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Struggle for Socialism Party

Partido de la Lucha por el Socialismo

Capitalism's fascist martyr: Why the system sanctifies Charlie Kirk

By Lev Koufax

Charlie Kirk was a racist. Charlie Kirk was a transphobe. Charlie Kirk was a Nazi in every sense of the word. And this cultivator of hate is now dead.

Since his death, U.S. presidents, news media, and even sports franchises have anointed Kirk as a martyr for the cause of free speech and open debate. All have strongly condemned Kirk's assassination as an "act of political violence."

A bipartisan salute to fascism

It was unsurprising when Trump's fascist Republican Party lionized Kirk as a hero and demanded swift, brutal justice for his killing. However, Trump and his fascist base have not been alone in their worship of Kirk. The entire ruling class has been unit-

Continued on page 12



IN NEW ORLEANS
CHICAGO AND
BALTIMORE
'Occupation
is the crime'



Photo: Bill Hackwell



Top, New Orleans, Sept. 9 – people hit the streets to say no to Trump and Landry's military occupation.

SLL photo: Gregory E. Williams

Left, demonstrators march through downtown Chicago on September 6.

BALTIMORE Mental health should not be a death sentence'
Protesters at Port turn out to: Defend Filipino Seafarers'

NYC tenants fight for homes, against displacement

Big Pharma & anti-vaxxers gut system protecting public health

GAZA is our compass:
North Americans for Palestine

British parliament bans protest
against genocide

VENEZUELA The U.S. attacks on
Bolivarian Revolution since 1999

CHINA World leaders unite to
escape to U.S. financial domination

JAPAN The Significance
of the Kantō Massacre

FRANCE Police arrest 473 as
'Block Everything' sweeps France

'Occupation is a crime'

Hundreds in march against Trump-Landry threats

New Orleans

By Gregory E. Williams

On Sept. 9, hundreds marched in downtown New Orleans. They were protesting both Trump's threat to occupy the majority-Black city with federal troops and Gov. Jeff Landry's ongoing deployment of state police in our streets, despite declining crime rates.

These two rich crooks are in on it together. Landry – who the Louisiana Board of Ethics recently charged with using \$13,540 in taxpayer money for free travel – knows no bounds in how low he will go to suck up to Trump. So, of course, he welcomes Trump's plans for New Orleans. (The crowd who usually talk about "states' rights" and "federal overreach" have been pretty quiet on all this.)

The New Orleans Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression initiated Tuesday's action, which began with a rally outside the Federal Building on Poydras Street. Other participating groups included the Palestinian Youth Movement, the Louisiana Workers Councils, the Party for Socialism and Liberation, and the immigrant worker organization Unión Migrante.

'From New Orleans to Palestine, occupation is a crime!'

Speakers emphasized the need for solidarity with the people of Los Angeles, D.C., Chicago, and other cities being attacked by Trump and ICE, as well as the connection between the repression inside U.S. borders and what this government and its Israeli proxies are doing in Palestine.

And we know that none of that repression does anything to address the real crisis of the working class with food costs, access to housing and medical care – quite the opposite. Every dollar spent brutalizing people is a dollar that could put food on a child's plate or help to keep a rural hospital open.

Racist roots go deep

At the rally, Adam with the Alliance Against Racist and Police Repression talked about the deep historic roots of the racist repression we are seeing here. From slavery to Jim Crow, to the mass incarceration of Black people, to immigrant crackdowns, it is all connected.

In recent years, Louisiana has become a hub for immigrant detention, and now Trump and Landry are opening up a new

immigrant detention facility at Angola (Louisiana Penitentiary) – the biggest maximum-security prison in the country.

The land where Angola now stands was used for slave plantations, and the prison today is still a working farm. Around 76% of the inmates are Black. Chain gangs still labor in the fields with overseers on horseback.

Legal proceedings against Angola are ongoing because of the deplorable conditions on the farm line. Last year, a judge issued an emergency injunction to stop work on the hottest days of summer. The plaintiffs are incarcerated workers on Angola's farm line, teamed up with the advocacy group Voice of the Experienced (VOTE). Judges have since found that the prison authorities are not fully complying, and the injunction was renewed on Sept. 10, 2025.

