

# STRUGGLE ★ LA LUCHA

## for Socialism / por el Socialismo



### FACT FINDING IN DONBASS

# Battle line drawn with Nazi forces after 2014

## Part 3

John Parker, Socialist Unity Party candidate for U.S. Senate in California on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket. This is part 3 of his report on his fact-finding trip observing the U.S./NATO proxy war on Donbass and Russia.

By John Parker

From May 1 to May 12, I traveled to both Russia and the Lugansk People's Republic, an independent republic in the Donbass region, formerly part of eastern Ukraine. The purpose of this fact-finding mission initiated by the Socialist Unity Party and Struggle-La-Lucha.org was to report the suppressed information challenging the narrative of NATO and its member states, led by the U.S., in this proxy war in Ukraine against Russia.

My visit to Lugansk was made possible with the assistance of Borotba (Struggle), a socialist political organization in Ukraine and Donbass which we have worked with for many years. Alexey Albu, one of the leaders of Borotba, also provided translation for me during interviews. This is the third part of my report.

On May 8, two days after we visited the Rubizhne shelter, we made our way from Lugansk city to the villages of Sokilnyky and Krymske. Both had recently been taken over by the joint forces of the Lugansk People's Militia (LPM) and the Russian military.

After the 2014 U.S.-sponsored coup in Ukraine that brought to power a pro-Washington, anti-Moscow regime partnering with fascist forces, the majority Russian-speaking people of the Donbass region decided they didn't want any part of this backsliding of history.

Dramatic evidence of the new coup government's fascist leanings came in its support for the neo-Nazis who burned alive activists at Odessa's House of Trade Unions on May 2, 2014. To this day, none of the perpetrators have been charged with any crime. Given that incident, the people of the Donbass region declared themselves the independent Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics (DPR and LPR). They voted by 89% in Donetsk and 96% in Lugansk for that change.

Instead of honoring the wishes of the people of Donbass, Kiev labeled them terrorists and sent armed forces with heavy artillery and aircraft against civilians, threatening to wipe out the population. The Lugansk People's Militia was organized to defend the area.

When the Minsk II cease-fire agreements took effect in 2015, the opposing sides' positions were drawn. Sokilnyky was controlled by the Lugansk People's Republic. Krymske was occu-



SLL PHOTO

From left: Alexey Albu of Borotba; John Parker of Socialist Unity Party; and Evgeniy Miroshnichenko, member of the Youth Parliament, State Duma of Russia.

ried and controlled by the Ukrainian military.

If the cease-fire stipulations under the Minsk II agreements were adhered to by the Ukrainian military, it would have protected this community. Instead, the agreement was used by Ukraine to create a one-sided shooting range against civilians in Sokilnyky. Today no one lives there and the homes and buildings have been destroyed.

The road that runs between Sokilnyky and Krymske is called Vulytsya Horkoho, named for the great Russian writer Maxim Gorky. Google also translates it as "Bitter Street." The name is fitting, since less than a quarter-mile north runs the Siverskyi Donets River – the border between two conflicting sides in a war.

When you travel along this road towards Sokilnyky, you see idle and broken down Ukrainian tanks that were used against the villagers after 2014, when no military force was there to protect those communities.

#### Ukraine continued war after Minsk II

122-mm shells from the Ukrainian government's arsenal rained down on villagers from the north of the river's edge and west of Sokilnyky, aimed at anyone driving along this road or just relaxing at home. These shells are capable of stopping tanks, penetrating bunkers and taking down aircraft. And as we could see along the way, many homes were blown to bits or

barely left standing.

The 2015 Minsk II agreements were negotiated by Russia, Ukraine, Germany, France and the Donetsk and Lugansk republics, allowing for some self-determination of the Donbass regions and the right to be protected by their own military forces – the Lugansk People's Militia and the Donetsk People's Militia.

By 2017, however, most residents on this road east of Krymske who survived left the area since it was too dangerous.

Although the Minsk agreements forbade attacks within this area, our guide told us that after 2015 the Lugansk militia forces began calling this street the "Road of Life," where LPR forces had to travel fast to keep from being shot at. "For seven years Nazis violated the Minsk agreements ... They attacked peaceful people who lived in this village during those Minsk violations," explained our LPM guide, who led us to our next location further west towards Krymske.

We saw further evidence of houses resembling Swiss cheese rather than safe spaces for families. We stopped on the edge of Zynamyanka village, where a monument commemorating fallen World War II soldiers was located. We had to follow the steps of the person in front since the area was filled with unexploded shells dropped by the Ukrainian forces.

We reached an administrative build-  
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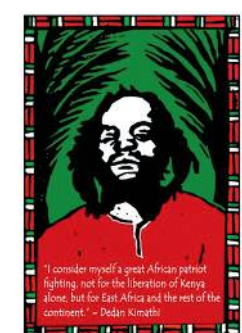
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# New York clinic defenders block anti-abortion bigots

By Melinda Butterfield

On Sept. 3, abortion rights activists mobilized to counter a monthly protest of the Planned Parenthood Manhattan Health Center by anti-abortion forces. In August, the New York Police Department had attacked the clinic defenders, arresting five. New York City for Abortion Rights organizes the monthly clinic defense.

The anti-abortion group Witness for Life is based at the nearby Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral on the Lower East Side. Clinic defenders began the day with a picket outside the church, then dispatched activists to provide support to Planned Parenthood escorts at the clinic and blockade nearby intersections to intercept roving gangs of anti-woman bigots.

Outside the clinic, dozens of abortion rights defenders held rainbow umbrellas and a banner that said "Your body, your choice," to block the chanting anti-abortionists.

All attempts to invade the clinic or stop patients from entering were successfully blocked. One entering patient aptly gave the middle finger to the bigots.

Comically, one of the anti-abortion goons wore a red MAGA hat and walked outside the clinic chanting, "Make America great again." His cohorts made him change his hat and change his chant halfway through



SLL PHOTO: MELINDA BUTTERFIELD

their stunt since it too clearly exposed their far-right allegiances.

Provocations continued after the "pro-life" group left the clinic. When abortion rights supporters held a wrap-up rally outside the church, a driver attempted to assault them with their vehicle. Then bigots threw eggs from the roof of a building across the street; they only suc-

ceeded in egging the SUV of one of their supporters.

Naturally, the NYPD was nowhere to be seen when these attacks on abortion rights activists took place.

The Supreme Court coup that overturned Roe v. Wade has emboldened the ultra-right against the rights of women, trans people, people of color and all workers. Even in a pro-

choice, "blue" state like New York, the fascists are trying to advance.

The clinic defenders – multigenerational, people of color and white, queer and trans – show that only the workers and oppressed will stop their advance, not the cops or politicians.

For info on upcoming clinic defense actions, follow NYC for Abortion Rights on Twitter. [📧](#)

# On Jeff Bezos' \$500 million yacht fiasco

By Kermit Leibensperger

Heard the news about Jeff Bezos' \$500,000,000 yacht? I wanted to wait a little while to write something and submit it for publication — just to be sure Big Boss Jeff hadn't slyly succeeded in buying the Rotterdam City Council and Mayor. What a downer that would be (and, of course, he may yet succeed).

Lately, I've been reading the writings of that young ignorant supporter of the Confederacy turned abolitionist turned anti-imperialist and world-touring Weisenheimer, Mark Twain. Herewith is my result regarding Mr. Jeffery Preston Bezos.

## Broken news

(The latest news link I could find was this August 11 article, so it's not breaking, it's long broken, in fact it's downright stale news.):

"Rotterdam Won't Dismantle Historic Bridge to Let Jeff Bezos' \$500 Million Superyacht Pass" [Credit: Town and Country]

Now there's a magazine that I must confess I have never bought a copy of, but I've seen it prominently offered at many a supermarket checkout aisle. So, is it bought by bumpkins who aspire to affluence and will attain it by



Rotterdam won't dismantle the Koningshaven Bridge for Jeff Bezos's yacht.

## A limerick dedicated to Jeff Bezos by Kermit Leibensperger

When whales get beached, the shrimp laugh\*

There once was lubber named Bezos.

Who thought his big yacht would be famous,

He offered to pay off,

But Council said

"F\_\_\_ off

That yacht is a crime

infelicitous."

\* A Bethlehem Steel blast furnace coworker of mine enjoyed repeating this with an ear-to-ear smile: "When whales get beached, the shrimp laugh," so I must credit him with my limerick's title. He religiously repeated this whenever the news reported that some big cheese who thought they were beyond the law had come in contact with the law — in a big, big way, as big cheeses rarely do.

(By the way this coworker liked to steal sporty cars for fun before he technically qualified as an adult — not that I think he ever could grow up, because after working with him

regularly purchasing lottery tickets and this magazine? I am ashamed to admit that this is the very first article from this fine bourgeois publication that I have ever read. In that regard I must offer thanks to the serendipity of the search engine. "Read all about it," as they say in the news biz, and here it is:

Jeff Bezos' Superyacht Is Nearly Completed

for over a decade, I knew the fellow well and he was too intelligent to do much in the way of grownup things, the "Awfuler... things that ever were," I concur with him wholeheartedly and like to whistle that song from the musical "Peter Pan" occasionally. The entire lyric is a masterpiece to me. But back to my digression ...)

This worldly-wise USW brother claimed to be a Mensa member, but I didn't fall for that yarn because, as a youth, he got caught purloining a car. You know, quite a fair percentage of them never do get caught. I learned this firsthand when my '66 VW vanished. I contacted officers of the law, and they have been clueless to this day, as those who enjoy this newspaper are well aware.

Getting back to the background story, qualifying as a youth offender at the time of his grand theft auto conviction (Note to readers not geezers like me: Video games did not exist in the 1960s and 1970s, if you are one of the unfortunates sadly addicted to the game with the same name), the only effect my friend's juvenile arrest and detention had on him by the time that I came to know him was bragging rights. I fondly remember his grand theft auto saga whenever I see the scene in the prequel movie "Star Trek" where teenager James T. Kirk sends his mean stepfather's antique Corvette over a cliff ... after the joyride of a lifetime. That movie is a favorite, like my old blast furnace brother. [📧](#)



# We want justice! Stop locking up our people!

By Gloria Verdieu

According to Prison Policy Initiative, white people are proportionately underrepresented in prisons and jails, while Black, Native, and Latino people are overrepresented. In a graph showing the racial makeup of U.S. prisons – Black people and white people each make up 38% of the prison population, while the U.S. population is 60% white and 13% Black. When Black, Latino, and Native prisoners are counted together, they constitute 61% of the state and federal prison population but only 32% of the total population.

Socialist Unity Party supports the struggles of all prisoners; prisoners of conscience, prisoners of war, and prisoners imprisoned because of their political beliefs. We believe that all prisoners are political prisoners because of the racist, corrupt and greedy profit-based system we live in. We want to build solidarity with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals by building coalitions, uniting all oppressed nationalities, and fighting side by side to shut down the U.S. prison-industrial complex.

We understand that the U.S. criminal justice system is flawed from the point of contact with the police to the arrest, trial and conviction. The Sixth Amendment of the Constitution guarantees citizens the right to a criminal trial by an impartial jury. But there is no requirement that the jury reflect the racial diversity of the community from which the person on trial comes.

We can list the impediments to a jury of your peers in a capitalist society, but we must ask ourselves if there are any benefits to standing up against racist courts. When I asked formerly incarcerated author and community activist Curtis Howard about his thoughts on jury duty, his reply was:

“The experience is worth it; seeing a jury pool with people who look like

me, from my community and knows some of the stuff that I’ve been through may have curved my option of taking a plea bargain or having a judge decide my fate.”

Howard adds that the experience of going through the whole process, the orientation in the jury hall, observing the people, hearing your name called for a jury pool, and being selected as a juror is worth it.

## On jury duty

I have been summoned for jury duty many times during the last 30 years. My name was called to be a potential juror three times. I reported to a courtroom and swore under oath to tell the truth when answering a series of questions. One of those times, I was selected as a juror in a case. The initial jury pool in the courtroom was full, with about 60 potential jurors. There was a laminated sheet of paper with a list of questions on one side and our juror number on the other. I was very surprised to be selected as a juror after answering all the questions from the judge and the lawyers as truthfully as I could.

It was a DUI case, which I thought was not a big deal. After we all answered the questions on a sheet, the judge and lawyers excused people for various reasons. Over half of the people were left with 12 in the jury box when the selection process began. The lawyers took turns using what I learned was called peremptory challenges — challenges used without any explanation or stated reason.

This process was like musical chairs that began with the jurors in the jury box. The lawyers would excuse a juror, and the next juror in sequence took that seat. I was further down in the numbers and thought that the jury would be complete before they reached my number, but they kept dismissing and reseating until my number was called to take a seat in the jury box. I knew I would be dismissed, but I believe they ran

out of peremptory challenges, and the judge announced this was our jury, and we took another oath. This process took two days.

I won’t go into all the trial details — opening, evidence and closing statements took one day. It took three days for 12 of us to deliberate and reach a verdict that we all agreed on. I will remind you this was a case of two counts — DUI and blood alcohol level above 0.08%.

After we reached a verdict, we were taken back into the courtroom. As the presiding juror, I handed the verdict to the bailiff. I saw the look of relief on the face of the defendant as the judge read not guilty and then thanked the jury for our service.

The process took six days (eight, including the weekend). I felt it was worth it; some thought it wasn’t.

