

► 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 Ruz.

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 HACKWELL

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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 AERTS

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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Howard University Hospital nurses stage one-day strike

By Andre Powell

The District of Columbia Nurses Association staged a one-day strike to highlight the failure of Adventist Healthcare to sit down and bargain in good faith. Adventist Healthcare is the administration for Howard University Hospital. The day-long rally ran from 7:30 a.m. until 8 p.m. on April 11. The nurses that attended represented many different nationalities. For the morning rally over 200 participants were in attendance.

Adventist Healthcare on several occasions has come to the bargaining table claiming that they had not seen any proposals. The union officials assert that all proposals were properly forwarded to the hospital administration. Just one day before the one-day strike was held, the hospital chief negotiator claimed at the start of the session that the union was attempting to back-date proposals for back pay that was owed to the nursing staff. He proclaimed the proposal was invalid and that the hospital couldn't afford it. He told them that there was nothing to talk

about and left the room.

Many issues have been raised by the union in this round of contract negotiations. Among them are patient ratios that make sure that nurses are not assigned more than a reasonable number of patients for care. Additionally, management has eliminated the differential pay for evening and weekend shifts which results in a cut in pay of several thousand dollars.

Chants demanding safe staffing levels were heard continuously throughout the day along with chants demanding fair negotiations. The nurses on the picket line received tremendous support from the public as many drivers honked their horns in support. Just about every bus driver that drove by honked loudly to show support. Many people walking by stopped to listen and discuss the issues with the nurses. 📌



Howard University Hospital nurses, April 11.

SLL photo: Sharon Black

Why is Earth Day on Lenin's birthday?

By Stephen Millies

Millions of people around the world rally for environmental justice every year on April 22, which is Earth Day. This struggle is more important than ever as capitalist climate change continues to cook the earth.

A big step forward in the environmental movement has been targeting toxic racism. It's not accidental that children in the Black-majority city of Flint, Michigan, were poisoned by their lead-contaminated drinking water.

Water protectors from Indigenous nations fight Big Oil and its dangerous pipelines. Hundreds of people who stopped the Dakota Access Pipeline were arrested.

Latinx and Haitian farmworkers can be poisoned by pesticides. Ninety percent of pesticides used in the U.S. are applied in agriculture. Five out of six farmworkers are Latinx.

Twelve of the 14 markers for harmful pesticides were found in the blood and urine of Black and Latinx people at levels five times that of whites.

Chemical plants throughout the southern United States are often located in Black communities. While in the North, Black and Latinx people living in the South Bronx have the highest number of asthma cases in the country.

Millions of poor white people also suffer from pollution. Cancer clusters exist alongside petrochemical plants from Philadelphia to West Virginia to Louisiana and Texas.

Only through struggle has any progress been made. Auto companies didn't want to use catalytic converters that have reduced smog.

The waters off the African country of Somalia were used as a dumping ground for toxic waste from Europe



Vietnamese Stamp celebrating 150th Lenin's birthday.

until the polluters were fought off.

Capitalist politicians have learned to speak differently than when Ronald Reagan was elected California governor in 1966. At the time people wanted to save the redwood forests from the clear-cutting lumber companies.

Reagan's response to this concern was to remark "once you've seen one redwood tree, you've seen them all."

Hijacking a movement

So how did April 22 get to be Earth Day? The 1960s were a time of revolt throughout the world.

Socialist countries accounted for nearly a third of the world's population. The Vietnamese and Laotian people were fighting 500,000 U.S. troops as well as napalm bombs and agent orange pesticides. Their courageous struggle found support all over the planet.

The Black liberation movement terrified the wealthy and powerful. Hundreds of thousands of anti-war demonstrators filled the streets of Washington, D.C. The women's and the LGTBQ2S movements were on the rise.

The widespread readership of books and pamphlets by V. I. Lenin — the leader of the Bolshevik Revolution — indicated how strong the movement of workers and oppressed people was.

By 1970, Lenin's writings had been translated into more languages

than the New Testament worldwide. April 22, 1970, was the centennial of Lenin's birth. Meetings and events were planned around the world to commemorate Lenin's life.

The U.S. ruling class wanted to divert attention from this important anniversary. They sought to keep an environmental

movement within the bounds of capitalist politics.

Capitalists also wanted to put the socialist countries on trial as polluters.

Many of the socialist countries — including China, Cuba, North Korea, and Vietnam — had been open or disguised colonies of the big capitalist countries. These countries that liberated themselves from colonial underdevelopment were always trying to catch up.

They often had to use coal as their main fuel supply. Money that could have gone to protect the environment had to be spent to defend themselves from the U.S. and NATO.

The capitalist answer was to establish Earth Day on April 22. Big business claimed it was against pollution, too.

Capitalist media used the slogan "people cause pollution," as if it didn't have anything to do with making profits, the profits-before-people system.

The TV networks almost never mention that the Pentagon is the world's biggest polluter. Today the banks, utilities and other corporations claim to be "green" as the earth continues to heat up.

We need to take Earth Day away from the billionaires. And we need to learn from V.I. Lenin and the Bolsheviks who first broke the capitalist chains enslaving humankind.

May Day 2022

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climate catastrophe and looming nuclear war that threatens human existence as the fight to end the intensified U.S. blockade continues.

May Day — International Workers' Day — began in the U.S. in Chicago in 1886 where workers fought for the 8-hour work day, but until 2005/2006 it was most celebrated outside the U.S. and especially in countries that have freed themselves from imperialist domination, like Cuba.

For a former colonial nation developing under a suffocating blockade ruthlessly imposed by the most powerful military and economic giant only 90 miles to the north, the significance of the march is expressed in the words of a now-80-year-old participant in Cuba's victory over the U.S. invasion at Playa Girón (aka Bay of Pigs) who said he was returning to the Plaza of the Revolution on May 1 "because this is now our Girón."

"The squares are, now, another good setting to support the efforts of the government, the party, the CTC, all the institutions and the people in the desire to build the prosperous and sustainable socialist society to which we aspire," Abel Vázquez Caballero told Trabajadores.cu.

The three day solidarity gathering culminates on May 2, with a solidarity conference featuring CTC General Secretary Ulises Guilarte de Nacimiento that will conclude with the approval of a Declaration of Solidarity with Cuba and the proposal to fight against imperialism and for the advancement of leftist organizations for a progressive change in the world.

On May 2, buses will depart from the solidarity conference headed to Guantanamo for the VII Seminar to Abolish Foreign Bases and NATO. 📌

On Transgender Day of Visibility, Baltimore Safe Haven vandalized

By Ellie McCrow

On March 31 — the International Transgender Day of Visibility — Baltimore Safe Haven reported that their Charles Village office had been vandalized with a bigoted message that read “Fuck Pride DIE.”

Founded in 2018, Baltimore Safe Haven is a local, trans-led nonprofit that provides the city’s at-risk TLGBQIA community — particularly Black trans women — with food, housing, health care and more. According to the organization’s website, their aim is to serve individuals “with an annual median income of less than \$10,000, who are currently engaged in or have a history in sex work, who are substance users, and who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.”

Key members of Safe Haven’s staff have expressed their outrage and frustration in the wake of this attack and the online harassment that has accompanied it. “We’re devastated. I’m afraid for my own safety and the safety of my staff at this moment,” remarked founder and executive director Iya Dammons. Case manager Nicole Wells was the first to notice the graffiti and shared a similar

comment: “I was shaking. At this point, I don’t even want to go outside by myself.” Program Manager Ngaire Philip added, “We haven’t done anything to hurt anyone.”

