

STRUGGLE ★ LA LUCHA

for Socialism | por el Socialismo



Afghan resistance ends U.S. occupation

By Scott Scheffer

The long and brutal U.S. imperialist war in Afghanistan is coming to a chaotic, inglorious end. For 20 years, the people of Afghanistan resisted the U.S. occupation and today the puppet government and its phony army has completely collapsed and practically disappeared.

The Kabul airport is packed with up to 6,000 U.S. officials and expats, Afghan people who collaborated with the occupation, and presumably some of the thousands of mercenaries that the U.S. hired while privatizing the war.

The Taliban, which claimed the victory, has announced that it will allow safe passage for those departing the country until Aug. 31. U.S. aircraft have begun ferrying people out. U.S. journalists are fretting that it's not enough time, lecturing the Taliban to respect human rights and hypocritically predicting all manner of brutality.

The Biden White House announced in the spring that the remaining 2,500-to-3,500 U.S. troops would be withdrawn (no mention at the time of the some 6,000 so-called NATO



Members of the Solidarity Party of Afghanistan protest against the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan ahead of its 16th anniversary in Kabul on Oct. 6, 2017.

troops or the thousands of mercenaries the big media call “contractors”).

As the withdrawal began, Biden kept sending more troops — 6,000 as of August 19 — to the airport. Presidents Obama and Trump had each announced a withdrawal. They both delayed and went along with an over-optimistic Pentagon fabrica-

tion of the prospects for an imperialistic victory.

Collapse of the puppet army, government

As the drawdown of troops began last week, by August 14, the Taliban had 21 of 34 provincial capitals un-

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UNEMPLOYED WORKERS UNION

- Evict the Supreme court!
- Dollar Store groceries
- Justice for Janitors

Puerto Rico ★ Cuba bond



LAPD explosion in South Central: Community demands justice

By John Parker

On June 30, residents of South Central Los Angeles were shaken by a thunderous boom like an aerial bombardment. Area residents are used to the sound of helicopters and police sirens, simulating a war zone. But this was even more intense. It was an explosion set off by the LAPD Bomb Squad.

Ignoring all safety protocols, the Bomb Squad decided to explode 42 pounds of fireworks confiscated from a home in a residential neighborhood. They did this during the day while people were in their homes and out walking. The explosion destroyed some homes on 27th Street and injured residents.

According to Comites de Resistencia, a Union del Barrio-initiated organization dedicated to community self-defense and empowerment in South Central LA: “The explosion is linked to two deaths, dozens of injuries, psychological trauma and millions of dollars worth of damage

to homes, cars and local businesses. Many residents have lost days of work and many were even fired due to missing days because of the explosion. Over 20 families had to be relocated because their homes were badly damaged. They are currently being housed by the city in a hotel in Downtown LA but they are being denied access to the swimming pool, gym and other facilities at the hotel.”

Six weeks have gone by since the bombing and the city has yet to fix the residents’ homes. Despite the families’ demand, the city has also not released the names of the cops who made the decision to detonate the explosives.

Needless to say, this would not have occurred in an affluent or predominantly white neighborhood. It occurred in a predominantly Latinx neighborhood.

These attacks on working people—especially Black and Brown working people—occur on a daily basis. There is a daily diet of police murder and terror in our communities; a daily



Residents of South Central Los Angeles.

diet of intimidation and lack of essential health care, especially now, during the COVID-19 crisis. Working people—disproportionately workers of color—are forced to work under dangerous conditions with little protection from the contagion. All of this is justified by systemic racism.

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► U.S. / Israeli nukes

BLOCK THE BOAT

Defend Palestine

► PHILIPPINES liberation artist murdered

Supreme Court says drop dead to 11 million tenants

We have to fight back!

Six judges on the U.S. Supreme Court have overturned the federal ban on evictions. The Aug. 26 ruling threatens to throw 11 million families — with 30 million people — into the street.

The Alabama Association of Realtors that petitioned the court to overturn the eviction ban represents the same bigots who fought fair housing laws in the 1960s.

A moratorium on evictions and foreclosures was enacted by Congress in 2020 during the worst capitalist economic crisis since the Great Depression. Over 30 million people were made jobless while the coronavirus was killing hundreds of thousands of people.

Millions are still jobless and can't pay the rent or mortgage. Yet Congress let the absolutely necessary

ban on evictions lapse.

It was only because of mass outrage — and a 5-day sit-in led by Representative Cori Bush — that forced the Biden Administration to act. The Centers for Disease Control issued a ban on evictions citing the new surge of COVID-19 cases and deaths.

As a public health agency, the CDC had every right to do this. Overcrowded housing is one of the biggest reasons for the death rate of Black, Indigenous and Latinx people from the coronavirus to be nearly three times the national average.

The six most reactionary judges on the high court claim that only Congress has the right to ban evictions, not the CDC. That's just an excuse to attack poor and working people.

Three of these judges had voted in 2013 to throw out a key provision of the Voting Rights Act passed by Con-

gress in the Shelby County

vs. Holder case. The three judges appointed since then would have agreed.

The recent Supreme Court action is as repulsive as its notorious pro-slavery 1857 Dred Scott ruling. It says in effect that “tenants have no right that landlords need respect.”

It echoes past court rulings that upheld child labor and union busting. It was the struggle of the people that overturned these obscene legal decisions.

Representative Pramila Jayapal rightfully declared that extending the eviction moratorium “is a matter of life and death.” Congress must reinstate the moratorium.

We can't wait for Congress to act.



We need to answer the landlords and bankers as we did last year when 26 million marched to demand justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. Black Lives Matter!

When the sheriffs come to throw a family out of their home, a wall of people has to come to prevent it. Just like the wall of moms protected anti-racist protesters from the cops last year in Portland, Ore.

The power of the people can beat back the big real estate interests — the landlords, realtors, banks — and their judges. Stop evictions and home foreclosures; defend the right to housing for all. 📌

Growing poverty of the U.S. working class

By Stephen Millies

Millions of working-class families in the United States are so poor they can't afford to shop at grocery stores any more. They're buying food at 99 cent stores instead.

Ohio resident Kyle Dishman told the Washington Post that he knows that “any food you can buy for only \$1 is not the greatest for you.” But he has only \$40 a week to spend on groceries for his two-person family.

Like millions of workers, Dishman had his work hours cut since the COVID-19 pandemic started. Despite the stock market being at an all-time high, there are 5.7 million less workers employed as compared to February 2020.