## The crime of all-white juries

This experience confirmed a Duke University study of a decade of criminal convictions in Florida, which found that all-white jury pools convicted Black defendants 16% more than white defendants. But when just one Black person was added to the jury pool, the gap in conviction rates nearly disappeared.

The whole experience of going into a courthouse is scary and intimidating; security checks, police everywhere, almost as if you are on trial. However, we must understand that it is our right to be on a jury and our choice whether we want to serve on a jury. We must not let this corrupt system make that decision for us.

We must remember: There is a long and ugly history of excluding Black people from juries, particularly in the South, and we haven’t figured out a way to escape this legacy.

In the case of the Scottsboro brothers in 1935, eight of nine Black youths were found guilty of raping two white women and sentenced to death. In the lynching of 14-year-old Emmett Till in 1955, Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam were acquitted by an

all-white jury of this vicious murder that they openly bragged about and later admitted to. In the 2006 case of the Jena 6, Mychal Bell, 17, was convicted by an all-white jury of aggravated battery facing 22 years.

Jury duty is not a solution to ending mass incarceration, but it may save one person, one family, one community the expense and grief of a loved one spending decades in prison. We know that Black, Brown, and poor people make up the majority of those in prison, and they are relying on us on the outside to fight for their freedom by organizing, educating and strategizing on ways of ending this system of mass incarceration by abolishing the prison-industrial complex.

Black and poor people can be and will be impartial and are the most qualified to be on any jury. The system knows this, and that is why Black, Brown, and poor people are the first to be excluded in these proceedings, by making it difficult for us to take the time because of the economic and domestic hardships we face.

I received a check for \$60 for my five days of jury service over ten years ago. Today in California, jury duty compensation remains at \$15 a day. Fifteen dollars a day is a financial hardship for poor people and people living on the edge, especially today in California. Jurors whose employers do not pay for jury duty should get paid a minimum wage from the state. Single parents needing childcare should be given vouchers to cover those expenses. Employers should not penalize employees for serving on a jury, whether for one day or several weeks. The state should provide these incentives to show how valuable your service is and how much you are needed.

The solution to mass incarceration is to abolish capitalism.

Stop locking up our people. Free our aging freedom fighters. Free our youth. Free them all! 📌

# ‘Billions for Ukraine – We say billions for Jackson’

## December 12th Movement

### Press statement

September 2, 2022

In 2022, in the richest country the world has ever seen, Jackson, the capital of Mississippi, has no water for drinking, cooking, bathing, flushing a toilet, or fighting a fire. As of this moment, the situation is predicted to continue “indefinitely.” We are calling on President Joe Biden to expeditiously authorize billions of dollars in emergency funds to address both the current humanitarian crisis triggered by the climate crisis-induced flooding and the implementation of long-term action steps to correct decades-long operational neglect of Jackson’s water systems.

The situation in Jackson is not new nor unexpected. As Jackson Mayor Antar Lumumba said, “We’ve been crying out for more than two years, saying that it’s not a matter of if our [water] systems will fail but a matter of when our systems will fail.”

Almost 17 years to the day of the Katrina man-made disaster, the citizens of predominantly Black Jackson are facing the same problem which the citizens of then-predominantly Black New Orleans had. As Jelani Cobb noted in 2005, “Katrina can be viewed as the first of a series of crises that seem to have become a referendum on Black citizenship.”

Jackson is the latest crisis in that series which now includes Flint, MI, Detroit, MI, and Newark, NJ. Clearly, the referendum has voted thumbs down on Black citizenship.

The citizens of Jackson are the victims of structural and environmental racism. And we are concerned that this latest disaster of capitalism does not become a cover to force people out of Jackson as part of the ongoing ethnic cleansing of Black people around the U.S.

What Black people have learned through these crises is that we must organize to take care of ourselves. We cannot depend upon anyone else



The December 12 Movement held a press conference in solidarity with the people of Jackson under the statue of Adam Clayton Powell outside the Harlem State Office Building named in his honor. Speakers included Roger Wareham and founding chair Viola Plummer of the December 12 Movement, State Senator Cordell Clear, Bill Dores of Struggle-La Lucha, and Jason Corley of the Cuba Si Coalition.

SLL PHOTO: BILL DORES

to do it out of benevolence or simply because it is the humane thing to do. We will join with other groups around the country to get aid to Jackson. But the investment needed to address the roots of the problem has to come from the federal government. We’ve got to bring that pressure to bear on Joe Biden.

Two years ago, President Biden

said that Black people made his election possible, that we had his back and he’ll have ours. Well, the time to have our backs is now. Send the aid to Jackson as quickly and extensively as you have been sending it to the Ukraine.

“That’s Our Blood Down There!”

No More Katrinas! 📌

# Dedan Kimathi was hanged by Queen Elizabeth

By Stephen Millies

The African freedom fighter Dedan Kimathi was hanged on Feb. 18, 1957, while Queen Elizabeth II was on her throne, head of state of Britain and the Commonwealth realms, including Kenya. As head of state, she did nothing to stop Kimathi's murder nor the execution of over a thousand other freedom fighters in Kenya.

Kimathi was a Field Marshal of Kenya's Land and Freedom Army. It was labeled the Mau Mau by the media. Being captured with a loaded revolver was enough to send Kimathi to the gallows.

The capitalist media are shedding tears over the death of Queen Elizabeth, who died in Balmoral Castle when she was 96. However, they say nothing about the monarchy's brutal colonialism and racism abroad and in Britain, a long and ruthless legacy that the Royal Family has overseen and still profits from.

Liberation fighters from Kenya, India, Ireland and other former colonies who lost their lives struggling for independence from the British government and monarchy are not remembered by the capitalist media.

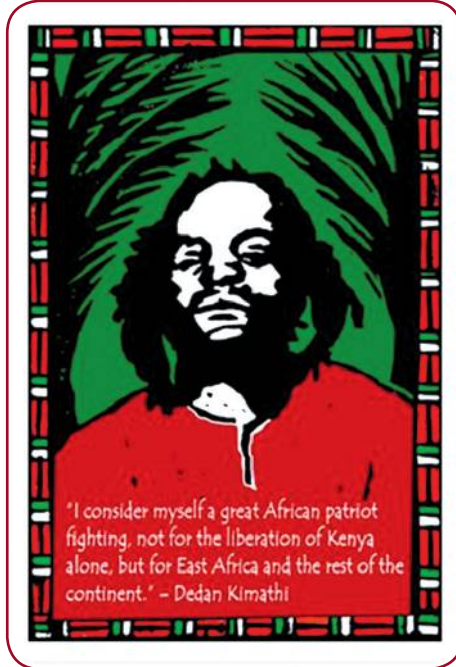
There's no mention of Dedan Kimathi being hanged in Nairobi's Kamiti Maximum Prison when he was 36.

The media helped lynch the Mau Mau in Kenya. They called Jomo Kenyatta a "terrorist." Typical was Time magazine which described one of the former Land and Freedom Army leaders as "one of the Mau Mau's bloodthirstiest killers."

Queen Victoria's stormtroopers seized Kenya in 1895. British aristocrats stole the land, with Lord Delamere alone grabbing 160,000 acres.

Africans were forced at gunpoint into "native reserves," which were modeled on Indian reservations in the United States.

Oppression sparked resistance. On May Day in 1950, the East African Trade Union Congress issued a call for independence and majority rule. These genuine labor leaders in Kenya were immediately arrested by



British Prime Minister Clement Attlee of the Labour Party.

One hundred thousand workers joined a general strike to protest. Nairobi was paralyzed for nine days. It took a mobilization of the British army and colonial police to crush this uprising.

Freedom demanded that an armed struggle be launched. Kenya's Land and Freedom Army was born.

Kenya's colonial governor, Evelyn Baring, responded by declaring a state of emergency on Oct. 20, 1952. The governor's family-controlled Barings Bank was founded in 1762 by the slave trader Francis Baring.

## Royal fascist terror

Baring ordered the colonial police to frame up Jomo Kenyatta and other independence fighters and imprison them. There was no jury.

According to Caroline Elkins' Pulitzer Prize-winning book, "Imperial Reckoning," Baring guaranteed a conviction by paying the judge a 20,000-pound bribe.

Baring hoped Kenyatta's frame-up would demoralize Africans. Instead, it ignited years of guerrilla warfare.

Mau Mau fighters liberated weapons and ammunition from the colonialist army and police. Mau Mau-supporting blacksmiths made hundreds of guns.

Britain mobilized 55,000 soldiers and cops to fight the Mau Mau. The Royal Air Force bombed guerrilla strongholds in Aberdares Forest and Kirinyaga.

Caroline Elkins estimated that the colonial forces threw 300,000 Kenyans into concentration camps and forced another million into 800 "emergency villages" built with the Africans' own slave labor.

For Africans in Kenya, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was their Hitler. Guards used Alsatian dogs to maul women inmates at the Athi River camp, and the guards themselves clubbed prisoners arriving at the Manyani camp.

Six hundred children were confined in Kamati camp alone. Almost none survived.

Prisoners labeled as "hard-core Mau Mau" were selected to bury the children. "They would be tied in bundles of six babies," recalled former inmate Helen Macharia.

Uncle Sam helped this genocide by financing Nairobi's Embakasi Airport. Now called Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, it was built by the slave labor of Mau Mau prisoners.

According to David Anderson's "Histories of the Hanged," 1,090 Africans were hanged in Kenya during this righteous uprising. Just for supplying food to guerrilla fighters — labeled "consorting" — the British settlers sent 207 people to their deaths.

A posse led by Ian Henderson, a notorious torturer of Mau Mau suspects, finally captured Field Marshal Kimathi on Oct. 21, 1956.

Henderson later spent 30 years as head of the secret police in Bahrain. But, his cruelty couldn't stop the freedom struggle in Kenya.

Twenty thousand Mau Mau guerrillas didn't die in vain. Kenya declared its independence on Dec. 12, 1963.

## Mandela was inspired

Queen Elizabeth will have a grand funeral. There was no funeral for Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi.

Kimathi was buried secretly by the British colonialists, who feared his gravesite becoming a memorial for Africans. A series of prime ministers, including Tony Blair, refused to reveal the location of Kimathi's grave.

That was cruel and inhuman for Dedan Kimathi's family and all Africans. It wasn't until 2019 that Field Marshal Kimathi's grave was discovered beneath Kamiti Maximum Prison.

Africa remembers its heroes. Kimathi's execution is commemorated, and streets are named in his honor. A statue of Dedan Kimathi was unveiled in Nairobi on Dec. 11, 2006.

When Nelson Mandela visited Kenya in July 1990, he said, "In my 27 years of imprisonment, I always saw the images of fighters such as Kimathi, China and others as candles in my long and hard war against injustice. It is an honour for any freedom fighter to pay respect to such heroes."

"China" referred to Waruhiu Itote, known as "General China." The pseudonyms that Mau Mau leaders used for security reasons were sometimes named after socialist countries. Dedan Kimathi was known as "General Russia."

In 2005, Mandela again visited Kenya and Dedan Kimathi's widow, Mukami Kimathi. "Mandela told me he is grateful for our struggles in the fight to liberate Kenya," she said. "He said his experience had taught him how painful it is to fight for independence."

Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi was avenged every time Africans seized a white-owned farm in Zimbabwe. After that, Britain and the United States put economic sanctions on Zimbabwe for daring to take back the land.

Mao Zedong wrote, "To die for the people is weightier than Mount Tai, but to work for the fascists and die for the exploiters and oppressors is lighter than a feather."

Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi's death was heavier than Mount Tai. The death of a royal parasite in a castle, not so much. 🇰🇪

# There are no homeless people in Cuba. No landlords, foreclosures, or evictions

By Sharon Black

You heard that right. No one in Cuba is living in the streets, in tents, or sleeping in cars at Walmart parking lots — scraping by without health care, regular showers, clean water, food, or even toilets.

That is not to say that there isn't a housing problem in Cuba. There is a housing shortage. Cuba is tackling building more housing for its people. This is extremely difficult because the 60-year U.S. blockade makes it impossible for Cuba to import needed materials. So there are instances where people live with relatives, and there is a need to improve existing housing. But housing is a right.

But yes, even the capitalist press admits — not a single child, family, or person is living in the street in Cuba — an island as big as the state of Tennessee or Virginia with 11.3



million people, just 90 miles from Florida.

In the U.S. homelessness is growing. Tennessee just made it a felony for homeless people to camp in parks and public property. Miami considered a plan to move unhoused people to a city-sponsored encampment on Virginia Key — next to a sewer wastewater treatment plant and away from services. The Los Angeles City Council has begun bans.

There are now an estimated 1.5 million unhoused people in the



A view of homes on a street in Trinidad, Cuba.

wealthiest capitalist country in the world. Another 6.4 million face eviction as rents have skyrocketed.

Interestingly, it isn't that there isn't enough housing. Unlike Cuba, there are plenty of vacant houses and apartments, many of them

brand new. The problem is the opposite of Cuba. People cannot afford sky-high rents and mortgages. If you don't have the money and landlords can't make a profit, then they'd rather have housing lie vacant.

And that should be a crime. 🇰🇪

# The Queen's diamonds. Why has the monarchy survived?

By Lallan Schoenstein

“The Queen is dead. Long live the King.” On Sept. 8, Buckingham Palace announced the death of Queen Elizabeth II and the succession of the Prince of Wales, now King Charles III.