Unfortunately this isn’t the first attack they’ve had to endure: last October, Safe Haven’s “Project Genesis” youth shelter in West Baltimore was burglarized and vandalized by a man who previously threatened staff and made “derogatory comments around sexuality and gender.” This time, Dammons believes the organization is being targeted due to the upcoming Baltimore Trans Pride ‘22 Block Party they are heading this June.

Despite these hardships Baltimore Safe Haven remains committed to their vision: “a world in which all transgender, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (TLGBQ) people enjoy healthy, self-determined and -sufficient lives, liberated from the stigma, violence, and oppression they have suffered.”

“We all just had to take a breath



SLL PHOTO

for a second,” says Dammons, who then continued: “We’re not going to let this break us. We’re not going to bend. We’re going to do the job.” The vandalism is currently being investigated as a hate crime.

Baltimore’s Peoples Power Assembly previously marched alongside Baltimore Safe Haven in 2021 for their 2nd annual Black Trans Lives Matter march, and will continue to

support the organization’s valiant struggle to uplift the most vulnerable members of our community.

Regarding the upcoming festivities Dammons said, “This is the first time we have ever thrown a major, big Pride like this for the trans community. I would like to see people come out on June 4 and let them know that this will not happen in Baltimore City at all.”

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

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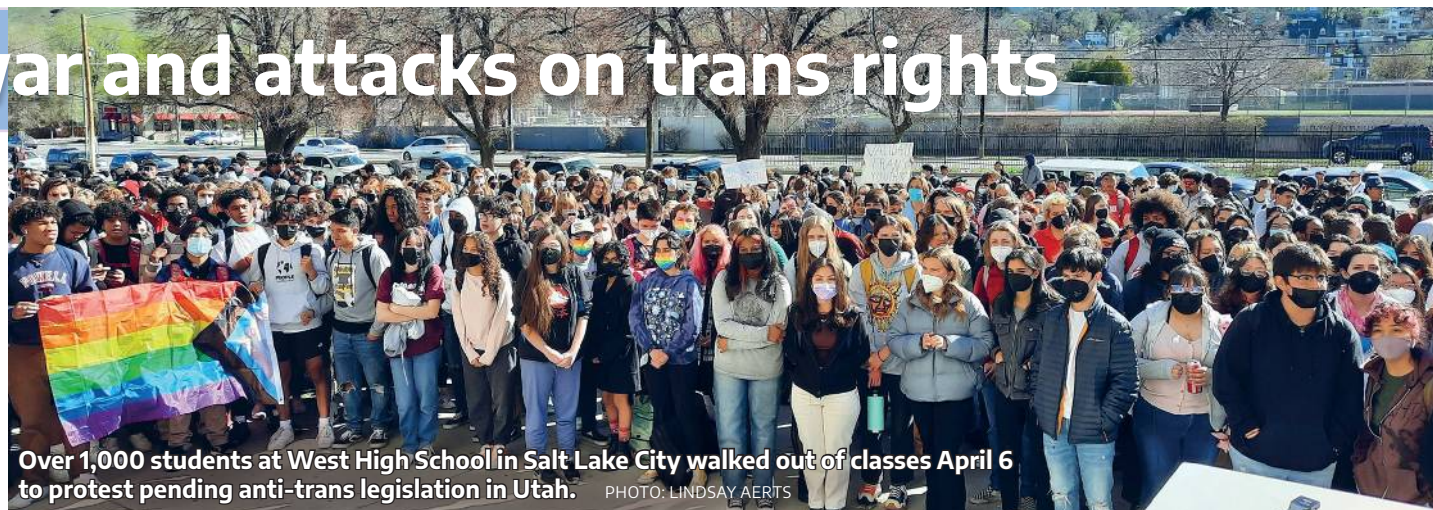
ers” or pedophiles for supporting gender-affirming care for youth.

Mainstream corporate media like the Washington Post have published pieces questioning whether trans people’s right to exist has “gone too far,” demonstrating that this bigoted campaign has traction within the capitalist ruling class beyond the fascist right that now dominates the Republican Party.

This slander campaign has gone hand-in-glove with the Florida “Don’t Say Gay” law championed by Gov. Ron DeSantis, which bans any mention of queer and trans issues from schools, and the British government’s decision to exclude trans people from the ban on so-called “conversion therapy” that forcibly seeks to change people’s sexual and gender identities.

The grotesque anti-trans campaign echoes the rhetoric of other anti-LGBTQ2S witch-hunts, like the one targeting gay men during the AIDS crisis. It is having dangerous consequences for the trans community, which already faces a high rate of murders and violence. Trans people have been harassed and threatened on trains and in the street. Death threats against trans people online have skyrocketed.

State and local protest actions and lawsuits are attempting to hold back the tide. But it’s clear that the ultra-right plans to continue riding their hate campaign into the mid-term Congressional elections this November. Democrats have shown no desire to take up the fight for trans rights, beyond the empty words “we are with you” uttered by President Joe Biden during his State of the Union address.



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 AERTS

In fact, Democratic politicians are rapidly moving to the right on every issue from police brutality to COVID prevention — all while leading the charge for war against Russia.

Big Lies, at home and abroad

On the other side of the planet, antifascists from the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics, the Ukrainian antifascist underground, and troops from the Russian Federation are fighting to stem the tide of a U.S.-NATO takeover of Eastern Europe.

The location chosen by the West for this showdown is the former Soviet republic of Ukraine, ruled by a right-wing coup regime installed by Washington in 2014. The backbone of this regime is neo-Nazi groups that have terrorized leftists, trade unionists, journalists and minority nationalities and immigrants.

The reality of the situation has been turned on its head by the propagandists of U.S. Big Business and the Pentagon.

People in the Donbass region — Donetsk and Lugansk — have been defending themselves from a war waged by Ukraine with U.S./NATO support for eight years. Washington pushed Ukraine to launch a new, massive attack on Donbass earlier this year, hoping to draw Russia into a war.

The people of Donetsk and Lugansk appealed for Russia’s help to defend themselves when a Ukrainian attack became inevitable. Russia’s government also saw that a complete NATO takeover of Ukraine would endanger its own sovereignty, and felt no option but to act.

And yet, their joint military campaign to denazify and demilitarize NATO’s puppet regime in Ukraine is portrayed in the U.S. as the greatest crime against humanity since World War II. (The many, many crimes committed by the U.S. war machine around the world are of course omitted from the conversation.)

Blame the victim

Does this “blame the victim” approach sound familiar? It should. It’s the exact same strategy of divide-and-conquer being used to demonize trans people here at home.

Consider these parallels:

Families of trans children are being forced to flee states that have adopted laws banning gender-affirming care and persecuting supportive parents. It’s so grave that even the U.S. Air Force has announced it will help resettle affected service members’ families from these states!

In the same way, millions of people in Donbass and Ukraine have been forced to flee their homes be-

cause of the war crisis methodically set up by Washington and its allies.

Trans people and their supporters are slandered and dehumanized every day in print, broadcast and social media and by elected officials. This creates an atmosphere that makes violent attacks inevitable.

In the same way, social-media monopolies, corporate media and Washington officials promote neo-Nazi-spawned claims of “Russian war crimes,” suppress and deplatform alternative sources of news and analysis, and support measures that dehumanize and belittle people who live in the Donbass region and people of Russian nationality.

How interesting that many organized sports bodies are banning trans people from competing while also banning Russian athletes!

Trans people, antifascists in Eastern Europe and anti-war activists have a common enemy: U.S. imperialism.

It might seem that geographical distance, lack of mutual understanding and the intensity of the attacks make it impossible for these struggles (and others) to unite. That’s what the imperialists are counting on.

It is the job of communists to prove them wrong, by building bridges between diverse sections of the working class at home and abroad to fight back. We need to start today.