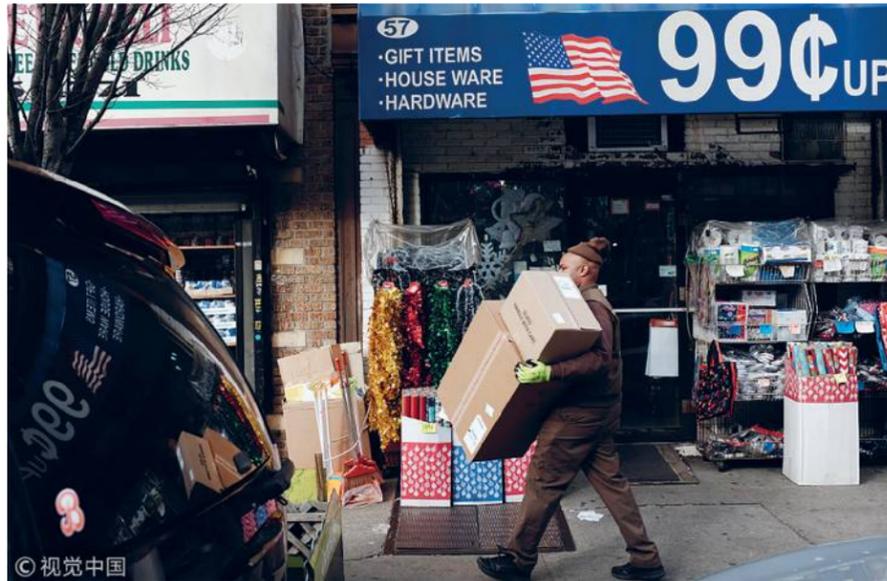
Dollar General, the largest dollar store chain, has 32% more customers than before the coronavirus. Some 1,650 new 99 cent outlets are expected to open this year.

Many of the 34,000 dollar stores are located in “food deserts,” neighborhoods where the nearest grocery store is at least a mile away. That makes it harder for residents to purchase fruits, vegetables and other fresh food.

These conditions help steal years from peoples' lives. Residents in the well-to-do Battery Park development in lower Manhattan live on average to be nearly 86 years old. A subway ride away in the overwhelmingly Black and Latinx Brownsville community of Brooklyn, life expectancy is 11.5 years less.

There's nothing new about working-class families being forced to buy lousy food. Frederick Engels — Karl Marx's co-thinker — described what was available to workers in Manchester, England, in the 1840s:

“The potatoes which the workers buy are usually poor, the vegetables wilted, the cheese old and of poor quality, the bacon rancid, the meat lean, tough, taken from old, often diseased, cattle, or such as have died a natural death, and not fresh even



99 cent store in Brooklyn, N.Y.

then, often half decayed.” (The Condition of the Working Class in England.)

The now-bankrupt A&P supermarket chain was boycotted in the 1960s and 1970s for its rotten food and racism in hiring. Activists followed an A&P truck carrying spoiled produce thrown out of a Massapequa store in suburban Long Island, New York, to be sold in Harlem.

Cutbacks everywhere

Food isn't the only item poor and working people can barely afford. Even during periods of “prosperity” millions buy used clothing and furniture at Goodwill or the Salvation Army.

In 2019, 7.5 million seniors couldn't afford medicine prescribed by their doctor.

Between 2007 and 2016 bankers foreclosed — that is, stole — nearly 7.8 million homes from families. Just in 2015 landlords evicted an estimated 2.7 million families..

Millions more face being homeless once the COVID-19 bans on evictions and foreclosures expire. We have to mobilize to cancel the rent and mortgages!

Those kicked out of their homes often turn to family members for

help. Between 1980 and 2010, the number of these doubled-up families increased almost four-fold, from 1.15 million to 4.3 million. (2012 U.S. Statistical Abstract, Table 59)

Overcrowded housing is a big reason why deaths from the coronavirus are two and three times as high in Black, Indigenous and Latinx communities. In the East Elmhurst neighborhood of Queens, New York — where Malcolm X lived with his family — one out of every 129 residents have died of COVID-19.

This is a housing crisis but there's no housing shortage. New York City landlords keep nearly a quarter-million apartments empty so the rent stays sky-high.

That's as criminal as hoarding food during a famine. The people united can take over these empty apartments and abolish homelessness.

Close to 43 million people owe \$1.6 trillion in student loans. Most will never be able to pay it off. That debt needs to be wiped clean.

Wages have stagnated or even declined since the early 1970s. You would need \$12.77 in July 2021 to match the buying power of the \$1.60 federal minimum wage that was enacted in February 1968.

But the federal minimum wage is only \$7.25 per hour. That's \$5.52 stolen from poor workers every hour. If you're lucky to work an entire year of 40-hour weeks, the wage theft amounts to \$11,481.60 — almost a thousand dollars a month.

A 50-year holiday for the rich

Even the Harvard Business Review admits that hourly wages, adjusted for inflation, have increased just two-tenths of 1% per year since the early 1970s. Since then the share of the national income for poor and working people has fallen from nearly 65% to below 57% in 2017.

According to the Brookings Institution — an establishment think tank — average wages, adjusted for inflation, increased just 3% from 1979 to 2018. At the same rate real wages would increase less than 16% in 200 years.

The wage stagnation — and for many workers wage cuts — happened despite a fantastic increase in productivity. Meanwhile there are 724 billionaires in the United States according to Forbes magazine.

The three richest U.S. billionaires — Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk and Bill Gates — have a collective stash of \$452 billion. Three members of the Walton family, whose Walmart employees work for poverty wages, have a total fortune of \$181 billion.

At one pole of U.S. society you have several hundred billionaires, and at the other, 40% of people who can't afford a \$400 emergency expense. How did that happen?

The wealthy and powerful have enjoyed a reactionary holiday since the mid-1970s. An orgy of union busting erupted. In 1975, Wall Street demanded New York City Mayor Abe Beame fire 50,000 municipal workers.

Unions were pushed back not so much by broken strikes but by a tidal wave of plant closings. Thousands of union fortresses were shut down.

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‘Dos Alas’ mural continues to shine in East Harlem

By Cheryl LaBash

Community leaders fought back and immediately restored the Dos Alas Mural in East Harlem, N.Y., after it was vandalized by right-wing, anti-Cuba elements on Aug. 14. The mural honors the historic bond between Puerto Rico and Cuba, depicting anti-colonial and anti-imperialist heroes Don Pedro Albizu Campos and Che Guevara.

Show your support by signing an online petition: “The mural belongs to El Barrio!” <https://www.change.org/p/el-barrio-defend-the-dos-alas-mural>

Activists are using rallies at the mural, along with online and in-person petitioning, to mobilize the community against the counter-revolutionary Cuban art dealer who is seeking to have the mural removed.

On Sunday, Aug. 29, New York City’s part of the nationwide month-

ly “End the Blockade of Cuba” car/bike caravan will culminate in a 3 p.m. rally at ‘Dos Alas’ mural, located at 201 E. 105th St. (between Second and Third Avenues).

Everyone is welcome with or without a car/bike! For more information contact CubaSi at 917-887-88710. Ten other cities will have events on Aug. 29.