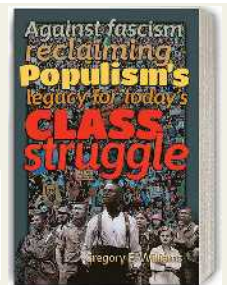
A speaker with Critical Mass New Orleans, which conducts monthly bicycle rides to promote cyclists' rights, quoted Malcolm X's 1964 line, "You can't have capitalism without racism." And today we are seeing them turn to old racist tricks (which never went away) to prop

Continued on page 3

Against fascism Reclaiming populism's legacy for today's class struggle

Fascist movements are on the rise worldwide. The authors argue that capitalism's inherent dynamics are the cause. It is the capitalist class's response to a system in crisis. They use racism and misogyny, transphobia and homophobia to beat back the diverse working class while amassing wealth. But workers beat back fascism before and can do it again. Workers have the power to eliminate the root cause of fascism by transforming society with socialist revolution. The pieces in this book come from fighters in the revolutionary struggle, many have been published in Struggle - La Lucha newspaper.

- ▶ Populism: progressive farmers' movement of 1890s
- ▶ Contemporary trans struggle
- ▶ The Silicon Valley-MAGA connection
- ▶ Legacy of Jena Six
- ▶ Abortion rights movement in South
- ▶ Real motives of right-wing governors
- ▶ Fight against KKK leader David Duke



Also: Vince Copeland's historic pamphlet **'SOUTHERN POPULISM AND BLACK LABOR'** tinyurl.com/Populism-book

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New York City



Protesters march in New York's Chelsea neighborhood, Sept. 13.

SLL photos: Stephen Millies

Tenants fight to save their homes

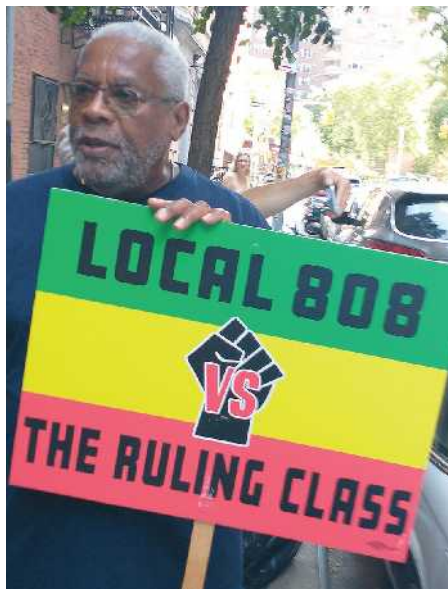
By Stephen Millies

Sept. 13 – Protesters rallied in New York's Chelsea neighborhood today to defend the Elliot-Chelsea and Fulton Houses from the wrecking ball. These New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) complexes are home to thousands of working-class New Yorkers – but instead of investing in repairs, the city is pushing demolition and displacement.

The area on Manhattan's West Side in Midtown South has been targeted by wealthy real estate interests who want to build luxury housing. The prime culprit is the Related Companies, which grabbed \$6 billion in tax subsidies for its Hudson Yards development, where the cheapest apartment goes for a million bucks.

The outfit even got the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to spend \$2.4 billion to extend the 7 subway line to Hudson Yards. Now, Related Companies is moving south from 34th Street to push working-class tenants out of their homes with NYCHA's assistance.

People marched on the home of City Councilmember Erik Bottcher, who is supporting the destruction of affordable housing. The marchers included many seniors, who are being told they might be



able to move back into new housing in 15 years, when most will be dead.

There were plenty of younger folks and children, too. Leaflets in Chinese, Spanish and English had been distributed to build the action.

Among the speakers in front of Bottcher's home were Chris Silvera, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 808 and Sara Catalinotto from Parents to Improve School Transportation (PIST).



Chris Silvera, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 808 and Sara Catalinotto from Parents to Improve School Transportation (PIST).

Caitlin Cahill described the

plans to destroy public housing as "Robert Moses 2.0." Moses was in charge of urban removal in the Big Apple for decades. Hundreds of thousands of people were driven out of their homes to build the Cross Bronx expressway, other highways and Lincoln Center.

Activists are also planning to file a lawsuit to stop the housing demolition. Donate to the Chelsea Public Housing Legal Defense Fund at GoFundMe.com. #

Trump wants war on Chicago

The people demand schools, jobs, and housing

By Gary Wilson

**Demonstrators
march through
downtown
Chicago on
September 6.**

Sept. 8 – Thousands poured into the streets of downtown Chicago this weekend, chanting “No Trump! No Troops!” and waving banners that declared “ICE Out of Chicago!” and “No Nazis, No Kings.” The mass demonstration was a defiant response to President Donald Trump’s escalating threats to unleash the National Guard and federal forces against the city – a move many see as an outright declaration of war.