Oakland teachers unite with longshore workers to demand: Stop privatizing Oakland!

Rank-and-file members of the Oakland Education Association and the longshore workers in ILWU Local 10 issued a call for a “shutdown” of Oakland schools and the Port of Oakland on April 29. Teachers and longshore workers in the Schools and Labor Against Privatization (SLAP) coalition are leading the unified labor action. The following report was published by the San Francisco Bay Area Independent Media Center on April 16: tinyurl.com/488fybh7



Photo: Leon Kunstenaar

Members of OEA, ILWU and other activists rally against privatization of the schools and port of Oakland on February 18.

Oakland teachers will be striking and joining with ILWU longshore workers on April 29 against privatization and closures of Oakland schools and the privatization and destruction of the Port Of Oakland by the Mayor and Democratic Party City Council supported by the leadership of the Alameda Labor Council and Alameda Building Trades. There will be a rally at 2 p.m. at Oscar Grant Plaza and march through Oakland.

- Stop Privatizing Oakland!
- No Stadium At Howard Terminal!
- No School Closures! No Cuts!

The billionaires are after our public resources here in the City of Oakland. The Oakland School Board has recently voted to close 11 public schools, despite overwhelming opposition from the community. School closures disproportionately harm communities of color.

They are part of a long-term plan by corporations to destroy public education – selling them off to real estate developers or converting them into charter schools. Oakland does not have “too many schools,” as the district says. Oakland has too many charter schools!

Meanwhile, the City of Oakland is planning to spend \$855 million in taxpayer money to construct a new A’s stadium and condo complex at Howard Terminal, which is crucial to the port of Oakland. These privatization schemes are part of the gentrification of Oakland — attacking working-class communities, destroying union jobs, and displacing low-income residents of the Bay Area.

We must come together and fight back! This year May Day (International Workers Day) falls on a Sunday, so our action will be two days earlier, on April 29. The ILWU Local 10 has informed the port that they will be having Port Shutdown! School Shutdown!

FRIDAY, APRIL 29 2 p.m. - Rally at Oscar Grant Schools & Labor Against Privatization @slapbayarea

Schools & Labor Against Privatization: MISSION STATEMENT

Schools and Labor Against Privatization (SLAP) was formed in direct response to the organized efforts of the Fisher family, various Oakland elected officials, the Oakland School Board and various Bay Area labor officials to privatize our public schools and public land/shipping ports.

As a collective we understand that Oakland is not the only American city under attack from billionaires attempting to privatize/gentrify for personal monetary gain.

We understand that Black and Brown communities across the country continue to be disproportionately affected by the resulting wealth gap epidemic.

We also understand the continued effect privatization and gentrification have on the working class as a whole. The wealth disparity between the very rich few and the majority working class is larger than it has ever been in this country’s history.

The main reason for this phenomena is that our elected representatives continue to give the rich and corporate America access to public resources and wealth at an alarming rate — resources and wealth created by the poor and working class.

We say NO to the closing of public schools in Oakland, which provide education and jobs to disadvantaged communities, to pave for the Fisher family and other privatizers to take them over as private charter schools.

We say NO to the Fisher family’s attempt to benefit financially by acquiring industrial public land that creates good union-paying jobs and tax revenue for our communities to build private multi-million dollar condos and a baseball park.

We say YES to redistributing corporate wealth to fund high quality public education and ser-


STOP PRIVATIZING OAKLAND!

NO STADIUM AT HOWARD TERMINAL! NO SCHOOL CLOSURES! NO CUTS!

The billionaires are after our public resources here in the City of Oakland. The Oakland School Board has recently voted to close 11 public schools, despite overwhelming opposition from the community. School closures disproportionately harm communities of color. They are part of a long-term plan by corporations to destroy public education – selling them off to real estate developers or converting them into charter schools. Oakland does not have “too many schools,” as the district says. Oakland has too many charter schools!

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APRIL 29

Port Shutdown! School Shutdown!

2pm - Rally at Oscar Grant Plaza / City Hall
3pm - March to 1000 Broadway

@slapbayarea

vices, adequate and affordable housing, and high quality union jobs for all working people.

We shall organize to forge a social, economic and political movement for all working people — employed and unemployed — in our own name. We shall spread awareness, influence elections (governmental and union) to once and for all provide a voice for the working class, independent of influence by either of the corporate-dominated political parties.

We shall work in conjunction with any organization(s) in which the purpose is to put an end to the oppression and exploitation of the poor and working class.

We shall hold any elected official (labor or governmental) accountable for catering to the interest of the rich few instead of the majority working class that elected them. We will achieve this by using class-struggle methods to expose and eradicate all efforts to privatize/gentrify any and all public resources for the financial benefit of billionaires, oligarchs or those who in any way represent corporate greed. We shall oppose all tactics used to divide the working class, both outside and inside the labor movement. And finally we shall create a voice and space for all people regardless of race, sex, age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, nationality, religion or work status. 📌



Meet author Clarence Thomas and hear the story behind his new anthology **‘Mobilizing in Our Own Name: Million Worker March’**

This anthology is a call to working people organized and unorganized to unite and mobilize around our own agenda.

The book is about African American trade unionists from one of the most renowned radical labor organizations in the world, the Int’l Longshore & Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10, that defied the Democratic Party and the AFL-CIO and mobilized the MWM on October 17, 2004, at the Lincoln Memorial.

Find out how the MWM reclaimed May Day in 2005. On May Days in the years that followed, the ILWU shut down the ports to demand justice for victims of police violence; to demand universal health care, and to demand workers rights for all.

The ILWU shut down West Coast ports – to oppose wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – and in solidarity with Palestine.

On Juneteenth 2020, ILWU Local 10 mobilized 29 Port Stop Work Actions to Stop Police Terror, to End Systemic Racism and to Stop Privatization of the Port of Oakland.

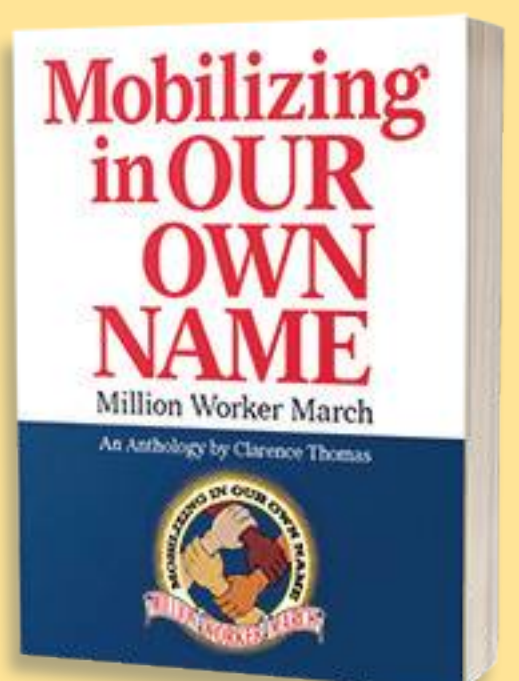
❖ Clarence Thomas Book Signing at the The People's Forum

Wed., **MAY 11** | 6:30 p.m. ~ 8:30 p.m. | 320 W. 37th St. (between 8th & 9th Aves.) NY, NY 10018

❖ **@ IBT Local 282** | Sat., **MAY 14** | 10 a.m. ~ 1 p.m. | 2500 Marcus Ave., Lake Success, NY 11042

❖ **@TWU Local 100** | Sat., **MAY 21** | 12 p.m. ~ 4 p.m. | 195 Montague St., 9th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Purchase ‘Mobilizing in Our Own Name’ at a 15% discount and have it signed by Clarence Thomas at the event. tinyurl.com/54drzhmx



Click on the links or read online at tinyurl.com/579kus95

Guide to the U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine

On Feb. 24, the anti-fascist Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics, together with the Russian Federation, launched a military action with the goal of "demilitarization and de-nazification" of the U.S./NATO coup regime in Kiev. Following are links to reports and analysis that give an understanding of the U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine.