The mural’s name comes from a poem by Puerto Rican independence poet Lola Rodríguez de Tió: “Cuba y Puerto Rico son / de un pájaro las dos alas, / reciben flores o balas / sobre el mismo corazón.” Translation: “Cuba and Puerto Rico are / two wings of the same bird, / they receive flowers and bullets in the same heart.”

Long live the sovereignty of the Cuban and Puerto Rican people!

Thank you to Yhamir Chabur from the Venceremos Brigade for photos and petition. 📷



Justice for Janitors fighting big tech, big banks for a fair contract

By Scott Scheffer

Thousands of janitors across California have taken to the streets to fight for a fair union contract. On June 15, hundreds of janitors held a commemorative march in downtown Los Angeles. The action marked the 31st anniversary of a brutal and unprovoked 1990 police attack on a striking janitorial workers’ protest in the posh Century City area of L.A.

At the time, LAPD cops simply waded into the peaceful march beating people. One woman worker was pregnant and miscarried. Some workers were hospitalized. The outrage over the attack helped bring about a solid contract settlement and built sympathy and solidarity for Justice for Janitors as the United Service Workers’ West’s (USWW) campaign came to be called.

The commemoration in June of that 1990 attack was also to announce new negotiations for a fair contract. Still without a contract, union janitors marched in six different locations throughout California on August 15, including the pictured march of 800 through the streets of Hollywood. Negotiations for a new contract began in early 2020, but were cut short at the height of the COVID-19 in March 2020. An extension of the union contract was put in place, which expires on August 31.

USWW represents some 40,000 janitors, airport staff, security guards and workers in the entertainment industry. The Justice for Janitors division voted August 20 to approve a strike if a fair contract is not wrested from management in September.

The president of USWW, David Huerta, spoke with Struggle-La Lucha by phone about Justice for Janitors and the current negotiations.

Struggle-La Lucha: Good morning David. I want to ask how the negotiations are going, and I noticed signs at the Hollywood march addressing a number of different employers. Who is it that you negotiate with?

David Huerta: We have a “master contract” with multiple employers. The union bargains with a number of real estate management companies, but the real power behind the scenes are some of the biggest tech firms, law firms, biotech companies, entertainment industry giants throughout California, including Facebook, Google, Apple, Visa and others. They’re the ones who really control the purse strings.

SLL: During the march, one worker explained to me that you have been working with an expired contract. When did it expire and what protections have you had in the meantime?

David Huerta: At the time that the last contract expired we negotiated and won guarantees of some pandemic protective measures — protective equipment, a 50 cent wage increase across the board, a guarantee that laid-off staff have a right to return to work up to 2 years later, and quarantine pay.

We set aside other issues and got

an extension of the contract. Much of what we bargained for were included in federal acts passed by the White House, but you’ve seen that a lot of workers without unions didn’t get those benefits. We insisted on them following up and we also worked to get our workers vaccinated right away.

The pandemic has exposed a lot of holes from the last 20 or 30 years. The Great Recession did a lot of damage to workers, too. Pensions — we have to rebuild pensions in this country. We have to continue the fight for good healthcare. Paid time off, too.

Yes, there are the economics we all think about. The GDP is up 6.5%, and there is inflation. Corporations got loans and money from the CARES Act and other federal actions.

Our workers continued to sacrifice throughout the pandemic, there were infections, and even some deaths, and without our people they couldn’t have kept operating. Even though we were called “essential workers,” 14,000 of the jobs for our people were impacted by the pandemic. Now, we’re back in negotiating and I can tell you, 3% won’t be enough.

SLL: How bad were the covid infections among your members?

David Huerta: Watt Plaza in Century City was closed for a time because of mass infections. Several of our people got sick. One man spread covid to his wife, who passed away. There were others too. Fortunately, deaths were minimized because we worked to vaccinate 8,000 of our members as soon as vaccines were available.

United Healthcare Workers, another division of SEIU, helped get that done. But our people in Janitors for Justice are mostly immigrants. So many live in crowded living conditions, use mass transit and are less able to take time off work.

SLL: So the fact that your membership didn’t have awful death numbers and massive infection numbers shows the power and protection of union membership. Can you talk a little more about the membership of USWW?

David Huerta: Gladly. Before getting unionized, thousands of janitors in California and elsewhere were traditionally African American workers. Then a shift came in the 1980s, with a wave of immigration. Immigrants coming here from Mexico and Latin America fulfilled janitorial jobs and the African American former janitorial workers shifted to security guard jobs. We helped to make that shift happen and organized and now represent the security guards in another division called Stand with Security as well as the janitorial workers in Janitors for Justice. These are all workers who have been the lowest paid, most vulnerable. Immigrants come here to try to find a better life, leaving deep poverty behind, and they fight for a better life here. They face all kinds of discrimination. This is my motivation to do the job that I do. All of our staff, we see these people — the salt of the earth — work so hard and fight so hard for their families and that is our motivation. 📷



SLL PHOTO: SCOTT SCHEFFER

UNEMPLOYED WORKERS UNION and workers' power in the pandemic crisis

Struggle-La Lucha questioned Sharon Black, an organizer with the Unemployed Workers Union in Baltimore. Following are her answers.

How did the Unemployed Workers Union get started?

You could say the initial effort began at the United Workers Assembly on May 1, 2021. While the Amazon workers' struggle was highlighted, Steven Ceci, an unemployed hospitality worker, spoke on his struggle to get benefits and invited people to connect around organizing the unemployed.

In the beginning it was primarily unemployed workers from the People's Power Assembly who called several protests at the unemployment office in Baltimore. The group was small, but as the crisis grew, it became apparent that we needed a union of the unemployed, underpaid and ultimately low-wage workers also.

Not just a committee but an actual union. At this point the UWU stands on its own as an organization. I'm sure that some people initially thought we'd lost our minds.

We organized weekly "Unemployed & Workers Rights Clinics." Because of COVID-19, we set up tables outside our office. On our first day, workers had shown up before we could even set up. People filled out grievances and we mailed them to the Labor Department Secretary and to the governor.

In the midst of what was already a major crisis, Gov. Larry Hogan announced that he was halting the federal pandemic payments early.

What about your lawsuit, how did that start?

The UWU lawsuit was one of the earliest lawsuits nationally. We did it as an organizing tool. Workers needed something that could buoy them.

In the beginning, we were alone. I don't want to go into all of the back-

story, but we were told that it was impossible, and at the start, we filed the lawsuit without any support either financially or politically.

As organizers, we never saw the courts as the be-all and end-all. With thousands of unemployed workers spread across the state (sometimes isolated), the lawsuit garnered a lot of attention for our campaign, helping to push the struggle forward.

What stage is the struggle in for the Unemployed Workers Union now?

We're overwhelmed. Our phones never stop ringing and we can't keep up. Building an ark in a storm is difficult and it takes some ability to see the bigger picture to keep going. We could easily become impatient with ourselves and the things we're lacking.