During the official coronation ceremony, Charles, currently titled Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester, Duke of Cornwall, Duke of Rothesay, Earl of Carrick and Baron Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, and Prince and Great Steward of Scotland, will gain a new title by proclaiming himself the King and the Head of the British Commonwealth.

## The English rebellions

The first successful British revolt against feudal relations and the monarchy occurred in a civil war from 1642 to 1660. King Charles I was executed by the authority of Parliament in 1649.

Although the monarchy was restored under Charles II in 1660, the gains made by the revolutionary movement were solidified under parliamentary law.

In 1668, a constitutional monarchy was established in a parliamentary reform process. New laws broke down the old power relations of the monarchy. The English feudal state was overthrown and became supplanted by the rule of an emerging capitalist class.

According to Marxist historian Christopher Hill: “The Civil War was a class war in which the despotism of Charles I was defended by the reactionary forces of the established Church and conservative landlords, and on the other side stood the trading and industrial classes in town and countryside ... the yeomen and progressive gentry, and ... wider masses of the population whenever they were able by free discussion to understand what the struggle was really about.”

The guild democracy movement of the period won its greatest successes among London's transport workers, most notably the Thames Watermen, who democratized their company in 1641–43.

And with the outbreak of the civil war in 1642, rural communities began to seize timber and other resources on the estates of royalists, Catholics, the Royal Family, and the church hierarchy. As a result, some communities improved their conditions of tenure on such estates.

In 1852 Karl Marx wrote: “The Tories in England had long imagined that they were enthusiastic about the monarchy, the church, and beauties of the old English Constitution until the day of danger wrung from them the confession that they are enthusiastic only about ground rent.”

The 17th-century English revolution preceded the French revolution and later struggles that overturned feudal relations across Europe.

In most instances, the old ruling class managed to hold on to its large land holdings and privileges of wealth while adapting to the new system of capitalist state power.

Property relations among this class over generations have obliged them to intermarry. The British monarchy is intimately related to all

the monarchies across Europe.

The House of Windsor began in 1917 when the family changed its name from the German “Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.” Queen Elizabeth's grandmother Queen Mary was born a royal princess of the German Duchy of Teck.

Former British PM Boris Johnson said, “I would have been terribly proud just to have been related to the German King, but I can't hide it from you that even in our common European home, I am particularly thrilled to have some British Royal ancestry as well.” Johnson is a descendant of Prince Paul Von Wurttemberg.

In 1947, Queen Elizabeth became engaged to Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark. Philip and his family were exiled from Greece during his childhood, so he studied in France and Germany before serving in the British Royal Navy.

Philip's mother, Princess Alice of Battenberg, was Queen Victoria's great-granddaughter. She gave him a diamond tiara that could be dismantled and used to create an engagement ring fit for a queen.

The diamonds come from the Romanov dynasty. His mother had been given the tiara on her wedding day by Tsar Nicholas II and Tsarina Alexandra of Russia, the last rulers of the Russian Empire, to whom she was distantly related.

## Vast land holdings

The Wall Street Journal reported on Dec. 9, 2021, that each one of the royal couple held control over a billion dollars in real estate, and that is just the property that can be valued. The Journal's headline reads: “The Billion-Dollar Property Portfolios of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Charles.”

Here is the extensive real estate that they list.

The property holdings include castles, palaces, country houses, townhouses, city apartments, cottages, and farmhouses.

- Clarence House, London;
- Buckingham Palace, London;
- Windsor Castle, Berkshire;
- Sandringham Estate, Norfolk;
- Highgrove House, Gloucestershire;
- Hillsborough Castle, Northern Ireland;
- Balmoral Castle, Aberdeenshire, Scotland;
- Palace of Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh, Scotland;
- Highgrove Estate, Cornwall.



Prince Charles's private estate, the Duchy of Cornwall, has vast land holdings, including Poundbury, a newly-built village on the outskirts of Dorchester, 125 miles southwest of London.

In Elizabeth's crown and scepter are shards of ‘The Great Star of Africa’ diamond. The 530-carat stone was stolen from South Africa in 1905 and is worth \$400 million.



The title of Duke of Cornwall was first established by King Edward III in 1337 to ensure his dominion over Cornwall. The duchy and the title have been passed down to the heir to the throne ever since. Prince William is next in line to become Duke of Cornwall.

The property holdings in Cornwall are vast. They include 130,125 acres of farmland, forests, coastline, and residential and commercial properties. In addition to Highgrove, the estate includes a large section of the Isles of Scilly, an archipelago of 200 islands off the coast of the English county of Cornwall, where Prince Charles has a portfolio of holiday cottages.

Other palaces, castles, and properties include:

- Llwynywermod, Carmarthenshire, Wales;
- Viscri property in Romania;
- and Zalanpatak property in Romania.

## The Royal blind trust

Stu Allen, a former diplomat at the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, reported that: “The Queen owns land privately in the United States and Canada, though not in her capacity as Sovereign. She owns a horse farm in Kentucky and is believed to own a prime Park Avenue estate in New York City. Details of ownership and much of her personal wealth are held in what is known as a blind trust.”

This blind trust protects the queen's private property should the British monarchy be abolished, and the property of the Crown Estates revert to public ownership.

Defending private property and class relations is intrinsic to capitalist rule. Despite revelations of the corrupt character of the Royal Family, they have been allowed to maintain the illusion of a religious-like institution with all the accompanying pageantry and pomp.

The Queen has been presented as a mother-like figurehead with no real power. That is far from the truth. She has had special consultation allowances regarding Freedom of Information requests to protect the reputation of the Royal household.

Despite this, scandals still manage to leak out. For example, in 2015, the British Guardian newspaper released the “Black Spider Papers,” 27 memos issued by Prince Charles in 2004 and 2005 and released only after the Guardian won its long freedom of information fight with the government. Prince Charles' memos revealed extensive efforts to influence government policy, including action to expand armaments for British troops fighting in Iraq.

The Queen had numerous powers which could be used against the working class. The Queen was the head of the British state. All bills require the monarch's signature before they can become law. She is responsible for dissolving parliament; she can call early elections; she swears in the Prime Minister. Private meetings are held weekly between the Queen and the Prime Minister.

The pro-monarchy Telegraph reported that senior royals had used their powers to impede the passage of at least 39 Bills Awaiting Royal Assent over the last 30 years. There is also significant evidence, supported by a BBC documentary “The Plot Against Harold Wilson” and other media reports, of a threat to use the monarch's powers to overthrow left-leaning Prime Minister Harold Wilson in the 1960s.

David Cameron asked the Queen to intervene publicly to help prevent the success of the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum. The Guardian reported that the Queen made a statement asking voters to “think very carefully” before voting, aiming to suggest the decision was “full of foreboding.”

Can the Queen's descendants hold on to centuries of looted wealth and retain ownership of prime real estate all around the world, allowing them untold power? [📄](#)

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# Their debts and ours

By Stephen Millies

The entire student loan program amounts to loan sharking. Forty-five million people owe \$1.7 trillion. Every cent should be wiped off the books.

The compound interest collected by the banksters is strangling millions. People in their fifties and older are still trying to pay off their loans.

Four years after graduation, Black college graduates owe almost twice as much as white graduates.

President Biden's loan forgiveness program may help millions. But, unfortunately, it's still modest and not enough.

That didn't prevent The Wall Street Journal from denouncing it as a "coup." Trying to get blood out of a stone has always been a capitalist specialty.

Biden was forced to act despite his rotten record in Congress. As a senator from the State of DuPont — also known as Delaware — he helped push through the misnamed 2005 "Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act."

It prohibited anyone from getting their student loan debt wiped clean by filing bankruptcy.

Also rooting for this bill were the plastic loan sharks. Delaware is the country's credit card capital because it allows these outfits to charge the highest interest rates.

While they want to prevent working and poor people from using bankruptcy laws, capitalists love bankruptcies. Donald Trump filed for bankruptcy six times.

If you owe a bank a few thousand

dollars and can't pay it, you have a problem. When billionaires owe billions, the banks have a problem.

As Trump bragged to CBS News anchor Norah O'Donnell, "I'm the king of debt." He claimed to have told his lenders, "I'm going to give you back half."

His daddy's record of stiffing creditors didn't prevent Donald Trump, Jr., from saying student loan forgiveness results in "nurturing incompetence and irresponsible behavior while penalizing hard work and fiscal responsibility."

When has any member of Trump's family been engaged in hard work?

## Making college unaffordable

Just as hypocritical are members of Congress. Super right-winger Majorie Taylor Greene from Georgia called forgiving student debt "completely unfair." She had \$183,504 in Paycheck Protection Program loans written off.

Pennsylvania Rep. Mike Kelly also attacked canceling student debt. Kelly had his \$987,237 PPP loan canceled.

Possibly more repulsive was Indiana Rep. Jim Banks. He responded to the news by tweeting, "Student loan forgiveness undermines one of our military's greatest recruitment tools at a time of dangerously low enlistments."

According to Banks, poor people should be cannon fodder for Big Oil instead of going to college.

One of the biggest reasons for the huge student debt is skyrocketing tuition. Capitalists don't want poor people in college.

The City University of New York

was free for more than a century when its enrollment was more than 90% white. Now when a majority of its students are people of color, tuition is \$7,510 per semester.

The University of California system has increased tuition 20 times since the 1970s.

Nobody in socialist Cuba has to pay tuition or medical bills. Education and health care are considered to be human rights in Cuba.

Meanwhile, medical debts are the biggest reason for personal bankruptcies in the United States. People fighting cancer or other diseases shouldn't have to worry about whether they can pay both their hospital and landlord.

## An ancient curse

For thousands of years, moneylenders have been ripping-off poor people. Many of the class struggles in the ancient world were between creditors and debtors.

In societies divided between rich and poor, agriculture has been intertwined with money lending for thousands of years. The whole nature of farming — where months separate harvests — puts the agricultural producer at the mercy of the usurer.

Almost 3,800 years ago in Babylon (not the town on Long Island, New York), the Code of Hammurabi had to protect farmers from greedy moneylenders. It proclaimed if a "storm wipes out the grain or the harvest fails, or the grain does not grow for

lack of water, in that year he need not give his creditor any grain in payment."

In the Bible, Deuteronomy 15 proclaims, "At the end of every seven years, you must cancel debts." That's a good program today.

The laws of Solon were an attempt to resolve this conflict in Athens over 2,500 years ago.

A debtors' revolt occurred in Rome during the very first years of the republic. The Roman historian Livy wrote about how this led within two years to the "secession of the plebeians."

The plebeians left the city and camped out on the "sacred mount." It may have been the first recorded general strike in history.

The "secession" only ended when the wealthy patricians agreed to the appointment of "tribunes of the people," which had a veto over the consuls.

We need thousands of people's tribunes to tell the banksters to go to hell. We'll make the banks pay reparations and cancel the student loans. 📌



# Battle line drawn with Nazi forces after 2014

Continued from page 1

ing that was now more cinder block pieces than structure. Two wires strewn across our path warned us not to go any further, since that area was not partially cleared of unexploded shells or mines.

Against the advice of our guide, a very brave journalist from the news service Izvestia, continued walking and laying a path for us. Why would he take such a risk? Because, he said, he felt it was important for us to see up close the monument with the names of those from this and nearby villages of both Ukrainian and Russian Soviet soldiers killed fighting the Nazi threat during World War II — so we could appreciate the respect these residents had for their relatives who fought fascists. And to appreciate their suffering in being targeted by those who adhere to that same fascist ideology.

My comrades insisted they walk in front of me, following the soldier from the LPM. Then it hit me hard. From our friends in Borotba to the guides from the Lugansk People's Militia and brave journalists dedicated to telling the truth — they were all here assisting me, putting their bodies on the line to keep me safe, because they believed the message I would relay back to the U.S. was that important.

I truly wish the U.S. anti-war movement that has so cynically and



John Parker walking through a Ukrainian bunker west of Sokilnyky.

arrogantly dismissed any facts or testimony coming from the people in Lugansk and Donetsk, who refuse to acknowledge their experiences or even existence, could feel just one tenth of what I felt in that moment.

When we reached the monument, carefully, the words with the hundreds of names of buried soldiers read: "Your Heroism is Immortal and Your Glory is Eternal."

## Sister towns separated by war

The once Ukrainian-held territory in and around Krymske, just west of us, included areas within eyeshot of the LPR-held Sokilnyky village. In 2014 almost 2,000 people lived in Krymske, and 1,000 lived in Sokilnyky. They lie about five minutes from each other by car.

In fact, the communities were very close. One of the Izvestia reporters with us wrote: "If a guy from Krymske married a girl from

Sokilnyky, the wedding was played in two villages at once." But after the battles in 2014 and by 2015, the two communities remained separated with blocks of concrete and barbed wire.

After passing the town of Sokilnyky, we drove about a quarter mile to where the Ukrainian military installed bunkers and

barracks to target that village, using these places to launch missiles and those 122 mm-shells against the LPR-held territories, even in the years when civilians were still there.

The south side of this "Bitter Street" had been swept for mines but the north side was not, so to remain relatively safe we stayed on the south side. On the ground was strewn Kalashnikov 5.45 caliber bullets and casings leading into an eight-foot dugout to tunnels of dirt and darkness protected by sandbags from retaliatory fire.

The Ukrainian forces were routed after the February operation by the Russians and the LPM, so undoubtedly gunfire was exchanged. But even if there was activity targeting this compound in response to shellings, it lies over a quarter-mile from 99% of the homes in the Krymske village.