On Ukraine

Voices from Donbass speak to U.S. anti-war movement

On March 27, the Socialist Unity Party and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper hosted a webinar called "Stop the War Lies: Voices from Donbass." This was a unique opportunity for the U.S. anti-war movement to hear directly from people in the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics (DPR and LPR), whose voices are silenced by the Western mass media's pro-Ukraine war propaganda.

Mariupol and Donetsk: a tale of two cities

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 who had to live under the thumb of the Azov Battalion and Ukrainian security forces.

Imperialist propaganda and Ukrainian Jews

The history of Ukrainian nationalist collaboration with Nazi Germany and the present alliance between the Kiev government and neo-Nazis.

Ukrainian security services arrest young communist leaders

The March 6 arrest of Aleksandr Kononovich and Mikhail Kononovich, leaders of the Leninist Communist Youth Union of Ukraine, has been condemned by the World Federation of Democratic Youth and other progressive organizations.

Ukrainian authorities unleash witch hunt

The Ukrainian authorities, being in a state of shock and fearing for their fate, organized a widespread witch hunt. Every day in the territories controlled by Kiev, there are detentions, abductions and torture of political activists and civilians who disagree with the policies of the central government.

Ukrainian secret service and neo-nazis abduct left-wing activist in Dnipro

Around noon on March 3, five persons forced their way into the apartment of 31-year-old hotel clerk Alexander Matyushenko and his partner Maria M. in Dnipro (Dnipropetrovsk). Matyushenko is an anti-fascist and a member of Livitsya (Left), an alliance founded by activists from various social movements in Dnipro two years ago.

Ukrainian leftist criticizes Western war drive with Russia: U.S. is using Ukraine as 'cannon fodder'

Yuliy Dubovyk: I am a Ukrainian-American. I grew up and spent over half of my life in Ukraine, although now I live in the United States. I wanted to explain my thoughts on the ongoing crisis with Russia, because mainstream corporate media outlets don't ever share perspectives like mine.

The Ukrainians that aren't mentioned

The corporate media claim that all Ukrainians support President Zelensky, who has banned most political parties except his own and the far-right. These news outlets also whitewash the fascist gangs — integrated into the Ukrainian army — that engage in torture.

Blackwater is in the Donbass with Azov Battalion Understanding Ukrainian Nazism

PENTAGON + NATO = WAR

NATO military expansion to target Russia and China, says top official

NATO formally launched a 40,000-strong rapid response force targeting Russia in February. This was in addition to the 175,000 NATO troops already on Russia's border. NATO has expanded from 16 countries to 30. NATO expansion technically means that the member-nation's armed forces are "integrated" into the NATO military command. NATO takes command, with the U.S. dominating. No NATO member-state can act without U.S. approval.

Graphic: 31-year history of NATO absorbing, arming Ukraine

Ukraine: NATO launched its attack eight years ago

A short history of NATO eastward expansion and the current tensions in Europe

NATO expansionism in Europe

The danger of a world ruled by NATO: Interview with Angeles Maestro

NATO is not a defensive international organization but was founded to threaten the USSR

U.S./NATO real culprits in Ukraine crisis



NATO expansion brought war to Yugoslavia. The smoldering wreckage of a passenger train after being hit by two missiles launched from a NATO F-15, April 12, 1999. At least 20 commuters were killed.

WAR PROPAGANDA

Who's the war criminal?

Refuting lies about "Bucha atrocities" by Russian military

A century of lies for war, about Russia

The vast international network in charge of Ukrainian war propaganda

FACT SHEET

No to U.S./NATO war: Here are the facts!

Expongamos las mentiras



STATEMENTS

John Parker (Socialist Unity Party/ Partido de Socialismo Unido): Stop NATO! No war on Russia and Donbass

John Parker (Socialist Unity Party/ Partido de Socialismo Unido):

'We must remain on the correct side of history'

Ukraine, war crimes and white power: The Black Alliance for Peace calls for the dismantling of NATO, AFRICOM and all imperialist structures

LENIN AND IMPERIALISM

Is Russia imperialist?

For socialists, the fundamental understanding of imperialism goes back to World War I and is found in the pamphlet written by V.I. Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism."



For more, read 'Bolsheviks & War' by Sam Marcy.

Lenin: How to oppose an unjust war

The Leninist view of how to fight against imperialist war remains one of the most controversial and defining characteristics of the communist movement, because it means standing up to the capitalist class at the moment its fangs are bared.

Ukraine and the Bolshevik Revolution

Gay communist on Russia, fascism and USSR's legacy

WAR ECONOMY

Biden gives Big Oil a win, gas prices going up

Who benefits from the crisis in Ukraine?

U.S. spends billions on war in Ukraine and working class pays the price



Victory to the anti-fascist forces of Donbass and their allies! U.S./NATO hands off Russia!

Socialist Unity Party / Partido de Socialismo Unido statement on the military conflict in Ukraine

¡Victoria a las fuerzas antifascistas del Donbas y sus aliados! ¡EUA / OTAN, saquen sus manos de Rusia!

Comunicado del Partido de Socialismo Unido sobre el conflicto militar en Ucrania



CARTOON: CARLOS LATUFF

Looking behind the headlines

Why Russia recognized the Donbass republics

In order to have a clear anti-war, anti-imperialist position today, class-conscious workers need to understand the significance of the Russian Federation's Feb. 21 decision to recognize the Donbass republics of Donetsk and Lugansk as independent, sovereign countries, nearly eight years after they first declared independence from Ukraine.

'Cut through wall of imperialist propaganda' on Ukraine

The situation in Eastern Europe today was created by the U.S. and NATO, which bear full responsibility for the military conflict unfolding in Ukraine. Ukraine and its Western sponsors spent the last seven years sabotaging the 2015 Minsk II agreements meant to end Kiev's attacks on the people of the Donbass region. Washington and Kiev spent the last three months preparing an invasion of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics as a means to draw Russia into a war.

Former NATO military analyst exposes West's Ukraine invasion narrative

In his speech on Feb. 24, Vladimir Putin stated the two objectives of his operation: to "demilitarize" and "denazify" Ukraine. It is therefore not a question of seizing Ukraine, nor even, in all likelihood, of occupying it and certainly not of destroying it.

Pentagon mania 1992: Bush disowns but won't denounce plan for world domination

On March 8, 1992, the New York Times published excerpts from a 46-page secret Pentagon draft document that it said was leaked by Pentagon officials. This document is truly extraordinary. It asserts complete U.S. world domination in both political and military terms. In other words, the U.S. is to be the sole and exclusive superpower on the face of the planet. It is to exercise its power not only in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, but also on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

Ukraine: It was all written in the Rand Corp plan

The strategic plan of the United States against Russia was elaborated three years ago by the Rand Corporation.



Protest against U.S./NATO intervention in Ukraine at the U.S. Embassy in Kiev, Feb. 9.

Ukraine and the Bolshevik Revolution

By Stephen Millies

The struggle to overthrow the cruel tyrant called the Russian Czar was long and difficult. The czarist empire was a prison house of nations.

Czarist Russia's conquering of Siberia meant killing and exploiting Indigenous peoples like what was done in the United States and Canada.

Poland was divided between Russia, Germany and Austria. Unlike Poland, which had been a powerful state for centuries before its partition, Ukraine was a nation in formation.

Revolutionaries fought against the oppression of dozens of nationalities in Czarist Russia.

