found out he was to be arrested. He and his family then fled to Crimea where they felt safe. He later went to Lugansk to continue his political work, but had to separate from his family for four years to do so.

As he is from Odessa and still has many connections there, I wanted to ask Alexey about the bombing on May 11. Alexey responded: "Yes, Russia attacked the luxury hotel Grande Bretagne, because there were foreign mercenaries operating there. And the big shopping and entertainment cen-

ter Riviera was attacked because they made it into a warehouse for NATO weapons.

"It's also important to know that Russia used high-precision missiles, so as not to cause harm to civilians. And it is very interesting that CNN did not pay attention when more than 40 civilians were drowned in blood and burned in fire in the Trade Union building on the second of May 2014," said Alexey.

Challenging U.S. narrative

The Russian intervention in Ukraine began Feb. 24, at the request of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics (DPR and LPR). About a month later, unlikely sources — analysts and advisers working for the Pentagon — be-

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Donate to support Struggle-La Lucha's John Parker on the frontline in Donbass

Beyond abortion, a struggle to win our future



Photo: Bill Hackwell

By Cheryl LaBash
Havana, Cuba

May 14 — When you have touched a woman you have struck a rock, says a South African proverb. It continues, you have dislodged a boulder, you will be crushed. The U.S. Supreme Court justices who penned the recently leaked draft majority opinion abolishing voluntary legal pregnancy termination should take heed.

Although the current debate centers on the issue of the women's right to make decisions over their own bodies, in fact much more is at the root. Today's political flashpoint holds within it the urgent need to overturn patriarchal gender norms, class oppression and the capitalist economic system that perpetuates them. The fight is

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- Baltimore commemorates 8-year anniversary of Odessa massacre
- Los héroes del Saratoga



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Defend Roe v. Wade: STRIKE WALK OUT SICK OUT SIT DOWN SHUT IT DOWN!

Socialist Unity Party Statement

A leaked draft opinion outlines plans for the Supreme Court majority to strike down the historic 1973 Roe v. Wade decision which guaranteed federal constitutional protections of abortion rights and the 1992 Planned Parenthood v. Casey decision that maintained these rights. Here is a link to the draft majority opinion: tinyurl.com/fxnkpcdd.

Women in Struggle/Mujeres en Lucha and the Socialist Unity Party/Partido de Socialismo Unido assert that it is time to take to the streets and resist the imminent, deeply reactionary Supreme Court decision that paves the way for a surge of attacks by the far right, including the neo-fascist elements responsible for the failed January 6, 2021, coup.

Reversing Roe v. Wade seeks to turn the clock back to the time when women – especially Black, Brown and poor women – were forced to seek back-alley abortions.

This decision is an attack on the rights of all genders, including transgender people and the LGBTQ2S movement. If affirmed, the arguments the draft opinion is based on would also undermine many other hard-won rights, including same-sex marriage, and be used to further the ongoing assault on trans people.

This attack is also deeply connected to the white supremacist attacks, voting rights for Black and Brown people and the attempts to stop workers from unionizing.

In the final analysis, the crushing of reproductive rights will fall disproportionately on women of color and poor women, as well as trans men, non-binary and gender non-conforming people who also need the right to abortion. It will also impact transgender and LGBTQ2S people by cutting their access to medical care. The very wealthy have always found a way to access abortions and other care.

Mainstream Democratic and Republican politicians have done almost nothing to stop the right wing in its tracks and to defend women's rights. The attack has been clearly coming for years – yet the Biden White House, with a Democratic majority in Congress, did nothing to prepare.

In the blink of an eye, Biden and Congress are preparing to turn over another \$33 billion to escalate the U.S./NATO proxy war on Russia and Donbass. But they remain powerless to stop the storm threatening



SLPHOTO CHEB BUTTERFIELD

Thousands in New York protest Supreme Court attack on abortion rights, May 3.