In other words, the civilian popu-

lation living in Krymske village was only victimized by the Azov, Aidar or Right Sector fascist regiments leading the Ukrainian military occupation there. This is according to the residents we spoke to, who also verified that those leading these soldiers were wearing Nazi regiment colors and fascist symbols.

Just about 100 feet down the road from the bunker, taking us into the eastern edge of Krymske, we observed on the side of the road a left-over decoy that had been used to frighten the Lugansk militia forces, mimicking a Swedish surface-to-air missile. The threat would have been believable since those real missiles and other military aid totalling \$102 million were promised to Ukraine from Sweden on June 2 — this on top of the other anti-armor weaponry already delivered.

## Nazi symbols

Due to the actual weapons present at that moment, the most common phrase I heard observing these sites was again, "Don't step there" — not only because of the unexploded shells on this side of the river, but also because the Ukrainian military would "sow" the area with mines that couldn't be seen in the grass.

We then drove a few feet further to a complex that was part of a tuberculosis clinic. The Ukrainian forces ret-

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# In memory of Evgeny Golyshkin: The struggle suffered an irreparable loss

By Borotba

Sept. 1 — We regret to inform you that one of the founders of Borotba (Struggle), Evgeny Golyshkin, died as a result of a shell shock received during the hostilities. Evgeny was a staunch communist and participated in the anti-fascist struggle from a young age. The Komsomol and the Communist Party of Ukraine, the Lukyanovsky Antifa-Patrol, the Kottovsky Red Guard, and then Borotba — these are the stages of the political path that our comrade traveled.

Evgeny was a red skinhead and an ideological Marxist. Few could compete with him either in hand-to-hand combat or in the field of communist theory. His sense of humor and optimism always supported his comrades in the struggle, and

younger comrades-in-arms envied Evgeny's inexhaustible energy.

We believe that the hundreds of mass protests organized by Evgeny Golyshkin will forever remain in the history of the left movement of Ukraine, and his armed struggle in the ranks of the Ukrainian Red Army, and then the 9th Regiment of the Donetsk People's Republic Marine Corps, will go down in the history of the liberation of Donbass.

Evgeny had specific party assignments, which he carried out with honor, even after a bullet wound in Mariupol and a concussion near Avdiivka. One of them was the maintenance of party information resources, so in the near future some of our platforms may be intermittent. Also, Evgeny was responsible for Borotba cells in the still-oc-

cupied territories of Ukraine, which perform an important function in our struggle.

Evgeny will forever remain in our memory as a true friend and reliable comrade. However, he is alive not only in our memory, but also in his artistic work, to which he devoted a certain period of his life, writing and performing an informal anthem of the Communist Party, as well as compositions by the "Ebalance" music group, revealing the acute social topics of modern Ukraine.

We express our sincere condolences to Evgeny's father and sister, as well as to all comrades and friends who are experiencing the pain of his loss today.

However, we promise that we will continue the work to which Comrade Golyshkin devoted his whole life.



**The struggle continues!  
No pasaran!**

Translated by Melinda Butterfield  
Source: Borotba.su

## Battle line drawn with Nazi forces after 2014

Continued from page 6

rofitted this clinic for war by evicting the patients and healthcare staff. In one of the buildings, the Ukrainian soldiers felt comfortable enough to scrawl in large letters the word representing a fascist soccer team in Ukraine, the ULTRAS — a team, we were told by one of the journalists with us, that is owned by an oligarch who funds Nazi regiments.

Something that seemed out of place, given the graffiti praising Nazi symbols and organizations, was a letter shaped as a heart with the colors of the Ukrainian flag from a child thanking these Nazi-led Ukrainian forces for keeping them safe. That is not surprising, since the Azov Battalion set up children's "educational" facilities. According to a Time article from January 7, 2021, the battalion even has an entire building loaned to them by the Zelensky government in Kiev that serves such a purpose.

In addition to general misinformation passed on in their libraries, this facility raises funds by selling key chains, t-shirts and other items adorned with swastikas and other Nazi symbols. Again, this building is on loan from the Ukrainian government, supporting what goes on there.

In another building here, 122-mm shells were stacked on top of each other. Their presence in this room seemed to be a testament to the threat against humanity symbolically displayed over half of one of the walls with drawings of a swastika and a Black Sun or Sonnenrad.

It should be noted that this Azov identifier is the same symbol used by the white supremacist shooter who recently targeted Black shoppers in Buffalo, New York. He was inspired by a white supremacist in New Zealand who murdered 51 Muslim worshippers in two mosques there. That New Zealand killer said he was in contact with the Azov Battalion and planned to go to Ukraine for military training.

As shocking as this is, it shouldn't be too surprising that young people are falling into the hands of these unchecked fascist movements. In the 2021 report "Like, Share, Re-



Sweden's AT4 anti-armor weapon.

cruit: How a White-Supremacist Militia Uses Facebook to Radicalize and Train New Members," Time explains how Azov's use of Facebook's algorithm drives white supremacists and disaffected youth toward them, allowing Azov exponential visibility growth.

Just a few steps away, another building turned military bunker contained lookout holes punched through the walls, with coordinates written in pen giving targeting coordinates for the LPM positions and civilians when they lived there. On another wall the words "No One But Us" were written in Ukrainian in blue and yellow.

### Military-industrial profits

We were accompanied by more than one camera crew with journalists representing various media from Ukraine and Russia. During our inspection of this site, one of the journalists from a Russian news agency found a container that once held explosive materials. This object, the journalist said, came from either the U.S. or a Western European country.

Of course, this is not surprising given that U.S. military aid to Ukraine, as reported in the May 20 New York Times, amounts to more money than given in any kind of aid to any country in the last decade. "It is roughly two times the amount given in 2011 to Afghanistan, the largest U.S. foreign aid recipient until now," reported the Times.

The U.S. had already surpassed the entire defense budget of Russia back in May. Perhaps the reason for this unprecedented funding, in addition to world domination, also has to do with profits. Business Insider reported May 23: "One of the largest defense contractors in the na-



SLL PHOTO: JOHN PARKER

A decoy surface-to-air missile weapon by a bunker near Sokilnyky.

tion donated to nearly 150 members of Congress as they debated Ukraine military aid."

On May 3, President Joe Biden went to Lockheed Martin's Pike County Operations facility in Troy, Alabama, and did a photo op at the Javelin missile production facility. And the top member of Congress in charge of the military budget, Democrat Adam Smith from Washington state, is also the top recipient of money from the weapons makers.

In its 2010 Citizens United decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that corporations can spend unlimited amounts on elections. When the selfish ambitions of the bought-and-paid-for politicians coincide with the goals of the ruling class, the sky isn't even the limit. The death and fear created are of no consequence to them.

Speaking of fear, while exploring this hospital complex I heard a constant buzzing, sounding like a flying bee with a megaphone. When I asked what that sound was, I was told it was from a drone overhead. This caused me some concern, knowing that in April the U.S. had been training Ukrainian soldiers in the use of a very advanced drone called the Switchblade Drone 600.

By that month, two of the lethal aid packages for Ukraine of over \$1 billion included those drones, capable of flying 24 miles. That distance was well within the area between us and the current Ukrainian positions. In fact, I could see with my naked eyes the plume of smoke from recent

targets hit by either the Ukrainian or Russian and Lugansk forces. And these drones carry warheads that can take out tanks.

With the recent memory of Ukrainian forces bombing an apartment building near the shelter where we were conducting interviews in Rubizhne, I felt a bit uneasy about that noise overhead and was therefore happy when we later returned to the cars to continue on our way.

As we continued to Krymske, the sight of almost all of the homes intact was a startling comparison to Sokilnyky. Although a relatively small percentage of those homes are damaged, according to our LPM guide, it was due to fighting that occurred in 2014, when they were also being shelled by the Ukrainian military.

Even if those homes destroyed in 2014 were mistakenly said to come from the more recent hostilities, the comparison of the two villages makes it clear that neither the LPM forces during the Minsk Agreements to the present time, nor the Russian military that came in February, carried out any bombing campaigns against Krymske.

### 'Everything Zelensky says is a lie'

When we arrived in Krymske there were a few children running around and playing — finally.

A stark difference from the situation at the Rubizhne shelter, where kids could not play for any significant length of time due to their proximity to the front lines and therefore within reach of the Ukrainian delivery of shells.

Now, the only deliveries being made is that of food and other humanitarian aid coming from the city of Lugansk. It is received at the former village council building.

With the exception of one person, all the residents I interviewed were very glad about the presence of Russian soldiers and the Lugansk People's Militia and the absence of the Ukrainian military.

Local resident Irina said: "In 2014, the Nazi Aidar and Right Sector battalions came to us. They entered our houses and fired over our heads."

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# Battle line drawn with Nazi forces after 2014

Continued from page 7

One person did complain about the military presence. He was upset with the sentencing of his son by the Lugansk People's Militia. His son was accused of collaborating with the Ukrainian troops. In spite of that, he still desired the protection of the military forces here now.

I was able to catch up to one of those children running around the overgrown playground, whose grass had not been cut during the Ukrainian occupation.

Eleven-year-old Ivan told me his family left in 2014, when the Ukrainian military began attacking civilians here. "The windows in our house shattered, but I stayed asleep and my mom had to wake me up. Then we left." As he spoke I saw him looking at a dog nearby. When I told him about my dogs and asked him if he had any pets, he sadly said his dog had to be left behind.

On this day, however, he seemed happy. He said he was glad to be back since this is where his grandparents live as well. I asked him what he studies in school and he said math and science, but now school is only open two days per week.

After talking about his favorite exercise and sports – basketball and football (soccer) – I moved on to more serious topics. I told him how the newspapers and TV news in the U.S. describe the Russians as hurting the people of Ukraine and that the Ukrainian government and its military are protecting people. "What do you think?" I asked.

He told me he strongly disagreed. "It is completely untrue that Russia attacks peaceful people. Russia protects civilians and their interests. Everything Zelensky says is a lie because when he says that this is a Russian occupation it is completely untrue, it is completely a lie, Russia protects civilians."

I figured that was enough war talk for a child and I'd give him a break and go back to my previous challenge to race him to the edge of the building. But instead of wanting to lighten the conversation or go play like most children his age in the U.S., he wanted to give some advice to the Ukrainian military and Zelensky: "Now the Ukrainian forces hide in Donetsk, but it will be better if they give up, because the peace will come sooner and we can repair our cities."

After thanking him for helping me get the message to people in the U.S., he said, "Yes, I told you because I understand that my speech can make a little influence on people in the world and maybe peace will come more quickly here."

Although they may run around in a playground, when war is present children are forced to ponder things they should not have to. But when war comes knocking at their door – or shattering their windows – they have no choice.

## Laughter and solidarity

I then approached a few elderly women sitting on a bench. I asked about the situation here under Ukrainian military occupation. They all described the military as being led by the Aidar Battalion, which they could tell by the colors of their patches and Nazi symbols they wore.

They said that, although not all of the soldiers were Nazis, their lead-

ership was. "They would make them get down on their knees and hit and humiliate them," said one of the women about the treatment of rank-and-file soldiers who weren't Nazis by their superior officers. They all assumed this was designed to indoctrinate them.

When I asked one woman what it was like during the occupation, her eyes quickly darted down and her head gestured "no." This made me wonder how horrible an experience she may have had, given the documented war crimes of the Aidar Battalion during this conflict, especially against women. So out of compassion for her I dared not ask again. If they humiliated their own troops, what might they have done to these civilians?

When I asked the women what they thought about people in the U.S. who send money to the Ukrainian government in the belief that they are protecting them from the Russians, one exclaimed: "Duratskiy!" A few of the definitions for that Russian word are "foolish," "fatuous" and "idiotic."

When Alexey told me it meant "stupid" and I repeated it in Russian, they all started laughing – first shyly, then out loud when they saw I joined them. I was glad our shared laughter communicated better than words my solidarity with their struggles here today.

The last interview in Krymske was with a member of the Communist Party. He explained the situation in 2014, when the people here demanded their governor reject the coup government in Kiev. But, he said, the governor sided with the coup and left.

After we talked, he walked me to an area where two monuments commemorated all of the people from the village who were killed fighting the Nazis during World War II and another honoring the soldiers who were not from that village, but died there fighting the German fascist military. This individual said he was very thankful that the Ukrainian occupiers did not destroy these two monuments like they had done in other parts of the Lugansk region.

This visit to Krymske was very inspiring. From the determination and wit of the women on the bench, to the 11-year-old willing to take time out from the playground for important matters, to the passion of the communist who was so proud of the monuments with names of his own family members inscribed on one of them – and all of this community's unceasing commitment to fight fascism if it rises here once again.

It is also clear that here the military that is despised is the Ukrainian one. When we first arrived, we noticed people walking around as if life was normal – although it is not. But now, for the remaining residents in Krymske – no longer threatened by the Ukrainian soldiers – the cessation of the worst horrors of war and occupation allows them to take a breath.

## Fire in the sky

The day before we visited Krymske, Alexey Albu and Evgeniy Miroshnichenko, a member of the Youth Parliament under the State Duma of Russia, invited me on a tour of Lugansk, the capital city of the LPR. We observed the monuments and also met with officials from the Lugansk city administration. We were, however, momentarily interrupted by the sight of smoke in the sky, coming

from either a drone or rocket that had been intercepted by a Russian missile.