"The situation of the Ukrainian working people today is tragic in the extreme," wrote the Russian novelist Maxim Gorky in 1916. "The czarist cutthroats give them no chance to develop their language, literature and art."

It was even illegal to publish books and newspapers in Ukrainian.

Before the Bolshevik Revolution, 76% of Ukrainians didn't know how to read or write. In 1900, there were only 35 Ukrainian women who had attended college.

The treatment of the Ukrainian poet, writer and artist Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861) was particularly outrageous. Born into serfdom, a form of feudal enslavement, he became the most famous figure of the Ukrainian national renaissance.

Czar Alexander II had Shevchenko imprisoned for writing a satirical poem, an action that helped shorten his life. Besides criticizing serfdom and the czarist dictatorship, Taras Shevchenko also opposed the grotesque discrimination suffered by Jewish people.

The great majority of Ukrainian people had been serfs. Serfs could be bought and sold like cattle. They were beaten by their owner with a leather whip called the knout.

But unlike enslaved Africans in the United States, their families couldn't be broken up. Their names and languages weren't stolen from them.

Poverty and pogroms

Ukraine was rich but Ukrainians were desperately poor. The country has some of the richest topsoil in the world.

The czarist empire was the greatest exporter of wheat during most of the 1800s with Ukraine producing the greatest share. It was only after 1870 that the United States, Argentina and Canada became major wheat exporters.

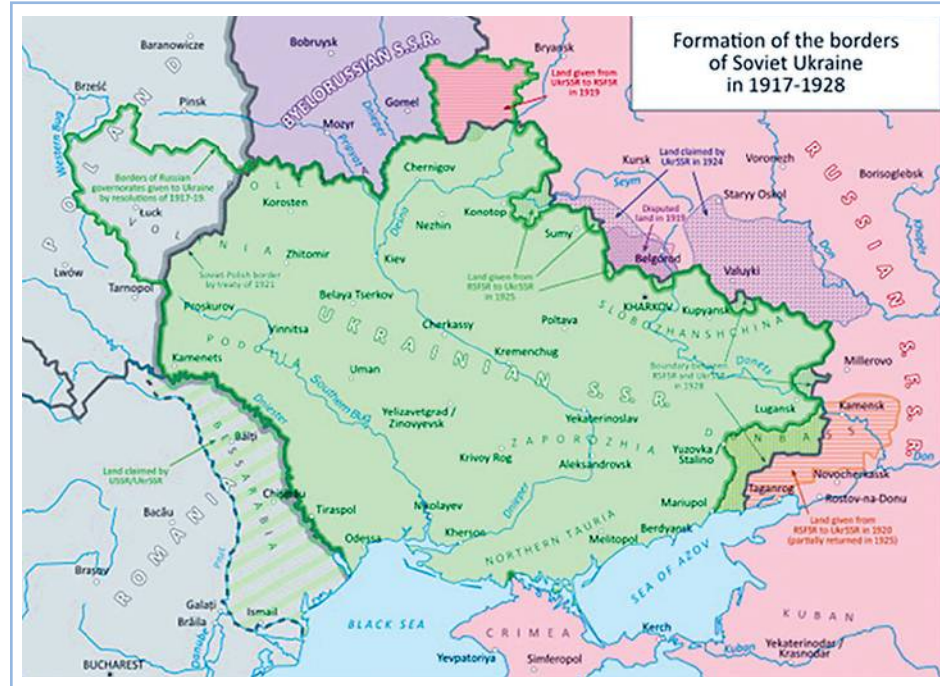
Yet the Ukrainian peasants who harvested wheat and other crops were often hungry themselves. Farm laborers would suffer night-blindness because of a lack of vitamins.

The Czarist regime was hated. It was almost overthrown in the 1905 revolution.

The Czar sought to turn this anger into racist violence directed at minorities. These spasms of terror in which hundreds of people were lynched were called pogroms. They were deliberately instigated by the regime.

The biggest target of czarist pogroms were Jewish people. Thousands of Jews were murdered, tortured and raped.

The Bolsheviks fought pogroms



with guns. The revolutionary movement had been centered in the cities and minefields where the working class was concentrated.

Workers in St. Petersburg prevented pogroms from being organized. The greatest center of pogroms was Ukraine and Moldova where the working class was smaller.

None of this prevented the centuries-old czarist police state from being overthrown in March 1917. Eight months later, workers organized into councils known as soviets took power. They were led by socialists who were called Bolsheviks.

Lenin led the Bolsheviks. Their slogan of "bread, peace and land" appealed to millions of people.

They wanted an end to hunger, poverty and war. Two million soldiers from the former Czarist Empire had died in World War I.

Peasants — the vast majority of society — wanted to take the land that they had plowed for generations. The Bolsheviks told them to kick out their landlords and seize the land.

In contrast, capitalists betrayed Black people after the U.S. Civil War. Instead of the former slave masters being forced to give up their plantations, most Black people became landless sharecroppers.

Lenin and Ukraine

When the peasants and workers took power on Nov. 7, 1917, the Russian landlords and capitalists were demoralized. The support given by capitalists in other countries sparked a civil war.

The counterrevolutionaries were called White Guards, who were a Russian terrorist army much like the Ku Klux Klan. The United States and other countries sent troops to support the White Guards and attempted to drown the socialist revolution in blood.

The Red Army of workers and peasants defeated the White Guards and foreign troops. Dock workers in Seattle and Britain refused to load weapons for the White Guards.

In the Russian Civil War of 1918-20, most of Ukraine had been overriden by White Guards. They murdered 100,000 Jewish people there.

A well-to-do minority of Ukrainians supported the White Guards and joined the pogroms. Their political descendants supported the Nazis in World War II and today they comprise the fascist Azov Battalion and Right Sector thugs.

After hundreds of years of Czarist oppression, Ukrainians and other

nationalities wanted freedom. Lenin, who was Russian, said in effect, "right on!"

He drafted a resolution for the Communist Party about Ukraine in November 1919. Here are excerpts:

"In view of the fact that Ukrainian culture (language, school, etc.) has been suppressed for centuries by Russian czarism and the exploiting classes, the [central committee of the Communist Party] makes it incumbent upon all party members to use every means to help remove all barriers in the way of the free development of the Ukrainian language and culture..."

"[Communist Party] members on Ukrainian territory must put into practice the right of the working people to study in the Ukrainian language and to speak their native language in all Soviet institutions; they must in every way counteract attempts at Russification that push the Ukrainian language into the background and must convert that language into an instrument for the communist education of the working people. Steps must be taken immediately to ensure that in all Soviet institutions there are sufficient Ukrainian-speaking employees and that in future all employees are able to speak Ukrainian."

Famines and industrialization

The Ukrainian Soviet Republic was established. In 1922 Ukraine joined with the other soviet republics to form the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Socialism brought great advances. By 1939, some 88% of Ukrainians could read and write. The literacy rate in 1959 was 99%.

Whereas printing in Ukrainian had been forbidden by the Czar, in 1980 there were around 1,500 newspapers and magazines printed in that language.

Ukraine is a multinational country. Besides millions of Ukrainian and Russian speakers, there are Greek, Hungarian, Jewish, Roma and other peoples. Ukrainian fascists call these people "scum."

Some have asked why the Bolsheviks included predominantly Russian speaking areas, like the Donbass, within Ukraine's boundaries. (The boundaries drawn by communists are the same ones used today.)

The reason was that in 1917, the vast majority of Ukrainians were peasants who lived in the countryside. Most of the workers were Russian, like coal miners in the Donbass.

Including these workers in Ukraine helped promote socialism.

After the civil war came the famine in 1921-1922 in which millions died. This was the era before the "green revolution."