John Parker
LUGANSK MEDIA CENTER
Socialist Senate candidate on fact-finding trip to Russia, Donbass 5, 6



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- Defend Roe v. Wade
- Elon Musk, super pig
- New York rally declares: Jerusalem is Palestine!
- Dollar dominoes
- Three days in May to fight imperialist war and fascism
- Oakland teachers and dockworkers fight for their community
- Socialist Senate candidate attends Moscow May Day
- Los Angeles on May Day: Workers gear up to fight back
- To honor Odessa anti-fascists, stop weapons to Ukraine!
- Instead of fighting COVID, U.S. spent money to support neo-Nazis in Ukraine
- Climate crisis rages as U.S. pushes war for energy profits
- Philippines community rallies to demand fair elections
- Federación de Mujeres se solidariza con la lucha de Puerto Rico por la independencia
- Defendamos a Roe vs Wade de la forma que podamos: en Huelga, Sentadas, Ausentáandonos, Clausurando



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▶ Los archivos de los cinco cubanos regresan a casa

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MAY DAY 2022: Cuba lives and works!

By Cheryl LaBash
Havana, Cuba

Three days of solidarity will mark May Day 2022 in Havana. In Cuba, for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic forced cancellation in 2020 and 2021, the awesome May Day march will joyously take place Sunday, May 1. The march theme, *Cuba Vive y Trabaja — Cuba Lives and Works* — expresses the firm and unconditional decision to continue consolidating "Our Economic-Social Socialist Development Model." The events are dedicated to Cuba's historical leader, Fidel Castro Ruiz.

On the eve of May Day, April 30, the Central de Trabajadores de Cuba [Cuban Workers Central Union] is welcoming workers from around the world to learn from Cuban workers and their neighborhoods the pain caused to Cuban families by the unilateral U.S. economic, commercial, and financial blockade — essentially an illegal economic war. After meetings with the hotel and tourism union, delegations will visit communities under reconstruction and partake in the community soup called *caldosa* with Committees for Defense of the Revolution.

Hundreds — most under 30 years of age — are coming from the United States in various brigades, delegations and just coming as individuals to demonstrate their solidarity with revolutionary Cuba — real aid to the Cuban people. Their experiences will inform their work when they return to the U.S., be it in work places, mutual-aid projects, communities fighting for affordable housing and against evictions, to abolish the police abuse and murders and to stop the

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Solidarity activists will join the Cuban people in the Plaza of the Revolution.
Pictured: May Day 2008.

PHOTO: BILL HICKMAN



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TRANSGENDER DAY:
Safe Haven vandalized 3



Over 1,000 students at West High School in Salt Lake City walked out of classes April 6 to protest pending anti-trans legislation in Utah.

PHOTO: LINDSAY AERITY

U.S.-NATO war and attacks on trans rights:

Two fronts in the class war

By Greg Butterfield

In Texas and Alabama, transgender youth are facing forcible detransition. A law passed by Alabama's legislature and signed by Gov. Kay Ivey April 8, and an executive order by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott in February, not only ban gender-affirming care for children, but subject their parents and health-care providers to prosecution.

This means that even kids who have been transitioning for years, who have lived as and always been known as a girl or boy to their peers, would be forcibly "outed" and denied the care they need to grow up happy and healthy — even banned from using the restroom they choose at school.

These measures directly contradict the recommendations of medical experts, including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Psychological Association.

A University of Washington study released at the end of February found that trans youth who got gender-affirm-

ing treatment experienced a 60% drop in depression risk and a 73% drop in suicidal thoughts, on average.

"Our study builds on what we have already seen from an already staggering amount of scientific research," study lead author Diana Tordoff told HealthDay News. "Access to gender-affirming care saves trans youth's lives."

Tennessee and Arkansas already have laws banning gender-affirming care. Nearly half of U.S. states currently have similar legislation pending.

It's worth noting, perhaps, that about 1.5 million people in the U.S. openly identify as trans — that is, less than half of 1% of the U.S. population of 330 million.

Slander campaign

In recent weeks, a new campaign of dangerous slander has accompanied this effort, as right-wing politicians, news outlets like Fox News and social-media bigots shout about the LGBTQ2S community and its supporters as "groom-

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► **Ante un gobierno criminal y fallido, un pueblo se levanta y lidera**

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Union victory for Amazon workers

A turning point for labor?

By Sharon Black

The first crack in the Amazon empire is officially opened!