We won this incredible victory in stopping the governor from halting the weekly pandemic benefits early. Over 300,000 workers will continue with the CARES Act money. Governor Hogan tweeted that he would never change his mind but he was forced to back down.

But there has been no rest or even a chance to allow this victory to sink in because over 20,000 unemployed workers still have not received their benefits because of a designed-to-fail unemployment system.

The second phase of this struggle, both in terms of the lawsuit and in the street, is in full swing. The challenge is getting people more deeply involved and to see that power comes from collective action. At our last Workers Assembly we talked about the George Floyd case and what it took to get Derek Chauvin convicted.

What is your general perspective around unemployment and the UWU?

Our goal is to organize a union of unemployed and low-wage workers. There is no rule that you have to have dues, or a paid staff. Not



SLL PHOTO

because we are opposed to either, but it doesn't suit our present situation. We define our union based on the slogan "an injury to one, is an injury to all."

The UWU might even look toward getting membership in the AFL-CIO. It's an interesting question that could challenge the narrow conception of what it means to be a worker.

We see the union as part of the broader workers' struggle. There's a connection between unemployment and low-wage and unorganized workers.

Part of the initial attack, the propaganda about workers not wanting to work, getting too much in pandemic benefits — was aimed at dividing workers. It was a lie that served to make the unemployed feel isolated and bad, but its real aim was to lower wages for everyone.

There's been a major displacement of workers, one that I believe

will be long-term. Some of this is obvious in terms of hospitality workers and in other areas of work. Certainly many smaller businesses have been wiped out. But how work is done, the way that technology for profit is utilized, is again reshaping and intensifying exploitation.

It has also been a period of resistance to what you could call a war against workers. The efforts of the Amazon workers in Bessemer, Alabama, to unionize — which is far from over — is one example as are countless smaller but inspiring strikes.

But the defining struggle that has shaped this past year has been the Black Lives Matter movement; even the New York Times was forced to document its incredible breadth. This struggle against racism is a workers' struggle and has helped to

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The relative decline of U.S. imperialism

By Michael Roberts

The swift collapse of Afghanistan's puppet government when U.S. troops withdrew from the war with the Taliban and left the country after 20 years has been likened to the fall of Saigon at the end of the 30-year 'American' war against the Vietnamese people. The scenes of Afghans trying to get onto U.S. planes at the airport to escape seem startlingly familiar to those of us who can remember the last days of Saigon.

But is this a superficial similarity? After all, America's occupation of Vietnam was way more costly as a share of U.S. national output and in terms of the lives of American soldiers than the attempt at 'regime' change in Afghanistan. The Vietnam disaster led to the U.S. government running deficits for the first time since WW2. But even more important, it meant a diversion of investment into arms rather than productive sectors at a time when the

profitability of capital had already begun to fall, the Golden Age of investment and profitability having peaked in the mid-1960s.

Indeed, by the end of the 1960s, it was clear that the U.S. could never win in Vietnam, just as it was clear at least a decade ago (if not from the very beginning) that it could not win in Afghanistan. But the ruling elite continued under Nixon and Kissinger to prosecute the war for several more years, spreading it into neighbouring countries like Laos and Cambodia.

But by the official end of the war in Vietnam, the economic consequences of this 30-year 'intervention' exposed an important turning point — the end of Pax Americana and the outright hegemonic position of American imperialism in the world economy. From then on, we can talk about the relative decline (relative to other imperialist powers) of the U.S., with the rise of the European countries, Japan, East Asia and more recently [socialist] China. Despite the

collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the end of the 'cold war' did not reverse or even curb that relative decline. The U.S. no longer can rule the world on its own and, even with the help of a 'coalition of the willing', it cannot dictate a 'world order'.

Economically, it all started before the fall of Saigon. As the profitability of U.S. capital started to fall from the mid-1960s, U.S. industry began to lose its competitive advantage in manufacturing and even in various services to rising Franco-German capital and Japan. This eventually meant that the economic world order after WW2, which had established the economic hegemony of the U.S. economy and its currency, the dollar, started to crumble.

In 1985, at a meeting at the Plaza Hotel, New York, of central bankers and finance ministers in the then big 5 economies, it was agreed to sell the dollar and buy other currencies to depreciate the dollar. The

Plaza accord was another milestone in the relative decline of U.S. imperialism, as it could no longer impose its domestic monetary policy on other countries and eventually had to relent and allow the dollar to fall. Nevertheless, the dollar continues to dominate and remains the currency to hold in a slump, as we saw in dot.com bust and slump of 2001 and in the emerging market commodity slump and euro debt crisis of 2011-14.

The relative decline of the dollar will continue. The monetary explosion and the fiscal stimulus being applied by the U.S. authorities to revive the U.S. economy after the pandemic slump is not going to do the trick. After the 'sugar rush' of Bidenomics, the profitability of U.S. capital will resume its decline and investment and production will be weak. And if U.S. inflation does not subside as well, then the dollar will come under more pressure.

*Abridged.
Full at tinyurl.com/ydfcqe3*



SLL PHOTOS

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shape what is taking place at almost every workplace.

What is your long-term political perspective?

Unemployment is a permanent feature of capitalism. There's never been full employment, at least in the United States, regardless of what cycle capitalism is in. Karl Marx explained it best: capitalists rely on a "surplus" of workers to keep workers competing with one another; this keeps wages and benefits low to extract maximum value from labor, increasing profits.

There's also the cyclical aspect of capitalism, the boom and bust of overproduction where the economy contracts. Massive unemployment is one of the main features.

This is important because it shows that organizing the unemployed is critical and will remain so in the future.

What are some of the issues pertinent to unemployed workers?

The unemployment benefit system is broken and in crisis, if you even want to call it compensation. There's no uniform system, rather it varies vastly in different states. In Mississippi, the highest benefits are \$235 a week. You also have states like Alabama, Florida and North

Carolina that have horrifically short periods of assistance, from 12 to 14 weeks.

The false excuse is that the cost of living varies in different areas, but the real driving force is the lack of a strong labor movement and the history of "Jim Crow" racism and segregation, the latter being historically most important.

Even before the pandemic, most workers would tell you they had to jump through hoops, that they were lucky to even collect benefits.

When I mention the "war on workers," one of the factors silently driving this present crisis has been the attack on public-sector workers.

Before and during the pandemic, state governments were automating the system and getting rid of the workers who service benefits. Certainly, the installation of the Beacon system has been a major feature of the crisis in Maryland.

There is a major probability that unemployment insurance reserves will be depleted if another major wave in the pandemic hits or another capitalist downturn takes place. Unemployment insurance is under-funded.

We saw this in September 2020, when states had to apply for federal loans. California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York and Texas

borrowed billions. The U.S. Treasury Department had listed 20 states that had applied for loans.