Farmers in Ukraine and Russia often used wooden ploughs. Even with good weather crop yields could be low. The loss of millions of agricultural workers because of World War I, the civil war and the 1918 influenza pandemic further reduced the harvest.

More controversial is the 1932-1933 famine. At least 3.3 million people died in this tragedy.

Many Ukrainians, who are not communists, claim this famine was deliberate genocide against the Ukrainian people. Yet the famine affected millions of Kazakhs and Russians outside Ukraine.

This famine took place during the first five-year plan which was rapidly industrializing the Soviet Union. Part of this offensive was bringing socialist production to the countryside.

Millions of peasants got land because of the Bolshevik Revolution. But these plots were too small to employ modern agricultural machinery.

Peasants were encouraged to join cooperatives and form collective farms. The richer farmers, called kulaks, resisted.

This was an intense class struggle which amounted to a second revolution. Sometimes the worst exploiters are the small property owners like small slumlords or other small-time cockroach capitalists.

Kulaks helped sabotage the harvest by concealing grain stocks and slaughtering livestock. Detachments of workers and poor peasants defeated the kulaks.

The forming of collective farms went hand-in-hand with constructing factories making tractors and harvesters. The countryside was electrified. Ukrainians left wooden ploughs behind and built a modern society.

Defeating Hitler and NATO

Looking back, some argue that collectivization should have started sooner and/or more slowly. Soviet leader Joseph Stalin in his article "Dizzy with Success" urged activists to be more careful.

Often overlooked in this famine, as historian Mark B. Tauger points out, is the devastating role of the wheat rust fungus. This plant disease would have been disastrous whether there had been a collective farm movement or not.

And where was U.S. President Herbert Hoover? In 1921, before he became president, Hoover led a relief campaign that aided starving people in the Soviet Union.

But in the early 1930s Hoover did nothing, even while many U.S. farmers couldn't sell their crops during the Great Depression.

Also questioned is that the Soviet Union exported crops while people were starving. Professor Tauger estimates that as many as two million people might have lived if these exports ceased.

This is heartbreaking. But as Tauger mentions, both Germany and Britain threatened to stop lending credit to the Soviet Union unless

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NATO military expansion to target Russia & China, says top official

By Gary Wilson

As the U.S. and its NATO satellites flood weapons into Ukraine, NATO is being “transformed” into a fighting force capable of direct wars on Russia and China, says NATO General-Secretary Jens Stoltenberg.

NATO formally launched a 40,000-strong rapid response force targeting Russia in February. This was in addition to the 175,000 NATO troops already on Russia’s border.

Also to be noted is President Joe Biden’s shift away from the “no first use” of nuclear weapons, with the Pentagon announcing March 29 that the U.S. would consider first use of nuclear weapons.

In an interview with the Telegraph, Stoltenberg said NATO is in the process of making a “fundamental” shift from engaging in what he called “tripwire deterrence” to “be transformed into a major force capable of” direct warfare.

Stoltenberg made clear that China is as much a target as Russia. “We are finalizing the work on the new strategic concept that will be agreed at the NATO summit in June. ... And there, I expect China to be an important part.”

Stoltenberg adds: “It is also of concern that we see that Russia and China are working more and more closely together.”

Ukraine & Bolsheviks

Continued from page 6

it paid more of its debts.

What the Soviet Union had to sell at the time was largely oil, lumber and wheat — all at the low Depression prices. As it was, the Soviets did cut farm exports. (“The 1932 Harvest and the Famine of 1933,” by Mark B. Tauger, Slavic Review, Spring, 1991.)

Imports of machinery were absolutely necessary to industrialize the Soviet Union. And the industrialization carried out by the five-year plans enabled the Soviet peoples to defeat the Nazi invasion, which killed over 5 million Ukrainians.

So many of the new industries were built in Ukraine. One of the best known projects was the Dnieprostroi hydroelectric dam. By 1940, over a half-million Ukrainian workers had high school or college educations.

Today the greatest racist hellhole is the United States. Wall Street was finally able to overthrow Soviet power in 1991. This was despite an overwhelming majority of Soviet citizens — including 78% of Ukrainians — voting to retain the Soviet Union in a March 17, 1991 referendum.

This tragedy was a greater defeat than the victory of Hitler over the bones of the German working class. World capital and its media have been able to poison the minds of too many Ukrainians, Russians and other peoples living in the former Soviet Union.

We look forward to NATO’s defeat and a revival of a revolutionary movement in Ukraine. Long live the unity of all the workers and progressive peoples in Ukraine! Workers and oppressed peoples of the world, unite!

Read the full article online at: tinyurl.com/zusnxfet

Since 2014, Stoltenberg said, “We have implemented the biggest reinforcement of NATO since the end of the Cold War.”

Following the overturn of the Soviet Union, NATO has expanded from 16 countries to 30. NATO expansion technically means that the member-nation’s armed forces are “integrated” into the NATO military command. NATO takes command, with the U.S. dominating. No NATO member-state can act without U.S. approval.

NATO expansion into Eastern Europe

For the last two decades, NATO has been expanding into Eastern Europe. In 1999, NATO took in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. In 2004, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia were incorporated. In 2009, Albania and Croatia. In 2017, Montenegro. In 2020, North Macedonia.

Finland and Sweden are reported to be “within weeks” of deciding to join NATO.

Meanwhile, the U.S. is expanding its proxy war in Ukraine, as Leon Panetta, who was CIA director and then secretary of defense in the Barack Obama administration, so clearly put it. The United States and its NATO military operation is in a proxy war against Russia, with Ukraine as the battlefield. The U.S. role, Panetta said, is to provide more and more weapons faster and faster with Ukraine doing the fighting, bolstered by foreign mercenaries.

It’s a matter of military fact that in the Ukrainian proxy war, more military-technical assistance has been dispatched by the U.S. and its NATO satellites, in a larger amount and in a shorter time, than in any previous military conflict in history.