It came on April 1, when the Amazon Labor Union (ALU) won its election to represent the 8,000 warehouse workers at the JFK8 facility in Staten Island, New York.

We can't help but think that billion-dollar boss Jeff Bezos – whose racist anti-union attorney had earlier declared in a leaked memo that Chris Smalls, the young Black rank-and-file leader of ALU, to be "not smart or articulate" – woke up with a giant headache that day.

On the other hand, news of the victory elated workers everywhere.

It has given confidence to workers in Amazon warehouses and facilities across the country. Chris Smalls, interim Amazon Labor Union president, has heard from 50 warehouses interested in organizing.

In Maryland, warehouse workers who have been building a committee made plans to launch the Maryland Amazon Workers Union, based on the example of the ALU. The group has been distributing flyers to workers at bus stops.

Bessemer, Alabama

The outcome of the Amazon vote in Bessemer, Alabama has yet to be decided. But what is clear is that there was a dramatic gain for the union in this second election for union representation.

This time the difference is only 118 votes, 993 "against" to 875 "in



Some of the striking mine workers from Warrior Met Coal have taken jobs at the Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Ala.

- **Minneapolis teachers** ²
- **The Malvinas War** ⁷

favor." And there are 416 contested ballots. While there is a slim chance that the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) will win representation, it's not over yet.

Comparing Bessemer to Staten Island is like comparing apples and oranges. The Bessemer election took place in a "right to work" state (better known as a right to fire state).

Just 30 minutes away from the Bessemer warehouse, the mine workers from Warrior Met Coal have been on a strike now going into its second year. The mine workers have been heroically holding out in a battle that symbolizes not just 900 miners fighting for justice, but workers everywhere fighting against billion-dollar bosses who do not want to let go of even a crumb of their overblown profits.

Some of the miners have taken jobs at the Amazon warehouse and this tends to strengthen union consciousness. But there is contradictory pressure also. The fact that these workers have been fighting for so long, under dire economic conditions, compounds the fear Amazon bosses have spread.

In addition, the average wages in Alabama are far lower than Staten Island, which makes Amazon's pay look attractive.

But the pay does not mitigate the grueling conditions inside Amazon or the lack of power workers have without representation.

Some key lessons of Staten Island

Many of us who have been in the trenches looking for ways to organize will be evaluating what worked and what didn't at the Staten Island warehouse.

One clear fact that stands out is that the initiative and organizing was built by the workers themselves inside the warehouse.

Equally important is that the core organizers who took on this battle were representative of younger activists influenced by the Black Lives Matter movement. They spent time in the streets fighting police terror and other struggles against capitalism, including the development of mutual aid groups. Some of these workers consciously choose to take jobs at Amazon to help with organizing.

One thing that struck those of us from Baltimore who attended an ALU rally outside the Staten Island

Baltimore banner drop



By Struggle-La Lucha Baltimore bureau

During rush hour on March 25, anti-war protesters in Baltimore held a banner drop and street meeting to demand "No U.S.-NATO War on Russia & Donbass."

Activists handed out fact sheets and Struggle-La Lucha newspapers to drivers at red lights. They reported many honks of support for the slogan on the banner.

SELL PHOTOS SHARON BLACK

WAR CRISIS

- **U.S./NATO peace?** ²
- **'Stop War Lies'** ³
- **Voices from Donbass** ⁴
- **Lies about Bucha** ⁵
- **Ukrainians not mentioned** ⁶
- **'Revolutionary Marxists look below surface'** ⁶

facility on March 20 was the care that ALU organizers had for fellow workers, similar to many grassroots community groups and assemblies.

The Amazon Labor Union assisted and worried about workers faced with health and family crises, memorialized and marked the deaths of workers, and took on successfully fighting sexual harassment in the adjoining LDJ's warehouse.

It is the example of this solidarity that is necessary to win struggles.

In terms of tactics, it is likely that there will not be a "one size fits

all" solution to organizing Amazon. Workers will have to experiment – win, lose, or draw – and embrace each other in solidarity. It is the goal of building working-class power that must remain front and center.

We are sure that debates and discussions will continue. Certainly what's considered the "mainstream" union movement will be important in the coming battles. Its resources and especially the members that they represent are incredibly important.