In addition, unemployment insurance is not adequate. It doesn't solve people's needs, including protection from eviction, foreclosures, repossessions and providing all of the other necessities.

This raises a number of questions.

The pandemic has proved that the money is there. The billionaires and trillionaires have made record profits, the pandemic being a bonanza for them. They're awash in money, including uncirculated capital moldering in banks. The bloated Pentagon death machine hasn't lost a dime from their \$700+ billion budget.

Every human being can and should be guaranteed an income. Dr. King's demand for a national guaranteed "Jobs or income now" — something that he advanced during the Poor People's Campaign — has to be raised with more vigor.

The magnitude of the crisis that is actually unfolding now — something that will ripen more — calls for different solutions and organization. Ideas that might have been considered pie-in-the-sky, are necessities. Like a shorter work week. A reorganization of work itself.

Questions about capitalism as a mode of production — is the sys-

tem viable under these conditions? The fact that capitalism creates the crisis, but cannot solve it, raises the issue of socialism.

Is there anything else you wanted to add?

Getting back to the nitty-gritty. What has been so rewarding about the UWU is watching workers develop solidarity, consciousness and bringing workers together who have never been in struggle. Workers who never thought that they would be betrayed by the system have found themselves abruptly and cruelly left to fend for themselves.

Organizing the UWU is part of the antidote, not the only one, to the Jan. 6 coup attempt by a band of neo-Nazi and racist extremists. Of course, it was not workers who for the most part led that attempt. It was wealthy business owners, large and small, and especially those from inside the state, i.e. the Pentagon, military, and police, that conspired. But they depend on white workers, especially those who have bought into racism, or who are neglected and confused, to stay on the sidelines or in some cases act as cannon fodder.

The UWU has been a force to unite, organize workers in their own self-interest and pull people away from that kind of answer. [icon]

LAPD explosion in South Central: Community demands justice

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It is an attempt to dehumanize oppressed peoples and justify even more heinous attacks. Police murder is said to be an unfortunate but necessary evil in Black and Brown communities, no matter how many children are gunned down by assassins with a badge.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki

And this month of August reminds us of another heinous act with racist rationalizations, a bombing of a much bigger magnitude: the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on Aug. 6 and 9, 1945.

At least 200,000 people, including thousands of children, were killed by the bombs dropped on these cities. Even decades later people died from radiation-caused illnesses, and its effects are still felt.

The racist ruling class promotes the argument that those children and civilians in Japan were not as worthy of life as white people, or U.S. soldiers representing the interests of the ruling class. In the same way, the life of a cop is deemed far more important than the life of a Black child, whose killing is justified by law if a cop says

they felt the least bit threatened.

This is why solidarity is so essential, especially from those who are not the immediate victims of imperialist aggression, whether the aggression be international or domestic (like the bombing carried out by the LAPD). It was the solidarity and community organization made possible by the Comites de Resistencia that forced some LA politicians to pay attention. Now they are feeling the pressure of the community and a growing movement demanding assistance for the victims of the LAPD's racist carelessness.

The police terror on our Black and Brown communities serves a purpose, and that is to keep down the inevitable fightback against this oppressive system that sacrifices our lives and livelihoods for the profits of the rich. But our struggle for social justice, just like the struggle intensifying here in LA, will not be shut down.

On Aug. 16, the families affected by the explosion protested in front of City Hall and delivered a letter with the following demands to Mayor Eric Garcetti. Union del Barrio and the Comites de Resistencia are assist-

ing the community with this action. Other participating organizations include the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice and the Socialist Unity Party.

The families are demanding the following:

- Fix our homes NOW!
- Give us the names of the LAPD officers who gave the order to detonate the explosives in our neighborhood!

- Immediate financial assistance for everyone who was affected!
- We want full access to all hotel facilities at the hotel in Downtown LA where we are being housed temporarily. We don't want to be treated like 2nd class citizens!
- We want a written guarantee from the city of Los Angeles that the city will continue to pay for our housing until the city repairs our homes and it is safe for us to return. [icon]

Growing poverty

Continued from page 2

We weren't defeated on the battlefield. Our battlefields were taken away.

The workers of Flint, Michigan, made General Motors rich. In return GM closed nine of the ten plants there, making the city impoverished and its children poisoned by polluted drinking water.

Hardest hit were Black and Latinx workers. Median Black family income in the Midwest fell by 36% between 1978 and 1982.

Instead of young Black, Indigenous

and Latinx workers getting jobs in the big plants, they were railroaded to the big prisons. The 2.2 million people in prison are workers, too.

The biggest defeat for poor people was the overthrow of the socialist Soviet Union, which had defeated Hitler and helped the African liberation struggle. The breaking up of the Soviet Union emboldened capitalists to attack us.

Now it's time for a fightback. The 26 million people who demanded justice for George Floyd shows it can be done. [icon]

Israel's nukes are U.S. approved

By Stephen Millies

While the U.S. corporate media has falsely accused Iran of developing nuclear weapons, it's been largely silent about Israel's nuke arsenal. This cover-up has continued despite widespread acknowledgement elsewhere of the Zionist state's H-bomb stash.

Back in 1986, London's Sunday Times published the front page story "Revealed: Israel's Nuclear Secrets." The article estimated that Israel had between 100 and 200 nuclear weapons.

It was based on information from the former Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu. In retaliation, Vanunu was kidnapped from Britain by Israeli agents and sentenced to 18 years in prison after a secret trial.

The U.S. State Department — which claims to defend human rights — said nothing about the abduction of this courageous whistleblower, who spent 11 years in solitary confinement for telling the truth.

The media even ignored U.S. organizations like the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, which estimates that Israel has 90 nuclear weapons. Or the Federation of American Scientists, which quotes "U.S. Intelligence Community" estimates that the apartheid state occupying Palestine had between 75 and 130 nukes.

So it was surprising that the New York Times on Aug. 11 ran an essay by Peter Beinart discussing Israel's nuclear arsenal.

Beinart is no radical. As editor of the Atlantic magazine he supported the 2003 invasion of Iraq. More recently he's become critical of U.S. foreign policy and was detained briefly in Israel.

It's a sign of how much more isolated Israel and its U.S. backers have become that Beinart wrote the piece and the New York Times published it.

A much bigger question is why the military-industrial-complex has tolerated Israel's nuclear arsenal that's over a third the size of either the British or French inventory.



General view of the Israeli nuclear facility in the Negev Desert outside Dimona seen in this August 6, 2000, file photo.

Nuclear bonding over colonial wars

Doesn't the Pentagon demand a monopoly of violence? That was the theme of its 1992 "Defense Planning Guidance," parts of which were leaked to the New York Times and Washington Post.

Written after the Soviet Union's overthrow, it sought to prevent the rise of any other military power, even among its supposed capitalist allies.