As we walked further I saw a playground and happier thoughts took over.

Playgrounds are wonderful. They are a place where children go to socialize and spend their energy with such excitement and joy. However, given the proximity of shellings or the very recent liberation of areas once occupied by the Ukrainian military, the priorities of food and shelter forced a lack of maintenance in those areas.

However, there in the city of Lugansk, which had been mostly free of attack for some time, I saw a beautiful playground full of children on the swings and slides and varied apparatus designed for the sole purpose of making joyful noises.

... But what I had just seen threatening the skies above this well-attended and most precious sanctuary was a killer of children – thankfully destroyed, this time. What would have happened to this playground had the Ukrainian military, now armed with even more sophisticated weaponry thanks to the Biden Administration and every other complicit politician, been successful?

The new reality we face as activists and members of organizations promoting social justice and peace is that the propaganda of the ruling class has become so capable, so well-funded, so fluid in its use of social media and Hollywood, that most, including many in the movement for social justice, are not even aware of its effects in molding our own opinions and distorting our sense of reality.

This three-part series began solely as an attempt to expose the fact that the war in Ukraine was manufactured to further the expansion of U.S.-led NATO, targeting Russia and China. But perhaps the more important story is how the State Department and its right hand – the corporate media – are today able to so effectively use false information manufactured in such a consistent and frequent manner and build on those past prejudices against Russian people.

The political left movement in the U.S. and Europe has a big problem that comes from a cultural disease developed especially by U.S. capitalism's history of racism. Not only is there class bias, but the added dehumanization with all its arrogant trappings intrinsic to the system of racism carries over to anyone deemed as "the other."

In the U.S., the other is usually anyone who is non-white and is therefore not taken as seriously, not as believable, not as legitimate and reliable a source of information and definitely not due as much empathy. This is carried over even to other white people deemed as the other. And we are told by the U.S. government who the latest other is – sometimes it's the Iraqis and their leaders, or it's the Syrians and their leadership, or the Libyans and their leadership. In spite of the fact that information coming from the U.S. corporate media during a U.S. war drive is consistently false – from the Lusitania incident in 1915 or the Gulf of Tonkin lie pushing the U.S. into war with Vietnam or the lies pushing war in Iraq and Libya – we are supposed to accept it as gospel and reject all information coming from the official or unofficial sources



SLL PHOTO: JOHN PARKER

Playground in Lugansk city.

from the latest target of U.S. imperialism.

This is why the sources of information coming directly from white supremacist neo-Nazi military organizations in Ukraine is more trusted than those in the Donbass region – because the people of Donbass, in Lugansk and Donetsk, are the other.

My friends from Borotba, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, the United Communist Party – the other; the 82-year-old woman from the shelter in Rubizne, who was crying over the bombing of her home by Ukrainian tanks and the loss of all her belongings; and the women in Krymskoye who identified the Right Sector and Aidar Battalion as their occupiers and torturers; the entire political and religious leadership in Lugansk; the Lugansk People's Militia members – all the other.

And even to much of the "left" in the U.S. and Western Europe, who refused to even acknowledge their existence, they are deserving of neither an ear nor a heart for empathy.

Is the history of the Soviet Union or Russia before this current conflict filled with the intentional targeting of civilians in any degree close to that of the U.S. military and NATO?

Did the Soviet Union yesterday, or Russia today, participate in European and U.S. colonialism or neocolonialism, or have a worldwide troop deployment and military bases anywhere near that of the U.S. or NATO?

Some will say that Russia is not the Soviet Union and now it's capitalist. Well, so are Finland and Sweden. But because years of Cold War propaganda did not target the integrity of the people of Finland and Sweden, folks see them in a different light – even though those governments said nothing about the NATO expansion for the past 20 years that caused this crisis and are now enabling and actively expanding the most belligerent military alliance in history at this critical and dangerous moment in time.

Accusations that are today thrown against Russia, if thrown against their people or soldiers, would not be so easily believed, even though the people of Sweden and Finland did not play the deciding role in defeating fascism in World War II that the people of Russia heroically played.

Hopefully this information countering the lies of the ruling class will help in refocusing our attention on the reality that the U.S. and its imperialist allies are driving us not towards fighting runaway inflation that threatens to impoverish us all, and not towards solutions stopping life-threatening climate change, but are instead driving us towards World War III. And that's a very bad thing.

So let's refocus, quickly. 📌



# Prisoners for profit: from the Kononovich brothers to U.S. jails

By John Parker

Based on remarks given at “Free the Kononovich Brothers International Campaign Meeting” on Aug. 25, Mikhail and Alexander Kononovich are leaders of the Leninist Communist Youth Union of Ukraine. They were among hundreds of political opponents of the Ukrainian regime jailed this year and thousands since the 2014 U.S.-backed coup.

On July 18, Ukrainian political prisoner and ethnic Belarusian Mikhail Kononovich called out the Belarusian opposition and its leadership for talking about political prisoners in Belarus, but not mentioning Belarusians in prisons in Ukraine.

That hypocrisy he exposes is very similar to those human rights advocates who selectively allege atrocities by any enemy of U.S. imperialism, but fail to mention a word about Israeli genocide against the Palestinian people, funded by the U.S., or the bombing of Somalia by the U.S. Not a care for those people, nor the political prisoners in the U.S. like Indigenous leader Leonard Peltier or Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Many of these political prisoners in the U.S., like the Kononovich brothers, endure daily torture and are there simply because they challenged the imperialist policies of the U.S. creating war, racism and poverty.

Almost all prisoners in the U.S. are political prisoners. Most wound up there due to economic desperation caused by capitalism and others for their political activism which threatens the hold of the capitalist ruling class over our working class.

And like the Kononovich brothers, they also face torture.

The United Nations states that solitary confinement for more than 13 days constitutes torture and is a violation of international law.

Almost 50,000 prisoners are being held in prolonged solitary confinement in U.S. prisons. They remain in cells the size of parking spaces. Six thousand prisoners were in isolation for over a year, and 1,000 of those have been in solitary confinement without the touch, smell or conversation with another human being for a decade or longer.

Where are the human rights advo-

cates who so conveniently use their criticism against the latest country targeted by U.S. imperialism, yet never say a word about this torture and racism faced by so many in the U.S.?

There’s much talk by those so-called human rights advocates about the lack of democracy, they say, in Russia and China. The timing of those attacks against those countries also conveniently aligns with the U.S. drive towards World War III, using Ukraine and Taiwan as proxies.

Well, let’s talk about democracy as it relates to the situation with the Kononovich brothers’ imprisonment. How many in Ukraine are being imprisoned simply for being socialist or communist and how large has the prison population grown there? These human rights hypocrites do not inquire about that.

## USA, a prison house of nations

The U.S. is supposed to be the greatest democracy, so its prison population must be the smallest – correct?

The fact is that the percentage of those in prison in the U.S. is five times the rate of that in China and twice the rate in Russia. It’s actually the highest number in the world, in both percentage of population and actual numbers – some 2.1 million in 2020.

Just as the budgets for Ukrainian security and military forces like the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) have increased exponentially due to U.S. aid, in the last 40 years police budgets in the U.S. have tripled and they are also the recipients of military weaponry, including artillery, to be used against local communities.

And, as in Ukraine today, who is targeted for incarceration in the U.S. is a reflection of the ideology of fascism and white supremacy.

The likelihood of a Black person born in 2001, for example, to be incarcerated in the U.S. is six times that of a white person. One in three Black men born in that year will be incarcerated in their lifetime.

This increased rate of incarceration was also driven by the lucrative contracts for private prisons, which incentivize judges to pass longer sentences and whose Wall Street stocks are seen as good investments.

The war in Ukraine is also driven by U.S. imperialism’s insatiable appetite for profit.

In just the first three months of 2022, the five biggest oil companies made \$35 billion in profits.

U.S. imperialism is profiting off of the war, especially the private military contractors like Lockheed Martin.

In the May 2022 aid package for Ukraine, up to \$20 billion was made available for U.S. weapons manufacturers.

How did that happen? Well, while the Congress was debating this package in April, military supplier Lockheed sent over \$200,000 in donations, right then, to 150 members of Congress.

Undoubtedly, this allegiance to profit and the \$30 trillion deficit the U.S. now holds will continue to eat into the social needs of working and poor people in the U.S. We, like the working and poor people in Europe, will be asked to sacrifice until we have no more to give.

But before that happens, people will, and are, beginning to revolt.

## Sacrificed for profits

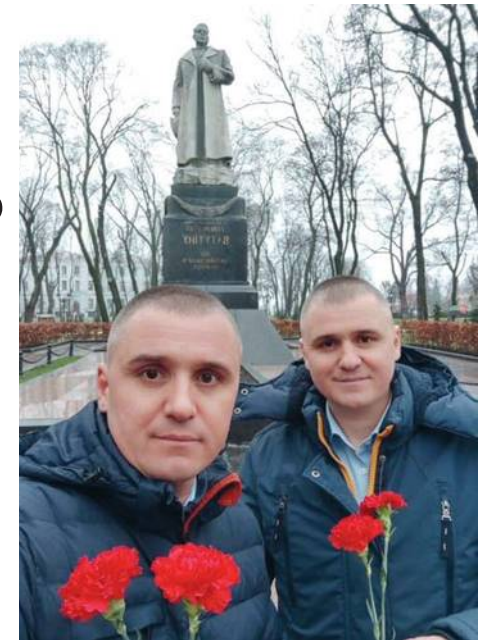
The economic situation for the people of Ukraine follows this path of an economy being sacrificed for oligarchs and the needs of U.S. imperialism. This requires repression by the ruling class to keep people from fighting back.

That’s why the U.S. began supporting Nazis in Ukraine even before the Euromaidan coup in 2014 – to prepare the extralegal military forces.

The SBU kidnaps and assaults leftists in Ukraine with the participation of the Nazi Avov Battalion.

This is similar to how the U.S. security and police forces work hand in hand with white supremacist groups. The number of white supremacist gangs in police departments in the U.S. is well-documented. However, it doesn’t stop at the local level.

The FBI and federal government collude with white supremacist groups by refusing to put them on the terrorist list, which could effectively shut down their activity in the U.S. Like the Ukrainian Nazis who are being paid well with U.S. weaponry, training and dollars, the U.S. is building its reserve extra-judicial army to meet the resistance of people in this country, who are getting



Mikhail and Alexander Kononovich

extremely frustrated by the lack of food, gas, healthcare and housing they can afford.

The latest increase in the military aid to Ukraine that was announced yesterday – a \$3-billion package that will push total U.S. aid well past the annual budgets of at least eight federal programs, including the entire judicial branch – exacerbates their desperation and poverty.

Working people of Europe are also frustrated as they watch their economic conditions deteriorate further due to their government leaders’ allegiance to U.S. imperialism.

This is why international solidarity is so important. Our movement should use that justified frustration and its exposure of the bankruptcy of aligning with U.S. imperialism. This exposure will help build solidarity with our international family of workers across the globe.

And we can use the example of the Kononovich brothers who, during one of their appearances at trial, wore shirts in solidarity with Cuba, which is also fighting the deadly sanctions and embargoes of U.S. imperialism.

This shows that we all have the same basic enemy – U.S. imperialism and its puppets in Europe and Ukraine – and we as a class, our working class, must come together and fight that enemy.

A big part of that battle is to build international solidarity for the Kononovich brothers. Every Ukrainian embassy in every country should hear our outrage. Every administrative building representing an imperialist country that is participating in this push towards WWII should be protested until our brothers are released from the Nazi-hell that is now Ukraine. 🇺🇸

## Arms sale to Taiwan

Continued from page 10

ways been seen as an essential part of building socialist China.

The Chinese constitution states: “Taiwan is part of the sacred territory of the People’s Republic of China. It is the lofty duty of the entire Chinese people, including our compatriots in Taiwan, to accomplish the great task of reunifying the motherland.” The Communist Party of China has always stressed its desire to achieve a peaceful reunification with Taiwan.

The escalation of arms from the U.S. to Taiwan, the expanded U.S. naval operations in the South China Sea and Strait of Taiwan, and the increasing frequency of the exercises by aircraft carrier strike groups threaten peace. These are war provocations and must be stopped. 🇺🇸

# Biden to name Ukraine war general

By Gary Wilson

President Joe Biden is planning to declare Ukraine an official U.S. military operation, the Aug. 24 Wall Street Journal reports, making it a separate command with its own general. Should Biden do that, it would put the Ukraine operation on par with the U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“The naming of the operation formally recognizes the U.S. effort within the military, akin to how the Pentagon dubbed the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Freedom’s



Sentinel. The naming of the training and assistance is significant bureaucratically, as it typically entails long-term, dedicated funding and the possibility of special pay, ribbons and awards for service members participating in the effort.

“The selection of a general, expected to be a two- or three-star,

reflects the creation of a command responsible to coordinate the effort, a shift from the largely ad hoc effort to provide training and assistance to the Ukrainians for years,” the Wall Street Journal reports.

Biden and Congress are stepping up war spending and expansion, while workers have taken a pay cut of almost 4% this year. This is good old guns-not-butter politics. In the words of Gen. Dwight Eisenhower: “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.” 🇺🇸

# Massive protest in South Korea as U.S. launches 'war games'

By Scott Scheffer

The U.S. military and its counterparts in South Korea are wrapping up a week-long rehearsal for an invasion of North Korea and the assassination of North Korean President Kim Jong Un. The Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises, as they are called, are a major escalation of the already provocative "war games" that the U.S. uses to threaten the socialist republic to the north.