On Sept. 6, Donald Trump declared that Chicago would be the first city to face his newly renamed “Department of War.” He posted an AI-generated image of attack helicopters flying over Chicago’s skyline with the headline “Chipocalypse Now” – a parody of the Vietnam War film *Apocalypse Now*.

The provocative image and its accompanying tagline, “I love the smell of deportations in the morning,” deliberately evoke Francis Ford Coppola’s 1979 Vietnam War epic *Apocalypse Now*. The AI-generated graphic, reportedly created at Trump’s behest, casts the former president in the role of Robert Duvall’s unhinged Lieutenant Colonel Kilgore – the character who infamously declared his love for “the smell of napalm in the morning” while presiding over the devastating massacre of Vietnamese civilians.

The image carries an additional menacing message emblazoned across its bottom: “Chicago about to find out why it’s called the Department of WAR.” This refers to Trump’s executive order signed Oct. 5, which formally renames the Department of Defense – the world’s most deadly military apparatus – back to its original pre-Cold War designation as the Department of War.

The reference is particularly pointed: Duvall’s character represented the callous brutality of U.S. imperialism abroad, making the adaptation of his iconic line into domestic policy rhetoric a striking example of how military language and imagery are being repurposed for immigration enforcement.

The message was unmistakable: Trump wants to use the U.S. military against a U.S. city.

Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker fired back, warning: “The President of the United States is threatening to go to war with an American city. This is not a joke. This is not normal.”

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson accused Trump of seeking to “occupy our city and break our Constitution.”

It was a threat. And Chicago wasted no time in answering back.

On Oct. 6, thousands of people marched down Michigan Avenue, chanting “No Trump! No Troops!” and holding signs that read “ICE Out of Chicago!” and “Rise Up! Fight Back!”

The march, organized by the Coalition Against the Trump Agenda and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, brought together people from every corner of the city – union members, immigrant families, students, faith leaders, and neighbors who refuse to see their communities turned into military zones.

Escalating repression

On Sept. 7, Trump’s “Border Czar” Tom Homan confirmed that raids were imminent. “You can expect action in most sanctuary cities across the country,” he told national television, adding that National Guard deployments were “always on the table.”

The assault on Chicago comes on the heels of sweeping immigration raids across the country. Last week, nearly 500 workers were seized in Georgia at a Hyundai construction site, the largest mass immigration raid in U.S. history. Over the weekend, federal forces stormed a granola bar factory in upstate New York, detaining both immigrants and U.S. citizens. Troops are also being mobilized for deployment in New Orleans and Baltimore.

Trump’s war footing at home is backed by the country’s wealthiest oligarchs. Just days before his Chicago



declaration, Trump met in Washington with tech moguls and financiers, including Mark Zuckerberg, Sergey Brin, Bill Gates, and OpenAI’s Sam Altman. The oligarchy is openly aligning itself with Trump.

Backing from the billionaires

This corporate alliance is already evident in policy. Trump has scrapped public health protections, threatened to gut Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security. Tax cuts for the wealthy and deregulation of industry are accelerating – policies guaranteed to stoke mass opposition. Trump’s answer is repression.

Despite the unprecedented nature of a U.S. president threatening to wage war on a U.S. city, the corporate press has largely muted its coverage. Major outlets like The New York Times and Washington Post relegated the story to their websites, omitting it from print editions. On Sunday talk shows, hosts largely ignored the subject; CNN even allowed Homan to claim Trump’s explicit threat of war on Chicago was “taken out of context.”

Resistance grows

But in Chicago, the resistance could not be ignored. Thousands of voices rose in unison along Michigan Avenue, sending a message that the city would not be cowed. “Rise up! Fight back!” they chanted.

For many, the march marked not just opposition to Trump’s immediate threats, but a defense of democratic rights under direct siege. “Trump said he would be a dictator ‘from day one,’” one marcher said. “Now he’s showing us he meant it. But we’re showing him something too: we won’t go quietly.” #

Baltimore City Council hearing

Community outrage over police killings

By Kat Davis

“Mental health should not be a death sentence,” words said by Zeke Cohen, City Council President, at the second crisis response meeting held at City Hall.

This was a continuum meeting called last month on police accountability for three deaths caused by Baltimore police – Bilal BJ Abdullah, Phtorcarcha Brooks and Dontae Melton Jr.

BJ Abdullah was known in the neighborhood as a beloved Arabber martyred by police gunfire.