U.S. capitalists wouldn't let Germany — the strongest European economic power — start building nuclear weapons. The German working class, which includes millions of immigrants, would rise up to stop it.

British scientists played an important role in the Manhattan Project which built the atom bombs that incinerated Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The British mission was led by the Nobel Prize winning physicist James Chadwick, who discovered the neutron.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill agreed to this sharing of information with the understanding that Britain would get atom bombs too. The Pentagon double-crossed Britain, which had to develop its own nuclear program. It wasn't until 1952 that Britain became the third nuclear power, after the United States and the Soviet Union.

Wall Street didn't want France to have nukes, either. France detonated its first bomb in 1960 in southern Algeria, then a French colony.

The French nuclear program was carried out in collaboration with Israel, which played somewhat the same role that British scientists did in the U.S. Manhattan Project.

France was then the Zionist State's closest ally. In its 1967 blitzkrieg invasion of Egypt, Jordan and Syria, Israeli pilots flew French Mirage jets, not U.S. Phantoms, which were then bombing Vietnam and Laos.

Israel joined the British and French colonial slave masters invading Egypt in 1956. They did so after Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, which had been built in the 1860s by French colonialists with slave labor. Taking over the canal was one of great victories against colonialism.

The Zionist state supported France's war of extermination against the Algerian people who were fighting for independence. At least a million Algerians were killed with 40,000 tortured to death.

One of the torturers was Jean-Marie Le Pen, the founder of France's fascist National Front, now renamed the National Rally. This war criminal is just as anti-Jewish as he is anti-Arab and anti-Muslim.

Targeting the Soviet Union

France's explosion of its atomic bomb in the Sahara was a war crime against all Africans. Hundreds of Africans must have died from the fallout.

The French capitalists' dirty war against Algeria was the political reason for Israel getting help to build the bomb. But France was defeated by the Algerian people. Afterwards French bankers had less use for the Zionist state.

The U.S. government wasn't initially in favor of Israel making nukes. President John F. Kennedy sent inspectors to Israel's Dimona reactor. But the Zionist regime was able to continue with its nuclear program.

It was President Richard Nixon who started the big cash pipeline to Israel. At least \$140 billion has been spent to prop up apartheid rule over Palestine. Every cent of it was stolen from poor and working people.

Nixon did this even though he can be heard on tape repeatedly attacking Black and Jewish people. This included a conversation with the late Rev. Billy Graham, who also made bigoted remarks against Jews. The evangelist's son Rev. Franklin Graham is a leading hate monger against Muslims.

Big Oil doesn't allow Israel to have dozens of atom bombs so it can bomb Rockefeller's oil wells in the Arab/Persian Gulf. Israel's nukes were to be launched at the Soviet Union.

This is something that's often overlooked in discussing the Zionist state. Israel's nukes can be used against Iran and are a threat to many other countries.

The most sinister example is the Zionists helping its fellow apartheid regime in South Africa to develop nuclear weapons. This was revealed in the 1979 "Vela Incident," which was the explosion of a nuclear bomb in the southern Indian Ocean.

At the time, South Africa was fighting a war with newly independent Angola and its Cuban allies. Sections of the South African apartheid military wanted to drop a nuclear bomb on Luanda, Angola's capital.

For the Pentagon brass, the first phase of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon was a proxy war against the Warsaw Pact. The Pact was the response of the Soviet Union and the European socialist countries to NATO.

By having Israel shoot down more than 80 Syrian planes using U.S. technology, the Pentagon was saying that they could do the same over East Germany.

Supreme cynicism

Israel's nukes were viewed as a replacement for the U.S. Jupiter nuclear missiles in Turkey that were removed in 1963 by President Kennedy following the Cuban missile crisis. However, there are also 50 nuclear weapons currently stored in Turkey at the U.S. Air Force base in Incirlik.

The Pentagon's green light for Israel's nukes came as the Soviet Union was able to match the United States in developing multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles. Several of these MIRV nuclear weapons are fitted on a single missile and can be aimed at different targets.

MIRV missiles greatly sped up

Continued on page 7



PHILIPPINES:
Revolutionary artist
PARTS BAGANI
murdered in police
and military raid

By Bayani

The art of Parts Bagani is world-renowned, undeniably distinct, and always in service of the masses. Spend enough time among the anti-imperialist forces in the world and you will inevitably see his work, whether decorating the office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in the Netherlands, or in anti-imperialist publications. This writer even has a tattoo with one of Parts' pieces as a source.

On Aug. 16, Ka Parts was murdered in a police and military raid, unarmed and alongside his spouse, Pamela Peñaranda, who was then arrested and detained. The Philippine police and military have lied through their teeth, claiming that Ka Parts was killed in a shootout.

Marco Valbuena, Chief Information Officer of the Communist Party of the Philippines, released a statement asserting that Ka Parts was armed only with his pencils, brushes, paint and paper.

Ka Parts not only leaves behind an outstanding model of revolutionary art, but also his legacy as a fierce, determined and strategic guerrilla fighter in the New People's Army, who made immeasurable contributions to the armed struggle.

Long live Parts Bagani!

Long live the revolutionary struggle for a liberated Philippines!

International solidarity forever! 🇵🇭

Haiti needs aid not intervention!

Stop the deportations!

Over 1,400 people were killed by the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti Aug. 14. Thousands more may have died. At least 30,000 families were made homeless.

This misery was compounded by Tropical Storm Grace that struck the country shortly afterwards. The tragedy comes 11 years after the Jan. 12, 2010, earthquake that killed over 220,000 people in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital.

People around the world want to help Haiti. Yet the Biden administration deported two planeloads of Haitians in the week before the earthquake.

Justice demands that deportations of Haitians be stopped. Temporary Protected Status (TPS) of Haitians must be made permanent.

The earthquake and storm comes in the wake of the July 7 assassi-



nation of Haiti's President Jovenel Moïse. The murder involved mercenaries from Colombia and may have been planned from within the United States.

Haiti needs aid but it doesn't need or want foreign intervention. The United States invaded Haiti in 1915 and occupied the country until 1934.

Thousands of Haitians were killed,

including resistance leader Charlemagne Peralte. The U.S. Marine who assassinated Peralte was given the congressional medal of honor.

The 2004-2017 UN intervention in Haiti resulted in over 10,000 Haitians dying from cholera. This occupation followed the overthrow of Haiti's democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide by U.S. President George W. Bush and the CIA.

The world capitalist class have never forgiven the Haitian people for conducting the only slave revolution in history. Every slave master in the United States feared enslaved Africans rising up in another "another Haiti."

It was Haiti that gave crucial aid

to the "Liberator of America," Simón Bolívar.

Two hundred thirty years of revenge followed. The restored Bourbon monarchy in France actually demanded reparations for the slave masters! Haiti was forced to pay this blood money until 1947.