The name Ulchi is borrowed from the sixth-century Korean general who is said to have defeated China in battle. Given the "New Cold War," in which U.S. rhetoric against China has escalated along with the presence of U.S. warships near China's coast, the name can hardly be lost on anyone.

The election of South Korean President Yoon Suk-Yeol signaled an escalation of U.S. and South Korean threats against North Korea. Yoon pledged increased military spending, new technology, and more cooperation with the Pentagon. The heightened hostility toward North Korea is a turn from the previous administration of President Moon Jae-In, who attempted to build a rapprochement with the leadership of the North independently of the U.S.

## Largest in recent history

Ulchi Freedom Shield is among the largest military exercises in recent history. It goes beyond the scope of recent years' war games – considered Command Post Exercises that involve simulations without live fire. Ulchi Freedom Shield is comprised of what are called Field Training

Exercises, which involve significant mobilizations and live fire instead of simulations. The exact number of troops taking part isn't yet available, but the last time similar exercises were held five years ago, some 50,000 South Korean troops and nearly 20,000 U.S. troops took part.

This particular exercise is also called "Kill Chain" by Pentagon planners and is broken into three phases. The first involves reconnaissance after infiltrating North Korea to find and strike weapons and bases. The second is called "Korea Massive Punishment and Retaliation," which involves massive destruction by land, sea, and air after rendering North Korea defenseless. Finally, the third phase is to find and execute the North Korean leadership — particularly President Kim Jong Un.

Under the leadership of its founder, President Kim Il Sung, North Korea survived the brutal 1950-1953 Korean War. The U.S. Air Force had carpet bombed in the first few months beginning in June and destroyed every city. The rest of the three-year war was a land war. The North Korean people forced the imperialist invaders south to Pusan at the bottom of the peninsula. The imperialists then launched a second invasion at Inchon on the West Coast but were finally driven out by North Korean soldiers, now joined by 1 million allied Chinese volunteers. Ultimately, 3 million or more North Korean people lost their lives.

## Korea divided by the U.S. in 1945

The Korean nation was arbitrarily divided by the U.S. in 1945 and re-

mains divided at the 38th parallel today. The U.S. has refused to sign a peace treaty for all these decades. As a result, the war is still on, and it's more than a technicality. U.S. guns have been aimed at North Korea ever since, and punishing U.S. economic sanctions that are among the most severe in the world are in place to try to starve North Korea into giving up its socialist agenda.

Yet, under seemingly impossible conditions, the DPRK has rebuilt its cities and, through its "military first" policy, has been able to survive against the U.S. threat of nuclear annihilation.

The U.S. media paints a picture of two halves of the Korean nation hostile to each other and the U.S. in a position of having to defend the south from potential North Korea attacks. Actually, U.S. forces occupied South Korea when the Japanese imperialist empire collapsed at the close of World War II. The people of South Korea, just like Koreans in the north, had fought against the brutal occupation by Japan since 1910. They had sacrificed and longed for self-determination. Soon it became clear that the U.S. agenda was to take Japan's place as colonizer.

## People of the south rebelled

The people of the south had been ready to build a progressive society. They had no quarrel with the people of the north. There were no differences between them in their 5,000-year-old civilization. They all



Tens of thousands of South Korean people demonstrated in the streets of Seoul against the U.S. military presence and plans for the Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises.

spoke the same language and shared the same history and customs.

The people of the south rebelled. Their struggle against the new U.S. occupiers was militant and continuous. Their movement was powerful and was met with U.S. brutality. The U.S. occupation government even called on the former Japanese colonizer's military at times to help put down rebellions.

The people of South Korea don't share President Yoon's vision of a U.S./South Korea block to destroy North Korea. On the contrary, the permanent presence of U.S. troops and weapons is hated.

This is a fact that the U.S. media works hard to conceal. Not one major U.S. publication mentioned that on August 14, tens of thousands of South Korean people demonstrated in the streets of Seoul against the U.S. military presence and plans for the Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises. The demonstration was called by the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, South Korea's second-largest labor confederation.

Anti-war and anti-imperialist organizations in the U.S. and worldwide should extend full solidarity with the people of North and South Korea. Korea is one! 🇰🇷

# Biden escalates with \$1.1 billion arms sale to Taiwan

By Gary Wilson

The Biden administration is set to ramp up its arms sales to Taiwan with numbers that suggest Ukraine levels of escalation.

"The Biden administration plans to formally ask Congress to approve an estimated \$1.1 billion arms sale to Taiwan that includes 60 anti-ship missiles and 100 air-to-air missiles, according to three sources with direct knowledge of the package," Politico reports.

According to Politico, the over \$1 billion arms package includes "60 AGM-84L Harpoon Block II missiles for \$355 million, 100 AIM-9X Block II Sidewinder tactical air-to-air missiles for \$85.6 million, and \$655.4 million for a surveillance radar contract extension, the people said. The Sidewinder missiles will arm Taipei's U.S.-made F-16 fighter jets."

"When it comes to the Taiwan question, the U.S. president is very much like the general sales manager of a big arms dealer," Global Times writer Hu Xijin commented on Twitter.

The new escalation to send more advanced arms to Taiwan follows a month of four separate U.S. Congressional delegation visits. It started with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's grandstanding arrival Aug. 2 in a U.S. Air Force Boeing C-40



militarized aircraft.

On Aug. 28, the U.S. Navy sent a pair of warships through the Taiwan Strait for the first time since Pelosi's trip.

## U.S. warships in Chinese waters

CNN reported: "The guided-missile cruisers USS Antietam and USS Chancellorville were on Sunday making the voyage 'through waters where high seas freedoms of navigation and overflight apply in accordance with international law,' the U.S. 7th Fleet in Japan said in a statement."

A spokesperson for the People's Liberation Army's Eastern Theater Command said in response: "Troops of the (Eastern) Theater Command are on high alert and ready to foil any provocation at any time."

"There is no legal basis for 'international waters' in the international law of the sea. It is false to call the Taiwan Strait international waters, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said at a regu-

lar news conference on June 13 when asked by a reporter from Bloomberg," says Li Huan of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations.

Huan adds: "The term 'international waters' used by the Bloomberg reporter is not a formal legal term in the international law of the sea, but it is used informally by some countries to refer to 'high seas.' ... Situated between the mainland and the islands of a country, the Taiwan Strait connects the East China Sea and the South China Sea. ...

"The Taiwan Strait is approximately 70 nautical miles at its narrowest and about 220 nautical miles at its widest. Under the [1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea] and Chinese law, the Taiwan Strait's waters comprise China's internal waters, territorial sea, contiguous zone, and exclusive economic zone. States have different rights and obligations over different waters, and different modes of navigation apply to different waters. ...

"U.S. warships this year have been sailing in the Taiwan Strait about once a month on average. ... Such [U.S. military] navigation borders on provocation by supporting Taiwan separatists and continually hollowing out and deflating the 'One China' policy.

"In accordance with the convention and Chinese law, China's government

enjoys sovereignty and jurisdiction over the waters of the Taiwan Strait, while respecting the legitimate rights of other countries in these waters. If this question is deliberately manipulated using the false claim that China is in violation of the rules of the international law of the sea, China certainly needs" to respond.

The U.S. military already encircles China with a chain of air bases and military ports. It wants to add bases in Taiwan.

## Control of computer chip production

"Beyond being a military asset, Taiwan is the global center of production of computer chips, making it crucial for global supply chains and the production of electronics by U.S. companies," Brendan Devlin reports in Passage, an independent media outlet in Canada.

"While in Taiwan, Pelosi had a meeting with the chairman of the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation. The visit coincides with U.S. efforts to convince the company to set up a manufacturing base in the U.S. and to stop making advanced chips for Chinese companies."

Under the One China policy, the U.S. — like the rest of the world — recognizes Taiwan as a part of China.

The unification of China has al-

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# Sri Lanka: The struggle continues

By Rasika Ruwanpathirana

Recent news of people overrunning the presidential palace in Sri Lanka, followed by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fleeing the country, took Western media by storm. What is not reported is the ongoing police repression by the current president, Ranil Wickremesinghe.

His latest attack took place on a peaceful protest Aug. 18 that was organized by the Inter-University Students Federation (IUSF) in Colombo, along with other progressive forces and artists. Witnesses say they were attacked unprovoked, and individuals were chased, beaten and arrested. Some of them were kidnapped by unidentified militia and held for hours in undisclosed locations.

Many progressive organizations and union leaders have condemned the police repression and demanded immediate release of those who were arrested. They are also demanding an investigation into the incident.

After Gotabaya's resignation and exit, it was time for Sri Lankans to decide the next steps towards the future. There was hope of a real change in the country. However, this new hope was short-lived.

It turns out that when Gotabaya left the country, he had carefully planned to secure his family's and his close allies' future by handing over power to official opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe.

Even though Gotabaya is very un-

popular at this time, he was elected by the majority of Sri Lanka's radical Buddhist nationalists. His political party still holds a majority of seats in parliament. Furthermore, when it was time to select the new president, it was clear that the decision was carefully orchestrated in order to preserve the status quo.

## People's demands disregarded

When the people of Sri Lanka came out to the streets, they demanded not only the exit of the president, they demanded the exit of all members of the parliament, who maintained the corrupt system cycle after cycle. Their demands were very clear: They wanted the current government gone and those who were responsible for the crises and corruption prosecuted.

However, these demands were blatantly disregarded by President Wickremesinghe in attempting to form a national government with his own agenda, so he can continue to stay in power without calling for a general election. So far he's done this by getting votes from the former president's parliamentary allies, promising to secure their futures and thus avoid prosecution.

But all progressive forces in Sri Lanka are demanding that Wickremesinghe should not stay in power, unelected for the remainder of the term, which is three more years. He must start the election process.

Since the uprising began on July

9, there have been many protests by various progressive forces. These protests have been brutally suppressed by Sri Lankan police, who portray the protests as a fascist rampage similar to the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

The current government in Sri Lanka is using the same methods that the U.S. often uses to track down and prosecute its political opponents. For example, they arrested the internationally recognized trade union leader Joseph Stalin and held him in custody for weeks. It was only after international pressure that his release was secured.

## Media ignores repression

To the surprise of many, these latest police repressions were not widely reported in the Western media. The news is not being prioritized by social media, and there is no mention by major outlets like CNN and BBC. The kind of media presence we saw leading up to the resignation of Gotabaya disappeared without explanation.

Moreover, the current government, in attempting to appease the International Monetary Fund, is considering privatizing national assets in Sri Lanka. On top of that, the government has borrowed money from many pension/retirement funds that belong to the workers and trade unions and is now in the process of canceling 20% of those debts. This will significantly reduce retirement funds for people who worked

their entire lives.

After the Cuban Revolution, a journalist asked Fidel Castro why he didn't kill the former dictator Batista. He explained that killing Batista wouldn't change anything, since the capitalist class would simply replace him with another and the cycle would continue. "The only way we can change that is to change the system itself. And that's what we did."

The uprising in Sri Lanka was not a revolution like in Cuba. It's also true that Western forces took advantage of the situation and even manipulated the situation through social media. But no one can deny the fact that people rose and demanded change.

It is the lack of real political organization that held them back. Progressive forces in Sri Lanka know this. They have been consistently speaking out and continue to reorganize the struggle in an attempt to build new leadership.

Over the last 40 years, Sri Lanka lost generations of youth to the civil war and the rebellion during 1989-1991. Now, decades later, there is a whole generation of youth out of work and without any hope. They continue to come out against the repression.

Therefore, there's a real fear that the current government will resort to the brutal methods used during the repression of the 1989 rebellion. The silence of the Western media during this latest wave of repression is appalling. 🇳🇵

# Pakistan floods & climate change

By Scott Scheffer

The year 2022 has seen so much devastation from climate change. Deadly heat waves plowed through all-time temperature records in Europe, the U.S., and South Asia.

Devastating floods from Eastern Kentucky and St Louis, Missouri, to Sydney, Australia, turned roads into rivers, washed away bridges, and destroyed thousands of homes.

East Africa is enduring its most prolonged drought in many decades, and 20 million people are at risk of severe hunger. The death toll from all of this is elusive, but when estimates are possible, it will certainly be in the hundreds of thousands.

Capitalist-fueled climate change is a war on the planet and all its inhabitants.

With all that, what is happening in Pakistan stands out. A monsoon season nearly double compared to "normal," compounded by the rapid melting of glacial ice, has unleashed floods that have a third of this poverty-stricken nation under water.

More than 1,150 people have died since the middle of June when the rains began, and 33 million others are affected. Millions of people have fled their damaged or destroyed homes, and search and rescue operations are finding more victims daily. More rain is on its way. Language describing the situation includes "epochal level," and "nothing left."

## Capitalist-caused climate change

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres made an emergency appeal for a \$160-million relief fund.

He warned of the perils of capitalist-caused climate change in his video to a ceremony launching the fund. Guterres said, "Let's stop sleepwalking toward the destruction of our planet by climate change. Today, it's Pakistan. Tomorrow, it could be your country."