Stop arming Ukraine

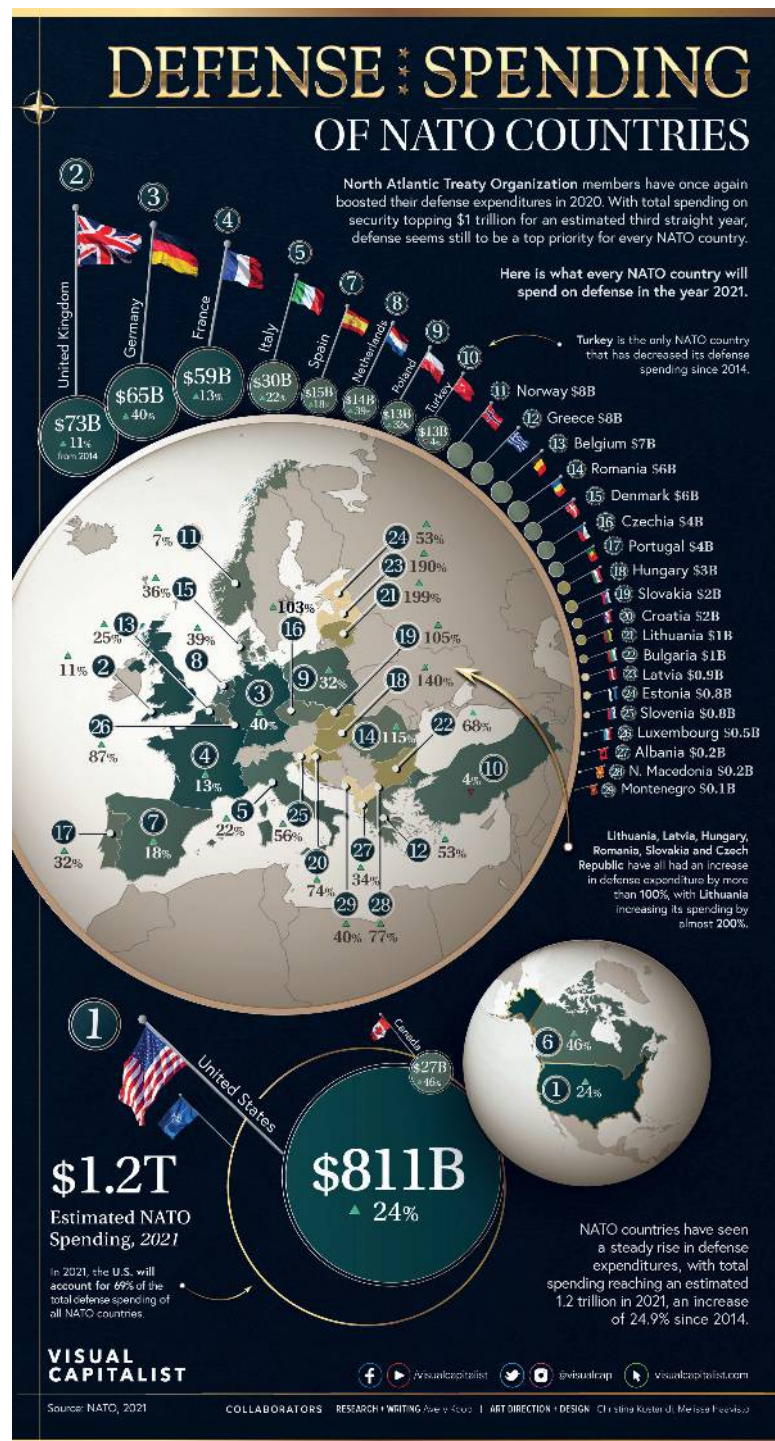
“Russia warns U.S. to stop arming Ukraine,” the Washington Post reported April 14.

The Post says: “Russia this week sent a formal diplomatic note to the United States warning that U.S. and NATO shipments of the ‘most sensitive’ weapons systems to Ukraine were ‘adding fuel’ to the conflict there and could bring ‘unpredictable consequences.’”

The diplomatic note, titled “On Russia’s concerns in the context of massive supplies of weapons and military equipment to the Kiev regime,” was forwarded to the State Department by the Russian Embassy in Washington. In it, Russia accuses NATO of trying to “pressure Ukraine to abandon peace negotiations with Russia in order to continue the bloodshed.”

The U.S. has sent more than \$2.6 billion worth of arms and other military aid to Ukraine since Russia launched its military action in February. The Pentagon explained, “The United States has now committed more than \$3.2 billion in security assistance to Ukraine since the beginning of the Biden administration.”

NATO’s military budget accounts for the majority of military spending worldwide. NATO spending in 2021 was \$1.2 trillion (\$1,200,000,000,000), up 24.9% since 2014.



U.S. commands NATO

As noted by the Pentagon, NATO is the primary force for U.S. dominance and control in Europe.

All NATO countries are under the effective military domination of the United States. While the governments of the imperialist countries in NATO are not puppet governments, they are unable to take major decisions involving peace and war without the approval of the government of the United States. The civilian governments of the NATO countries lack full control over their own armed forces.

NATO was founded as a U.S.-led military alliance against the Soviet Union and the socialist countries in Eastern Europe. But it was more than that. After World War II, the United States was determined to bring all the imperialist countries under its military control — first the defeated Axis powers of Germany, Japan and Italy and then increasingly its “victorious allies,” Britain and France, through the NATO alliance.

At the end of the Cold War, the newly capitalist oppressed countries of Eastern Europe were signed up as formal NATO members. NATO has been in the process of unofficially taking in Ukraine — minus Crimea and the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics.

Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, socialist industry was dismantled in Ukraine. Once the second-largest economy in the USSR, “independent” Ukraine is now the poorest country in Europe.

In 2013, the European Union demanded that Kiev impose Wash-

ington-based International Monetary Fund (IMF) controls, neoliberal structural adjustments, over all aspects of state spending and operations as the conditions required for membership in the European Union. Even more government assets were to be sold off. Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich rejected this for a more favorable offer from Russia.

The Euromaidan coup quickly followed in 2014, openly supported and financed by NATO, to put in a government that bowed to the IMF demands and made NATO membership a policy mandate. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has repeatedly talked of Ukraine’s entrance into NATO. On Feb. 19, Zelensky demanded, once again, entry to NATO, saying, “Eight years ago, Ukrainians made their choice [the Euromaidan coup].”

The resistance to the Euromaidan coup and to NATO in Ukraine has been bigger and more widespread than reported in the U.S. corporate-controlled media. The resistance has been strongest in the eastern part of Ukraine, particularly the Donbass region. The autonomous Donetsk People’s Republic and Lugansk People’s Republic were created when the people there voted overwhelmingly (89% and 96%) against a NATO-controlled regime and to secede from the Kiev regime.

In Crimea a 2014 referendum rejected the Euromaidan coup. The result was a 97% vote in favor of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea seceding, with an 83% voter turnout.

This is exercising the right of self-determination. A NATO takeover of Ukraine is the opposite. [📌](#)

Los archivos de los cinco cubanos regresan a casa

Por Bill Hackwell

Hace una semana Cheryl LaBash y yo iniciamos el viaje para llevar a casa los Archivos de la larga lucha por la liberación de los 5 cubanos que con Alicia Jrapko acumulamos durante un período de 13 años, cuidadosa y metódicamente guardados en nuestro sótano; desde la primera carta que Gerardo Hernández le envió a Alicia a fines de 2001 desde una prisión federal en Miami hasta la última que nos envió desde el Hueco en la prisión de transferencia de Oklahoma City el 12 de diciembre de 2014.

Junto con las cartas hay material de las muchas campañas y proyectos que tuvieron lugar durante ese tiempo. Si bien es una cantidad significativa del registro histórico, no representa toda la información acumulada durante ese tiempo por el movimiento internacional que apoyó a los Cinco.

La singularidad de la lucha por la libertad de los Cinco Cubanos fue que, a diferencia de la mayoría de las luchas, estuvo claramente enmarcada en el tiempo desde el momento en que fueron arrestados en Miami el 12 de septiembre de 1998, por defender su patria de los ataques terroristas organizados en esa misma ciudad hasta su liberación el 17 de diciembre de 2014, a través de esa estrecha ventana que se abrió por un breve momento bajo Obama.