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Mariupol & Donetsk: a tale of two cities

By Greg Butterfield

In December 2014, a young Russian communist named Andrey Sokolov was visiting the newly formed Donetsk People's Republic. He went to meet a friend who'd been driven into exile from Ukraine after the U.S.-backed far-right coup d'état in Kiev earlier that year.

Sokolov took a wrong turn and wound up at a checkpoint controlled by the Ukrainian Armed Forces. He was arrested and "disappeared" for nearly two years in the occupied city of Mariupol.

Sokolov was held for a long time in a bare cell in a secret prison. He was denied contact with the outside world, given little food, was tortured, and witnessed Ukrainian militants using cutouts of leaders from the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics for target practice.

Eventually supporters were able to track Sokolov down with help from locals. As reports seeped out about his case, and those of others "disappeared" by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion, Sokolov was offered a plea deal, which he accepted, and a court ordered him released with time served.

Upon his release, though, he was kidnapped by goons in plainclothes and held captive in another location.

Ukraine's government eventually felt obliged to allow a visit to Mariupol by human-rights investigators from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Sokolov's captors debated what to do with him. He was probably closer to death at that moment than he had ever been during his ordeal.



People in Donetsk bring flowers to the site where 20 people were killed by a Ukrainian missile attack.

Eventually the order came down from above. There was too much attention to Sokolov's case to dispose of him permanently. Instead he was put in a taxi headed to the Russian border and given bus fare to Moscow. That was in the autumn of 2016 – almost two years after his fatal wrong turn.

Mariupol and the Big Lie

Mariupol has been in the news a lot recently. It's been a major hotspot in the joint military operation by the Donbass People's Republics and Russia to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine.

The U.S. and other Western media mostly ignored Mariupol for the eight years it was under fascist occupation. They couldn't have cared less for the workers and political activists like Sokolov who had to live under the thumb of the Azov Battalion and Ukrainian security forces.

Now that the Azov nazis are being routed by the Donetsk People's Militia and Russian Armed Forces, newspapers, TV networks and social media are full of stories claiming "Russian war crimes" in Mariupol.

First there was a story about Russia attacking a maternity hospital. But as Russia's First Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations Dmitry Polyansky said at a

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The Emergency Campaign to STOP THE WAR LIES

By Solidarity with Donbass & Antifascists in Ukraine

The Emergency Campaign to Stop the War Lies is a grassroots effort to stop the lies and tell the truth about the U.S./NATO war on Russia and Donbass. It will kick off on March 20, the anniversary of the Iraq War, and culminate on the weekend of April 2 to 4, the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination.

March 20 to 27 Local outreach to communities, students and workers, including protests and picket lines, distributions of flyers and posters, street corner speak-outs, tabling in busy areas and banner drops.

March 27 "Expose the Lies" National Webinar featuring Alexey Albu from Borotba in Luhansk, Katya A. from Aurora Women's group in Donetsk, and Kristina Melnikova, a journalist who has covered Ukraine's war on Donbass for several years. Hear directly from the independent Donbass republics under fire from Ukraine and NATO.

Weekend of Sat., April 2 to Mon., April 4 – National protests on the anniversary of the assassination of Dr. King, who stood against war and racism.

Join us in demanding:

- No U.S./NATO war on Russia and Donbass!
- Jobs, education, housing, and healthcare, not war!
- Disband NATO, AFRICOM & AUKUS!
- Close Guantanamo and all U.S. military bases – bring the troops home!
- Feed the people, not the Pentagon! No to U.S. sanctions!

Initiated by Solidarity with Donbass & Antifascists in Ukraine and Socialist Unity Party / Partido de Socialismo Unido

Partial list of endorsers: John Parker, Socialist Unity Party candidate for U.S. Senate in California; Youth Against War & Racism; Mujeres En Lucha / Women In Struggle; Struggle-La Lucha newspaper; Communist Workers League; Workers Voice Socialist Movement; LA Black and Brown Unity – Los Angeles; Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice – Los Angeles; Peoples Power Assembly – Baltimore; Odessa Solidarity Campaign; Unemployed Workers Union; Anti-War West Sydney; Rhode Island Against White Nationalism – Providence.

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