Guterres' remarks could easily be seen as a veiled criticism of the dismal U.S. response to climate change. For more than a century, while emitting the most significant volume of greenhouse gases, the capital created by labor throughout the world flowed into the coffers of imperialist corporations and banks. Being the preeminent imperialist country, the U.S. is considered the most well-equipped and, simultaneously, the most obligated to battle climate change. But for decades, U.S. energy companies, banks, and the entirety of corporate U.S. have blocked and sabotaged actions to curb emissions.

## IMF austerity imposed on Pakistan

A 2019 IMF "bailout" of Pakistan's economy imposed austerity measures as is typical. When exploitative imperialist corporations bleed a country dry, the IMF swoops in and demands that the government lower wages, cut social services and push living standards down in exchange for funds to "rescue" the spiraling economy. After a long delay, they finally released a scheduled payment of \$1.17 billion during the devastating flooding.

The government of Pakistan estimates that the recovery from the floods will cost \$10 billion. However, if the U.N. appeal for \$160 million



comes to fruition, combined with the long-delayed IMF payment, that will provide less than 14% of the estimated needs.

Since 1994 the U.N. has organized annual conferences on climate change called Conference of the Parties (COP.) In 2009 at COP15 in Copenhagen, wealthy capitalist countries were forced into an agreement to provide \$100 billion annually to the Global South by 2020. The funds are meant to finance mitigation and adaptation in those countries that are not the cause of climate change but have been so exploited by imperialist policies that they are the least able to recover from the consequences of an overheated global atmosphere.

Pakistan is a sterling example. According to CBS News, "Since 1959, Pakistan is responsible for only 0.4% of the world's historic CO2 emissions. The U.S. is responsible for 21.5%."

So far, not one penny of the funds promised in 2009 has been paid. Because of the explosion of climate-change-related, devastating crises around the world in the last few years, the lack of payment is anticipated to be a huge issue at

the November COP27 in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt.

Climate scientists have shown that because of rising ocean temperatures due to greenhouse gas emissions, rainstorms, tropical storms, and hurricanes lose their strength and move along more slowly than before capitalist industrialization. Rainstorms hang around for days dumping water on land. Urban areas with concentrations of tall buildings slow the storms down even more. This phenomenon has been especially apparent in the last 50 years and was expressed most clearly when Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. Katrina also showed the world that racism and national oppression compound the problems of climate change. The experience of nations of oppressed people within the borders of the U.S. in many ways mirrors that imposed on people in the Global South.

Hoping for a solution from a capitalist government is like appointing the fox to guard the henhouse.

Writing this week in the journal Nature Climate Change, a group of scientists has called on their colleagues for activism. April saw protests by more than a thousand scientists from 25 countries. In the UK, scientists were arrested for gluing their scientific papers — and their hands — to the Department for Business building.

The fight against climate change must be taken from the hands of the corporate class and their government. A militant mass movement in solidarity with the most impoverished and oppressed throughout the world will surely grow. 🇳🇵

# Argentina VP survives assassination attempt

By Cheryl LaBash

On Sept. 1, Argentina's current vice-president and former two-term president, Cristina Fernandez Kirshner (CFK), narrowly escaped assassination when a pistol misfired just inches from her head. The assassin had concealed himself in that evening's supportive crowd, which mass daily outside her residence to defend her.

CFK, the most popular politician in the country, is targeted with politically motivated corruption charges wrapped in a campaign of outright threats taken from the right-wing lawfare playbook. If the assassination attempt had been successful, who knows what the streets of Buenos Aires would look like today?

According to Pagina12, when supporters of former President Mauricio Macri demonstrate, they come "with mortuary bags or with gallows or guillotines ... and signs saying 'Death to Cristina.'" Offices of Fernandez's political organization Frente de Todos have been fire-bombed and shot up.

In Macri's four-year term, he saddled Argentina with the Interna-

tional Monetary Fund's largest loan in its history, \$46 billion, condemning the people to years of austerity and privatization with an impossible repayment schedule.

President Alberto Fernandez declared a public holiday on September 2, characterizing the attack as the worst since the end of the military dictatorship in 1983. The U.S.-backed dictatorship and Operation Condor and the threat of political violence returning were on the minds of demonstrators who marched in cities across Argentina, rejecting the attempted killing.

The Buenos Aires Times reported the outpouring in Buenos Aires, Argentina's capital, massing in the place made internationally famous by the heroic Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, whose demands and tireless campaign for the estimated 30,000 murdered and disappeared youth helped end military rule.

"I'm here today because what happened yesterday cannot be permitted in our society," Leandro, a 28-year-old doctor, tells the Times. "I feel that something very serious happened. We have not seen political violence in our society for a long time. We said 'Nunca

ca más' in '83. We are saying 'Nunca más' to political violence."

A 32-year-old service worker says he and his friends support the vice-president and her achievements in office. "The years of the Kirchner governments have been the best years of my life. We won many rights: gay marriage, the Gender Identity Law, the Transgender Employment Quota Law," he explains. "I really hope for a commitment from all sectors of the political arena to protect democracy, and to lessen hate speech."

In addition to her current role in the Senate, Vice President Fernandez was president from 2007 to 2015 and is considered the most popular candidate for the 2023 election. Fernandez has stated she believes the outcome of the court case against her was predecided to try to block her future candidacy. If she had been found guilty the prosecutor was calling for a 12-year prison sentence and a ban against her ever running for public office again. Even before the assassination attempt, women's organizations, especially, mobilized in her support. Among the avalanche of support for Fernandez and condemnation of the attempted

assassination were messages from Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken via Twitter.

## Just about elections?

Elections are not revolutions that change the economic system. Nonetheless, powerful global forces in these internal electoral campaigns have sharp political divisions, particularly in Latin America.

Next year the notorious Monroe Doctrine will celebrate its bicentennial in the midst of a desperate attempt by the U.S. to maintain the economic and political hegemony enjoyed by its wealthy rulers since the end of World War II.

In 1823, the Monroe Doctrine laid claim to the Americas as integral to the U.S. empire. Attempts at independence have been met by invasions, assassinations, coups, U.S.-backed and trained military dictatorships, and new forms of disruption and intervention in the digital age.

The U.S. relentless economic, financial, commercial and media war against socialist Cuba – along with the slanderous listing of the country as a state sponsor of terrorism – is a six-decade example. Other current examples include the U.S. appointment of a faux president of Venezuela; sanctions and slander against Nicaragua; coups in Honduras and Bolivia (since reversed); and rants by U.S. elected officials threatening coup and assassination against the new leadership in Colombia.

In June, the Biden administration hosted a sham Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles, excluding Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, only to face sharp, direct and well-earned criticism from the president of Argentina, Alberto Fernandez, who also spoke as rotating chair of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and others.

Brazil's national election is this fall and Argentina's is in 2023. In Brazil, Luiz Inacio (Lula) da Silva, the front-runner presidential candidate, supported the formation of BRICS economic alliance – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – that challenges U.S. international economic hegemony by opening up new trade routes and development partners. Argentina and Iran are now BRICS candidates, too.

As the U.S. imperialism and NATO provoked war in Europe continues, and now, while the U.S. aggressively antagonizes the People's Republic of China over its Taiwan territory, the White House will certainly not welcome the expansion of BRICS in Latin America. 📌

# Israel admits its troops responsible for Shireen Abu Akleh's death

By Lev Koufax

As we previously reported, senior Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was murdered earlier this year while covering an Israeli Defense Force (IDF) raid on the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank. Early reports indicated that Abu Akleh was killed by Israeli weapons fire.

The IDF followed its murder of Abu Akleh with an attack on her funeral procession. Her procession included Muslims, Christians and Jews. Abu Akleh herself was a Christian. The Israeli forces beat pallbearers and other attendees.

Until recently, the Israeli government denied any culpability in Abu Akleh's death. However, on Sept. 5, 2022, the IDF released a statement admitting a "high possibility that Ms. Abu Akleh was accidentally hit by IDF gunfire fired towards suspects identified as armed Palestinian gunmen."

Eyewitnesses reported that Israeli troops appeared to be firing directly at journalists. The IDF indicated that the stormtroopers responsible for Abu Akleh's death would face no criminal charges or prosecutions.

Translated: "We launched an attack on Palestinian refugees and murdered a prolific Palestinian journalist because that is what Zionists do."

## Blood of Palestine on hands of U.S. defense industry

As Abu Akleh was an American citizen, her family requested a meeting with U.S. President Joe Biden during his July visit to Israel. The family simply wanted to express their concerns and demands for justice directly. Biden refused the meeting, instead inviting Abu Akleh's family to visit Washington, D.C.

The U.S. has provided Israel with \$63 billion in military aid and security assistance since 2001. \$8 billion

of this aid came in 2021 and 2022. The planes that terrorize Gaza City are from the U.S. The semi-automatic rifles that murder Palestinian teenagers are from the U.S. The entire military infrastructure of Israel is provided by the United States of America, which is why Biden's refusal to meet with Abu Akleh's family is so cold and detestable.

The U.S. defense industry's hands are covered in Palestinian blood. Israel enforces apartheid while Northrup Grumman, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon make billions in profits. The least the President could do is meet with the family of the slain Palestinian-American journalist.

## IDF continues siege of Jenin

Unfortunately, the IDF raid on the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank that killed Shireen Abu Akleh was not an isolated incident. The raid is part of a broader swath of Israeli offensives against Palestinian communities in Gaza and the West Bank. Syria has also felt the wrath of this offensive.

On Sept. 5, 2022, the IDF launched another attack on Jenin with artillery and ground forces. Sixteen Palestinians were injured, and one was martyred. The Palestinian person killed was a 29-year-old man attempting to capture the vicious Israeli attack on the social media site TikTok. The IDF claimed that the operation in Jenin was aimed at demolishing the home of an alleged "terrorist." Indeed, the IDF regularly demolishes the homes of Palestinians they label as "terror suspects" as punishment for their families.

This attack, much like the one that killed Abu Akleh, also included



IDF forces firing at journalists and other individuals trying to capture the raid on video. The U.S. accuses countries like Cuba and China of violating freedom of the press while materially supporting an apartheid regime that targets journalists with impunity. No U.S. journalist has ever been shot and killed while reporting by military forces in Cuba or China.

The global anti-Zionist community must unite in solidarity with Shireen Abu Akleh, the Palestinian people, and all those who would attempt to uncover the truth about Zionist apartheid.

**Down with Israeli apartheid!  
Free Gaza! Israeli settlers out  
of the West Bank!**

# Mikhail Gorbachev died

By Gary Wilson

Mikhail Gorbachev died on August 30. His legacy?

Under Gorbachev, the Soviet economy fell into recession as the government began to dismantle the planned economy. Under Gorbachev, socialist industry was dismantled.

Russia's GDP dropped by 40%. Real wages were halved. Poverty ballooned from 2.2 million in 1987-88 to 66 million in 1993-95. Millions died under the brutal regime of privatization and shock therapy. Half a

million women were trafficked into sexual slavery. Life expectancy fell to 57 years.

Gorbachev and what followed are now remembered as perhaps the worst period in Russia's 1,000-year history. This was the greatest economic disaster any country has seen in modern times, in war or peace.

See "Perestroika: A Marxist Critique" [https://tinyurl.com/2n-hg4a7y] by Marxist leader Sam Marcy, first published in 1990. It gives crucial background to the destructive legacy of Gorbachev. 📌

# Why China isn't capitalist

By Stephen Millies

Wall Street and the Pentagon view the People's Republic of China as their number one enemy. China is the target of U.S. imperialism's "Pivot to Asia."

China's economy may already be larger than the United States. The American Enterprise Institute — one of the best-known capitalist think tanks — admits China surpassed the U.S. as the world's biggest manufacturer back in 2010.

That's historically significant. Factories in the United States exceeded Britain's production in the 1890s.

China is now the "workshop of the world." In 2021, China built nearly 17 million more motor vehicles than the U.S.

This tremendous economic growth is the result of China's socialist revolution. It's not just a matter of China making more than a billion tons of steel a year or having more miles of high-speed rail than the rest of the world.

When Mao Zedong declared "China has stood up" in 1949 and the People's Republic of China was born, Chinese people lived to be, on average, just 36 years old.

By 2022 life expectancy had more than doubled to reach 77.3 years. That's a longer lifespan than in the United States.

Despite these tremendous gains, some communists and revolutionaries contend that capitalism has been restored in the People's Republic of China. They point to the 606 billionaires in China, including 67 in Hong Kong.

## The capitalist world market

The People's Republic of China is entangled in the capitalist world market. Almost \$2.5 trillion in foreign direct investment has poured into China since 1992.

This represents millions of Chinese workers being exploited by foreign capitalists. For example, in 2021, General Motors made 2.9 million cars in China.

That's almost 700,000 more vehicles than it sold in the U.S. Tesla is investing \$7.5 billion in its Shanghai "gigafactory."

Unlike China before liberation, none of this investment is colonial in character. Foreign corporations have to share technology and know-how. Elon Musk ignored California's safety regulations during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, but he has to follow Chinese laws.

## Mistakes shouldn't be repeated

Decades ago, many revolutionaries had already considered the Soviet Union to be capitalist.

Mikhail Gorbachev — who opened the door to capitalist restoration — didn't come out of nowhere. He rose in the bureaucracy under both Khrushchev and Brezhnev.

There were hundreds of thousands of Gorbachevs in the Soviet government and Communist Party. They were supporters of Gorbachev's anti-Marxist "new thinking" that sneered at the class struggle. These elements shared Gorbachev's illusions about U.S. imperialism and capitalist society in general.