Haiti deserves aid and reparations, not another U.S. or UN military intervention. Genuine aid is being given to earthquake survivors by medical workers from socialist Cuba.

Haitians in the United States are also collecting aid. Please contact the Family Action Network Movement in Miami at info@fanm.org or call 305-756-8050 if you can help.

Reparations for Haiti! [📧](#)

Activists picket Israeli cargo ship

By Terri Kay

Elizabeth, N.J. — Sunday, July 25 at 6 a.m., about 100 pro-Palestine community activists in the New York metropolitan area picketed Israeli shipping giant ZIM in an attempt to block their cargo ship, Zim Qingdao, from unloading its cargo in the Port of New York/New Jersey at the Maher Terminal in Elizabeth, NJ. Zim Integrated Shipping Services Ltd (ZIM) is Israel's largest cargo shipping company, often dealing in Israeli manufactured military technology, armaments and logistics equipment.

The event was organized by Block the Boat NY/NJ, the local affiliate of an international coalition of labor and human rights organizations fighting for justice in Palestine, led by the Arab Resource and Organizing Center in Oakland, CA.

"We are sending a message that profiteering from Israeli apartheid and the ongoing violence against the Palestinian people will not be welcome in New York, New Jersey, or anywhere on the East Coast," said Nerdeen Kiswani, Chair of Within Our Lifetime-United for Palestine. "Our communities are taking a stand against the ethnic cleansing, evictions, and bombings that Palestinians face every day."

Chanting "Stand Up, Shut It Down, Turn That Boat Right Back Around", "Injury To One, Injury To All! Tear Down Israel's Apartheid Wall!" "Move Boat, Get Out The Way", and "When People Are Occupied, Resistance Is Justified!" picketers held colorful signs and banners as the dockworkers drove past them to begin their shift. A few honked in solidarity and many popped out their cameras to take video of the lively and spirited picket line.

The Zim Qingdao had docked shortly before the picketers arrived. In an attempt to avoid the protest, Zim had tried to hide their approach by removing the ship from the Maher Terminal's shipping schedule. Although police blocked demonstrators from gaining access to the employee entrance, Zim was well aware of our presence. Zim refused to comment when asked by a reporter from the local National Public Radio station, which covered the event.



Block the Boat activists picket arrival of Israeli apartheid-profiteering Zim Qindao at Maher Terminal, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

PHOTO: JEHAD DAWOUD

Actions like this one against ZIM are a response to a call from labor unions in Palestine urging workers and communities worldwide to refuse dealings with Israeli companies. The international #BlockTheBoat has received over 150 endorsements from labor unions, faith, and community organizations worldwide, including the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the largest federation of trade unions in South Africa, representing 1.8 million people. Recent escalations of Israeli violence against Palestinians in Gaza, Jerusalem, and the West Bank have prompted thousands of demonstrations in cities across the world.

This mobilization follows months of successful actions on the North American West Coast which prevented the unloading of ZIM-operated vessels in Oakland, Seattle, and Prince Rupert. Over 8,000 people worldwide have signed up to answer the call to action at port cities around the world, as part of the BDS movement.

In Oakland, the ZIM-operated Volans' was forced to disembark with its cargo in tow after being blocked from unloading for several weeks by a community picket. The same Volans ship eventually landed in Prince Rupert, BC. After a public call to action, First Nation, Arab, and allied community members organized a picket to successfully block the ship from unloading for 5 days. In Seattle, Falastiniyat, a Palestinian feminist collective organized community pickets at Seattle's port, successfully blocking ZIM San Diego ship from being unloaded for 4 days before a police crackdown forced the unloading of the vessel. Meanwhile solidarity actions were held in Los Angeles, Vancouver, New York/New Jersey, Houston, Detroit, Italy, and South Africa.

The San Francisco-based Arab Resource and Organizing Center first called on communities to block ZIM-operated ships in the U.S. in 2014, with the first successful #BlockTheBoat action. Organizers have claimed the disruption of ZIM's operations as a major victory for the international Boycott, Divestment, & Sanctions (BDS) movement, which works to put pressure on businesses profiting from Israeli apartheid.

The BDS movement has gained national prominence as a flashpoint in US politics as right-wing legislatures attempt to criminalize the boycott movement. Several BDS campaigns globally, including #BlockTheBoat, have seen numerous successes over the past year, driven by plummeting public support for Israel in the wake of human rights abuses and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.

"Across the US, workers and social justice movements are standing to show their support for the Palestinian struggle for freedom, and that there will be a high price for all companies who do business that profits the apartheid state of Israel," said Lara Kiswani, Executive Director of AROC

Block the Boat NY/NJ Coalition member organizations and endorsers include AROC: Arab Resource & Organizing Center, New York 4 Palestine, Al-Awda: The Palestine Right to Return Coalition, Within Our Lifetime: United for Palestine, Labor for Palestine, Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, American Muslims for Palestine New Jersey, the ANSWERCoalition, Peoples Organization for Progress, Northern New Jersey Jewish Voice for Peace, Jews for Palestinian Right of Return, Jewish Voice for Peace-NYC, NYC Democratic Socialists of America, the NJ Green Party, CUNY4 Palestine, and Central NJ JVP.

Source: Fighting Words

U.S. / Israeli nukes

Continued from page 6

the arm race. The Pentagon hoped it would be the knockout threat that would force the Soviet Union to surrender. They were astounded that the socialist state could make them as well.

To military planners in U.S. think tanks, Israel's nukes could be used to launch a "limited" nuclear war against the Soviets. Such an attack would kill millions of people, including many Jewish Soviet citizens, and devastate the Soviet Union.

Yet it would be suicidal for the Soviets to respond with an all-out attack on Israel's master, the United States. Instead the Soviet military would be forced to attack Israel.

It's hard to equal this cynicism. Six million people were killed by Hitler during the Jewish and Roma holocaust. A few decades later more than six million Arab and Jewish people in occupied Palestine could be killed in a nuclear exchange.

This scenario isn't far-fetched. The whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg revealed Pentagon plans in 1961 to launch a nuclear first strike. It would kill 600 million people in the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and other socialist countries.

This writer helped organize a 1969 demonstration in Milwaukee against the visit of then Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir who grew up there. She denied that the Palestinian people even existed.

The protest was called by Youth Against War and Fascism at the newly opened Performing Arts Center. It's now named after the late Zionist fundraiser Ben Marcus who refused to hire Black waitresses at his local Big Boy restaurant chain.

Communist leader and union organizer Al Stergar called upon Meir "to come home to Milwaukee and leave Arab people in peace." Israel's current prime minister was born in San Francisco. Stergar called Israel a deathtrap for Arab and Jewish people.