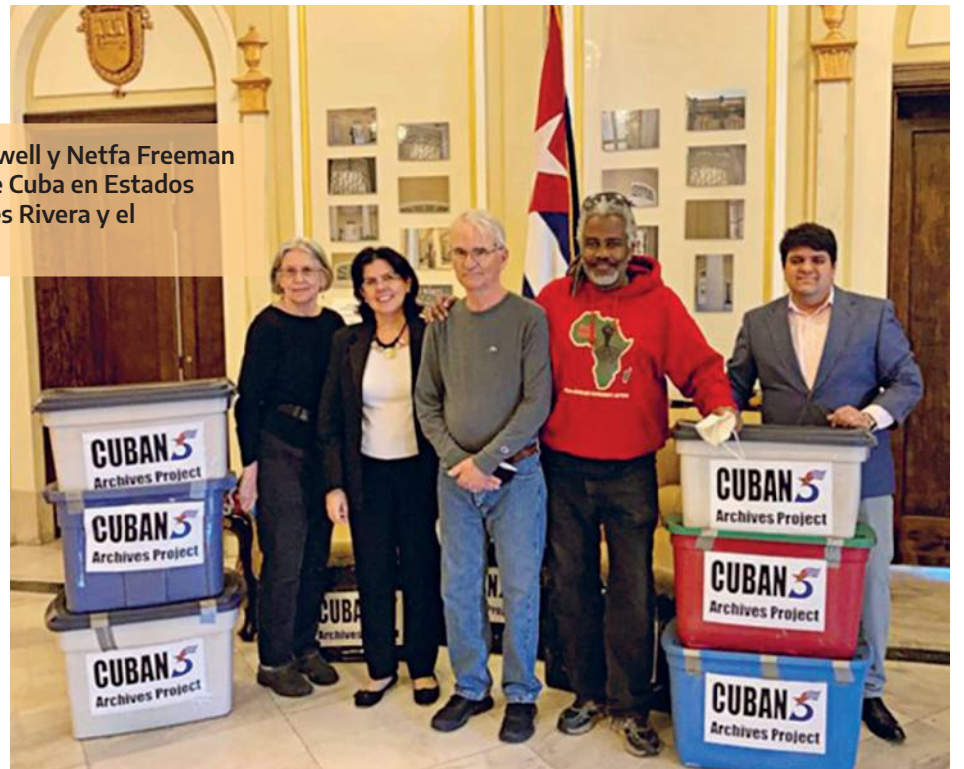
Lo más inspirador fue que se llevó a

Foto de portada: Cheryl LaBash, Bill Hackwell y Netfa Freeman en la entrega de archivos a la Embajada de Cuba en Estados Unidos junto a la Embajadora Lianys Torres Rivera y el funcionario Daniel Menocal.

cabo cuando Internet se estaba convirtiendo en una herramienta de organización cada vez más importante que conectaba al movimiento como nunca antes, lo que permitía que se llevaran a cabo eventos internacionales en Londres; Holguín, Cuba; Toronto; Puerto Alegre, Brasil; Tijuana, México, por mencionar algunos, y en Washington D.C. donde durante varios años simpatizantes de Cuba de todo el mundo se reunieron para protestar por la libertad de los Cinco frente a la Casa Blanca y cabildearon en el Capitolio contra la legislación que atrinchera el bloqueo de la isla.

Cuando llegamos a Kramer Junction, nuestra ruta era continuar hacia el este hasta Arizona, pero no pude evitar tomar un desvío hacia el sur con el automóvil lleno de la historia de los 5 Cubanos hasta las puertas de la penitenciaría que encarceló a Gerardo durante tanto tiempo, una vuelta de victoria modesta pero significativa para una lucha librada por todo el pueblo cubano y apoyada por millones en el mundo.

Nos pareció apropiado hacerlo. Decidimos también salir de la Interestatal 40 en la ciudad de Oklahoma para repetirlo en el Centro Federal de Transferencia donde los prisioner-



os son trasladados hacia y desde las prisiones federales de los EEUU. Fue aquí donde Gerardo terminó en el Hueco durante una semana antes de ser enviado a Butner Prison Carolina del Norte donde se reencontró con sus hermanos Ramón Labañino y Antonio Guerrero antes de su regreso triunfal a casa. Fue desde esta prisión de Oklahoma donde pudo sacar su última carta de prisión para Alicia diciendo que no sabía a dónde lo llevarían pero sabía que su tiempo en California había terminado y le agradecía todo lo que había hecho.

Las 3100 millas recorridas con esta carga histórica fueron para mí, en lo personal, un momento de reflexión y

un avance desde el fallecimiento de Alicia en enero pasado.

Devolver todo esto a sus legítimos dueños, el pueblo cubano, era algo que ella y yo habíamos discutido muchas veces, ahora se había convertido en el cumplimiento de una promesa, en mi percepción de urgencia.

La entrega de los Archivos a la Embajada de Cuba fue un momento de solidaridad y un paso importante hacia su destino final. El cierre del viaje tuvo lugar anoche cuando activistas solidarios con Cuba del área de D.C. y diplomáticos de la Embajada de Cuba se reunieron para compartir recuerdos de Alicia y su vida bien vivida.

Fuente: Resumen

Cuban 5 archives begin their journey home

By Bill Hackwell

April 11 — A week ago Cheryl LaBash and I started the journey to take home the archives of the long struggle to free the Cuban 5 that Alicia Jrapko and I accumulated over a period of 13 years, carefully and methodically stored in our basement; from the first letter Gerardo Hernandez mailed to Alicia in late 2001 from a federal prison in Miami to the last one he sent us from the hole in the Oklahoma City transfer prison on December 12, 2014. Along with the letters are material from the many campaigns and projects that took place over that time. While this material is a significant amount of the historical record, it does not represent all of the information accumulated during that time by the international movement that supported the Five.

The uniqueness of the struggle to free the Cuban 5 was that, unlike most struggles, it was clearly framed in time from the moment they were arrested in Miami on September 12, 1998, for defending their homeland from terrorist attacks organized in that very city to their release on December 17, 2014, through that narrow window that opened for a brief moment under Obama.

What was most inspiring was that it took place as the internet was becoming an increasingly prominent organizing tool that connected the movement like never before enabling international events to take place in London; Holguin, Cuba; To-



FREE THE CUBAN FIVE

ronto; Puerto Alegre, Brazil; Tijuana, Mexico, to name a few, and in Washington D.C., where for several years supporters of Cuba gathered from all over the globe to protest for the freedom of the five in front of the White House and lobbied on Capitol Hill against the legislation that entrenched the blockade of the island.

Ironically our endeavor to bring this material to its first stop, the Cuban Embassy in Washington, began by retracing the highways of California that Alicia and I traveled during the more than 100 visits we made to Gerardo over that time. Every town and every turn of the 404 miles from our home in Oakland to the doors of the Victorville prison is indelibly stamped into my memory forever; starting by taking Interstate 5 down through the vast Central Valley of California that grows around 20% of the world's produce, then over the

Tehachapi Pass dropping down into the wonders of the desolate Mojave Desert with its twisted but majestic Joshua Trees.

When we arrived at Kramer Junction our route was to continue east to Arizona but I could not help myself but take a detour south with the utility vehicle full of the story of the Cuban 5 to the gates of the penitentiary that imprisoned Gerardo for so long taking a modest but significant victory lap for a struggle waged by the Cuban people and supported by millions around the world. It seemed like an appropriate thing to do. It also seemed right to get off Inter-

Bill Hackwell, Alicia Jrapko, Antonio Guerrero, Nancy Kohn, Joelle Deloison; in back, Amanda Bloom and Cheryl LaBash.

Pictured in the early years of the victorious global fight to free them following their 1998 arrest and long unjust U.S. imprisonment, are Fernando González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, René González and Gerardo Hernández.

Graphic: Cuban 5 Banner

state 40 in Oklahoma City to repeat it at the Federal Transfer Center where prisoners are shuffled to and from federal prisons around the U.S. It was here where Gerardo ended up in the hole for a week before he was sent to Butner Prison, North Carolina, where he reconnected with his brothers Ramon Labanino and Antonio Guerrero before their triumphant return home. It was from this Oklahoma prison where he was able to get out his final prison letter to Alicia saying he didn't know where they were taking him but he knew his time in California was over and he thanked her for everything she had done.

The 3,100 miles driven with this historic cargo was personal for me, a time of reflection, and a moving forward since Alicia's passing this past January. Getting this all back to its rightful owners, the Cuban people, was something she and I had discussed many times and now it had become a fulfillment of a promise in my perceived urgency.

The delivery of the archives to the Cuban Embassy was a moment of solidarity and an important step to its ultimate destination. The finality of the trip took place last night when D.C.-area Cuba solidarity activists and the diplomats of the Cuban Embassy gathered to share remembrances of Alicia and her life well-lived. 📖

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