Most of the "oligarchs" came from their ranks. They stole trillions

of dollars worth of socialist property that workers and peasant farmers had built over a dozen five-year plans.

## Aided the liberation of Angola, Namibia

Yet as late as 1988, Soviet-built MiG-25 jet fighters gave the People's Armed Forces of Liberation of Angola air superiority in the crucial battle of Cuito Cuanavale. A coalition of liberation forces decisively defeated the apartheid army from South Africa, backed by the Pentagon.

These included the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), the armed wing of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO); uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the armed section of the African National Congress (ANC), and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba. Also present were military advisers from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Soviet Union.

Less than two years after this battle, Nelson Mandela walked out of prison on Feb. 11, 1990.

Apartheid South Africa first invaded the newly independent People's Republic of Angola in 1975. Africa called, and Cuba answered. Cuban volunteers shed their blood beside their African comrades.

Critics of the Soviet leadership could see for themselves which side of the world struggle the Soviet Union and its allies were on.

It's been over 30 years since socialism was tragically overthrown in the Soviet Union. This was a greater defeat for workers and oppressed people everywhere than Hitler crushing the German working class.

To have written off Soviet socialism in the decades before Gorbachev rose to power confused revolutionaries. It disarmed communists when the real counter-revolutionary threat appeared.

## Socialism vs. COVID

Those that claimed that the Soviet Union was already capitalist 50 or 60 years ago apparently didn't understand that capitalism can't function without a huge body of unemployed workers. Frederick Engels, the co-thinker of Karl Marx, called jobless workers the industrial reserve army.

Capitalists know this well. Sam Insull — whose crooked Midwestern utility empire collapsed in the Great Depression — declared that "the greatest aid to the efficiency of labor is a long line of men waiting at the gate." Meaning women and men desperately seeking a job.

But there was no industrial reserve army in the Soviet Union. Instead, the country suffered from a labor shortage.

This was one of the features of Soviet society that made it incompatible with capitalism. The Soviet economy was planned. A state monopoly of foreign trade kept the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank at bay.

In contrast to the Soviet Union, millions of workers in the People's Republic of China are without a job. The unemployment rate for youth between 16 and 24 years old reached 19.9% in July.

Particularly affected are the record number of 10.75 million college graduates. Before liberation in 1949, there were only 117,000 college stu-

dents in China.

A big reason for the lack of hiring has been the anti-COVID actions that socialist China took. The capitalist media attacked these absolutely necessary health measures.

Huge cities like Beijing and Shanghai were temporarily closed. Unarmed socialist police in Wuhan delivered meals to people in their homes.

This was a clear contest between capitalism and socialism. In the U.S., 1,046,243 people have died from COVID-19 as of Sept. 1.

Meanwhile, 14,922 people died in the People's Republic of China, which has over a billion more people than the United States. (China's total includes 9,701 people who died in the capitalist Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong.)

No capitalist government on earth could have done what socialist China did in fighting the pandemic. Banksters and billionaires wouldn't have allowed it. Profits are more precious than life to billionaires and their media stooges.

John Tyson (chicken billionaire) and other dead-animal capitalists got Trump to issue an executive order keeping the meatpacking plants open and shielding themselves from lawsuits. As a result, over 59,000 meatpacking workers caught the virus, and 269 died.

## Kept on a leash

China has a sizeable capitalist class, with 606 billionaires forming its crest. These capitalists are kept on a leash.

Liu Han's \$6 billion stash didn't prevent him from being executed in 2015. A millionaire (much less a billionaire) has never been executed in the United States.

A handful of banks play a dominant role over the U.S. government. The Communist Party of China runs China's banks.

The commanding heights of China's economy are controlled by the Communist Party. While production has stagnated in the imperialist countries, China's steel production leaped from 400 million tons in 2007 to over a billion tons today.

You can't explain China's fantastic economic growth except by admitting there's some other social system than capitalism in charge.

If socialism had been overthrown in China, there would be no need for a separate regime for capitalist Hong Kong, which has its own currency. China liberated Hong Kong from British colonialism in 1997.

After the Soviet Union was destroyed, Wall Street's next target was China. But, to many in the military-industrial complex, NATO's 78 days of bombing Yugoslavia was a poor substitute.

Their frustration was behind the deliberate bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.

NATO's war against Yugoslavia was a class war. Despite all the concessions that Tito had made to imperialism, what remained of Yugoslavia in 1999 was socialist in class character.



Sometimes retreats are absolutely necessary. For example, the Long March was a glorious retreat that saved the Communist Party of China from being destroyed.

Mao Zedong argued for the Red Army to take the Long March to escape encirclement. Lenin and the Bolsheviks had to make a sharp economic retreat in the early 1920s by launching NEP, the New Economic Policy.

Karl Marx contemplated that following a socialist revolution, the working class might have to "buy off the band" of well-to-do elements.

Confronted by world imperialism, the People's Republic of China has allowed both foreign and domestic capital to flourish. It was a case of bending instead of being broken.

## Growth of China's working class

While the capitalist class has grown in China, much more spectacular has been the growth of the working class.

The Chinese Revolution's biggest problem was the small number of workers in the country. In 1949, workers were perhaps 1% of the population.

Today the working class in the People's Republic of China is hundreds of millions strong. Thousands of strikes occur against private capitalists.

Chinese workers credit communism for China's tremendous advances in health and economic growth. The social weight of the working class has been responsible for China's extensive reforms in health care and education over the last 20 years.

Those who claim that a counter-revolution has taken place in China should show when this overthrow occurred. Comrade Mao Zedong famously wrote that a revolution is not a dinner party.

A counter-revolution is far bloodier. The events following Mao's death couldn't have changed China's class character.

Just as a rising class needs to smash the state machine of the old ruling class — as was done in the French and Bolshevik revolutions — so would a counter-revolution need to smash the apparatus built by the Chinese Revolution. That hasn't happened.

To claim that the concessions made to capitalists over the last 45 years amount to overthrowing the Chinese Revolution is reformism in reverse.

There are many more chapters to be written in the Chinese Revolution. The working class in the People's Republic of China — which includes millions of workers from minority nationalities like the Uyghurs and Tibetans — will have the last word.

**Long live the Chinese Revolution!**

# ¡Fuera Luma! Dice el pueblo boricua

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Esta semana la paciencia del pueblo frente a los abusos de la privatizadora Luma Energy ha llegado a su fin. Desde que esta mafia corporativa llegó a Puerto Rico impuesta por la Junta de Control Fiscal, han habido 7 apagones masivos, explosiones de subestaciones por falta de

mantenimiento, incendios de casas, ha peligrado la vida de cientos de personas al dejar hospitales y centros de envejecientes sin luz; y en la montaña, también sin agua porque se necesita electricidad para el bombeo. Encima, la tarifa ha aumentado también 7 veces, y mucha gente tiene que decidir si pagar la luz o comprar comida.


Se ha dicho BASTA y la lucha contra Luma se ha llevado a distintos niveles y en distintos escenarios. Desde protestas dentro de las oficinas de la empresa, piquetes semanales frente a sus oficinas centrales, pasquinadas en sitios públicos, campañas en los medios sociales, y muchas otras

formas de protesta, incluyendo cacerolazos nocturnos frente a Fortaleza, la casa del gobernador Pierluisi que defiende a Luma a capa y espada.

Hasta en los medios corporativos se ha arreciado la cobertura de los abusos de Luma y tanto presentadores de programas de radio y televisión, como artistas populares, se han pronunciado en contra de este contrato.

El jueves hubo una manifestación masiva frente a Fortaleza donde se exigió al gobernador que anule el contrato. Cerca de las 9 de la noche, la policía decidió terminar la manifestación y desalojó la muchedumbre tirando gases lacrimógenos y balas de goma, hiriendo a varias personas.

Esto no ha hecho sino aumentar el coraje del pueblo, que sigue convocando acciones casi diarias.

Así que la lucha continúa hasta que se cumpla la consigna de ¡Fuera Luma! 



Desde Puerto Rico, para Radio Clarín de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci.



SLL FOTO: BERTA JOUBERT-CECI

Miles protestan contra LUMA Energy el 25 de agosto frente a La Fortaleza, la residencia del gobernador en el Viejo San Juan. Posteriormente, la Unidad de Operaciones Tácticas de la Policía atacó a los manifestantes pacíficos con gas pimienta y granadas de humo.

## Declaración del grupo Mujeres Contra Luma

Jueves, 1 de septiembre de 2022

Mujeres Contra Luma declaramos nuestra completa solidaridad hacia todas las personas que en la mañana de ayer miércoles 31 de agosto, fueron detenidas por el simple hecho de expresar su rechazo a la violenta política de la Junta de Control Fiscal. Recordamos que fue esta Junta quien impuso la privatización de la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica y por ende, el contrato leonino de Luma Energy.

La manifestación fue convocada por el grupo Jornada se Acabaron las Promesas, y también participaron conocidas personas de intachable reputación, respetadas por sus años de compromiso y lucha por la justicia para nuestro pueblo.

Rechazamos categóricamente el uso de la fuerza por parte de agentes del Estado – la Policía de Puerto Rico – para acallar el creciente sentimiento de frustración y enojo del pueblo que son expresados a través de estas manifestaciones.



de Energía Eléctrica. Ha despojado al pueblo de los fondos que sí podrían ser usados para una verdadera rehabilitación del sistema eléctrico y la eventual transición hacia una energía renovable.

El pueblo necesita una renovada agencia pública de Energía. Exigimos por tanto, la salida de la asquerosa politiquería con que administración tras administración han llenado la gerencia de la AEE. Una verdadera agencia que responda a los intereses del pueblo puertorriqueño y no a compañías privadas.

Enojo que va en aumento por el gran sufrimiento causado, entre otros, por el atropello de la compañía Luma que desde sus inicios ha trabajado intensamente para destruir nuestra infraestructura energética. Ha degradado a nuestra clase trabajadora experimentada como son las y los trabajadores de la Autori-

Rechazamos igualmente las preguntas capciosas como las de buscar la opinión de Mujeres Contra Luma sobre la “violencia” de manifestantes. Preguntas que intentan dividir y penalizar a sectores del pueblo que protesta. Le decimos a los medios, que si realmente quieren saber sobre violencia, pregunten a los oficiales de Luma. Éstos quienes incluso se han burlado de la Justicia de PR. Pregunten al gobierno que hace lo indecible por defender lo indefendible en este contrato leonino, a costa del sufrimiento del pueblo.

La “violencia” de un pueblo insultado, degradado y diariamente abusado es realmente una respuesta a la gran violencia de un gobierno que aunque se dice de Ley y Orden, hace todo lo contrario. Anula la constitución cuando les interesa, ignora los reclamos del pueblo al que está obligado a servir y proteger, y por el contrario, ensalza, excusa y premia a los entes privados y millonarios que poco a poco nos están robando el país.

Mujeres Contra Luma nos unimos al esfuerzo para sacar a Puerto Rico adelante ante el gobierno tirano y fallido que busca invalidar nuestra lucha.

¡Fuera Luma! 

## The Puerto Rican people say: Luma out!

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

This week the patience of the people in the face of the abuses of the Luma Energy privatization scheme has come to an end.

Since this mafia corporation arrived in Puerto Rico, imposed by the Fiscal Control Board, there have been seven massive blackouts; substation explosions due to lack of maintenance, and house fires; hospitals and senior centers have been left without electricity, endangering the lives of hundreds of people; and in the mountains, people without water because electricity is needed for pumping. On top of that, rates have also increased seven times, and many people have to decide whether to pay for electricity or buy food.

The people have declared “Basta! Enough!” and the fight against Luma has taken different levels and different forms, from protests inside company offices, weekly pickets in front of their central office, pasquinades (lampoons) in public places, campaigns on social media, and many other forms

of protest, including cacerolazos (banging pots and pans) in front of Fortaleza, the house of Governor Pierluisi, who has defended Luma tooth and nail.

Even in the corporate media, there has been coverage of the abuses of Luma. Both radio and television program presenters and popular artists have spoken out against this contract.

On Thursday, Aug. 25, there was a massive demonstration in front of Fortaleza where protesters demanded that the governor annul the contract. Around 9 o'clock at night, the police decided to end the demonstration and cleared out the crowd by shooting tear gas and rubber bullets, injuring several people.

This has only increased the courage of the people, who continue summoning almost daily actions.

So the struggle continues until the victory of the slogan “Fuera Luma! Luma Out!”

From Puerto Rico, for Radio Clarín of Colombia, this is Berta Joubert-Ceci.

## FBI hands off Puerto Rican activists!

By Socialist Unity Party

The Partido de Socialista Unidad/Socialist Unity Party and Mujeres en Lucha/Women in Struggle strongly condemn the McCarthyite witch hunt tactics of the FBI on the island of Puerto Rico against the Cuba Solidarity Committee (CSC) and the Juan Rius Rivera Brigade.

Employing similar tactics that they used during COINTELPRO against the Black Liberation movement and the American Indian Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the FBI embarked on a coordinated campaign of harassment and intimidation of these solidarity organizations all through the island on Aug. 23. Intimidation tactics included visiting friends and family of the groups' members, as well as threatening to bring charges against other family members.

These efforts of the FBI will never deter the people of Puerto Rico from standing in solidarity with Cuba, and continuing to demand an end to the decades-long U.S. hostilities against their revolution.

FBI hands off Puerto Rican activists!

**STRUGGLE** ★ **LA LUCHA**  
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