All of occupied Palestine is still a deathtrap. Israel's nukes must be destroyed. Palestine will be free, from the river to the sea! [📧](#)

For more on **Block The Boat** Palestinian support actions in Oakland see: **"Mobilizing In Our Own Name"** millionworkermarch.com

Estado de violencia en Puerto Rico

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Hace unos días despertamos con la cruel noticia de que un padre había torturado y matado a su niño de ocho años en medio de una disputa legal con la madre. Pero desgraciadamente, este no es un crimen aislado. La ola de actos sumamente violentos y desgarradores que rompen la fibra familiar y social, va en aumento.

Violencia de género, golpizas y matanzas entre padres, hijos, hermanas, ya son noticias diarias. Y si a esto le sumamos los robos, las matanzas a plena hora del día producto del trasiego de drogas y peleas entre grupos mafiosos que inundan el país, donde muchas veces mueren personas inocentes, lo que sale a relucir es un país sumido en una ola de terror donde ninguna agencia del gobierno actúa en defensa del pueblo.

Esto es lo que produce la violencia del estado colonial que se va percolando



ando más intensamente hacia la población en general.

Es el mensaje de un gobierno y una Junta de Control Fiscal impuesta por

el Congreso de EUA diciendo que el pueblo no importa, que la educación de nuestros niños no importa, que la seguridad y la salud de nuestra gente



Desde Puerto Rico para RADIO CLARIN de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci

no importa. Y por eso recorta servicios básicos del pueblo, y privatiza la energía otorgando contratos multimillonarios a mafias extranjeras que maltratan a nuestros trabajadores sin ofrecer tan siquiera un servicio adecuado. ☐

Afghan resistance ends U.S. occupation

Continued from page 1

der their control. Only three of the bigger cities — Kabul, Jalalabad and Mazar-i-Sharif — were not yet in Taliban hands. When they ultimately took control of Kabul, the U.S. media feigned shock at the speed of the Taliban's return to Kabul.

But an Aug. 15 article in the Washington Post revealed that in the ruling circles of imperialism, they were aware that they had a "morale problem." Afghan government soldiers could not be relied on to fight the Taliban on behalf of U.S. imperialism.

More than a year ago, Taliban representatives began offering amnesty-for-surrender deals to Afghan puppet government troops, officers, and village officials throughout the country. Repeatedly, Afghan government troops were handing over U.S.-provided weapons and equipment — no shots fired. The Taliban let the soldiers trained and armed by the U.S. simply walk away.

The transition happened first in rural villages, then districts, then provincial capitals. In April of this year, when Biden announced that the withdrawal deadline was being sped up from Sept. 11 to Aug. 31, the pace of the surrenders quickened.

Then, on Aug. 15, a few days after Afghan President Ghani gave a speech brimming with confidence about his government's prospects for fending off any Taliban assault, reports surfaced that he had fled the country. Video of Taliban figures sitting at his desk in the presidential palace appeared. There had been no resistance by the Afghan military.

This year-long process of surrender by Afghan troops couldn't have been investigated in so much detail by the Washington Post in the last couple of days. Imperialists and savvy journalists have known that a pro-imperialist government could not survive on its own. The choice

was between continuing an unpopular war and occupation (getting little in return), or ending it.

For twenty years, the imperialist U.S. military installed successive puppet governments, headed by U.S. cronies such as CIA asset Hamid Karzai, or Columbia University educated Ghani (who, ironically, wrote a book titled "Fixing Failed States.") None of them had anything to offer that could improve the lives of impoverished people, rebuild infrastructure, or provide health care, education or housing. None of them had a base of support among the Afghan people.

A long history of Afghan resistance

There is a long history of Afghan independence and determination. In the middle of the 19th century, the Afghan people annihilated the formidable private army of the British East India Company and held off imperialist domination.

The example of the 1917 revolution lifting the impoverished Central Asian nations formerly oppressed by the Czars of Russia influenced neighboring Afghanistan. Between 1921 and 1929 the two countries signed a Friendship Treaty and embarked on projects to help develop Afghanistan with power generation, water resources, transportation and communications. The projects were later abandoned with a government change.

Even during the four decades of the last King of Afghanistan who was overthrown in 1973, there was a respectful relationship between the USSR and Afghanistan. The 1978 Saur Revolution that brought socialist leaders to power was an expression of growing sentiment among youth and students in Kabul and other cities for socialism.

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) took over with support from a substantial part of the Afghan military. Immediately

they worked to eliminate the crushing debt agricultural workers owed to feudal landlords, build up women's rights and workers' rights, along with other progressive initiatives.

The CIA's Operation Cyclone cut their progress short. The spy agency recruited among the most reactionary fundamentalists from the region to build the mercenary mujahedeen army to overthrow the April Revolution. Later, in the 1990s, the Taliban emerged from among the mujahedeen forces that dominated Afghanistan.

From the time that the CIA launched Operation Cyclone in 1979, until the current retreat of U.S., NATO, and mercenary troops, the U.S. imperialists have been trying to impose a pro-imperialist government on an anti-imperialist population.

The U.S. war leaves in its wake cities crowded with internal refugees — families who lost homes or fled the warfare to save their lives. Officially, nearly 71,334 Afghan civilians and nearly 70,000 Afghan police and military were killed directly by the war. About 7,500 U.S. soldiers, NATO troops and mercenaries died. More than 50,000 Taliban were killed. Nearly 500 journalists and aid workers perished.

U.S. banks, military contractors made a fortune

Military contractors and big U.S. banks, though, made a fortune during the war. In the past, taxing the rich to pay for war expenditures wasn't out of the question. An Aug. 17 Associated Press article noted that U.S. President Harry Truman tem-



CARTOON: RAWA (REVOLUTIONARY ASSOCIATION OF THE WOMEN OF AFGHANISTAN)

porarily raised top tax rates by 92% and President Lyndon Johnson by 77% to pay for the horrors of the U.S. wars against the Korean people and the Vietnamese people.

Today's billionaires are bigger and more privileged than ever. Lawmakers no longer even hint that U.S. corporations should pay for the wars that bolster the fortunes of the capitalists as a class. Instead, the U.S. has debt-financed the \$2 trillion used for the mayhem and murder in Afghanistan.

Taxes on the rich have been practically eliminated. The U.S. Treasury will be paying the banks for the war on Afghanistan at least until 2050. With interest added, the Treasury will have shelled out some \$6.5 trillion in costs. This amount doesn't even include a portion of the \$2 trillion the U.S. has committed to pay in health care, disability or burial costs for the millions of veterans that were hoodwinked into taking part in the dirty imperialist wars against Iraq or Afghanistan.

The U.S. war on Afghanistan was another tragic setback for humanity. The task for anti-imperialist organizers — especially in the United States — is to make it the last. ☐

'Black August 1619-2019' commemorates 400 years of Black freedom struggle

This book examines the construction of a racial capitalist venture — slavery — where the histories of African, Native and working people overlapped. Online at <https://tinyurl.com/vn3qvn5>

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