Throughout the long three hours taken up by city officials to point fingers at different agencies. A lot of discrepancies were uncovered with disappointment of the community, such as \$10 million allocated by the courts to be spent merely on advertising for 988, an already-lacking system in place.

The 988 number is a suicide hotline and prevention number which is supposed to be used to divert 911 mental health calls. Less than 1% of calls were diverted.

That system was not effective when it came to Ms. Brooks; she was a 70-year-old woman who had a history of mental health issues. Police have been to her home about 20 times before her last interaction with police.

After kicking Ms. Brooks’ door down, police entered to allegedly take her to the hospital. Ambushed and confused, Ms. Brooks saw that her home was breached. She held a knife for defense as the BPD tried to detain her. An officer attempted to deploy a taser to no avail. The officer then fired his gun, which struck Ms. Brooks twice.

In a heartfelt speech, Ms. Brooks’ brother talked about how the system failed their family. They suffer the trauma of their family member being talked about as a number and statistic.

Dontae Melton Jr.’s death was skirted around and purposely not directly addressed. The full body cam footage and the ruling of his death were released on the same day of the hearing. Melton was seen in the footage approaching the officer, asking for help.

Officer Gerard Petitford radioed in, “I have a gentleman pulling on my doors asking for help but he doesn’t look like



he needs help.” Melton’s feet and hands were shackled. Ten police officers stood around for 50 minutes as Melton passed away, with the fire department less than 3 minutes away and Mercy Hospital 2 minutes away.

The police department vows to train 100% of officers in CIT to improve safety for mental crisis encounters. Currently, 23% of BPD have had this training. In other publications, Police Commissioner Richard Worley has said that, because of the understaffing of police officers, they allowed officers to volunteer to take training. Blaming the failure of officers on the faulty CAD system, which has failed five times before already.

Ms. Bailey, one of the citizens who testified, said it best: “What I realized sitting here for three hours is that I’ll never get a solution.”

Members of the council and the mayor are complicit when it comes to the healing of Baltimoreans. The mayor complied when BPD pleaded for an increase in the police budget in June, a week before officers killed three members of the community.

Almost everyone who testified that night said the community does not need more policing as a solution to healing. Testimony from Alec Summerfield for PPA (People’s Power Assembly) emphasized health care, not handcuffs. A sep-

arate department develops Community Mental Health Navigators, who would be hired to work at outposts across the city. Navigators will have the following roles.

1. Conduct community outreach / relationally organize to advertise their services.
2. Screen for anxiety, depression, and stress.
3. Identify and manage risk as part of a treatment team, including an on-call licensed supervisor.
4. Provide mental health referrals and broader social service referrals, as needed.
5. Educate about mental health.

This issue at hand is systemic; it cannot be changed with those who succumb to the imperialist system. The CIT training is supposed to be a step to reform policing, though the language of the program suggests otherwise.

Safety cannot be achieved if the officers who arrive at the scene are trained to take people to jail. CIT has existed from 1988, yet so many people have died by police during mental health crises. Dontae Melton’s story resembles Oral Nunis’s, a father worried about finances who threatened to jump out his second-story home in 2020. Upon arrival,

Continued on page 8

Baltimore organizers prepare to resist Trump's National Guard threats

By Sharon Black

Struggle-La Lucha spoke with Andre Powell, a community organizer with the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly, about the Trump administration's threats to deploy federal military forces in the city.

SLL: Like everyone, we have seen the back-and-forth between Trump, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, and Baltimore City Mayor Brandon Scott, with Trump threatening to send the National Guard to Baltimore City. How does the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly view this?

Andre Powell: We have to understand that Trump's threats have nothing to do with addressing urban crime and everything to do with normalizing martial law as a tool of capitalist crisis management. What the billionaire ruling class fears isn't street crime – it's the growing solidarity among multi-national working-class communities to unite against racist divisions and demand economic and political justice. We need to resist now.

Trump's threats to deploy the National Guard are racist to the core. The pattern is unmistakable: he has exclusively threatened cities led by Black mayors. This is another key reason why everyone must fight to stop these plans.

It is costing one million dollars a day in Washington, D.C., to station the guard. Let that sink in. This is millions of dollars that could be spent on affordable housing, healthcare, education, food and of course jobs.

SLL: What kind of organizing strategy is the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly developing to counter this threat?

Andre Powell: That's the most important question. We're engaged in mass political education – distributing literature, posting flyers, and conducting outreach to build the kind of broad-based resistance that can stop a federal military

Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly march in honor of Dr. King, Jan. 18, 2020.

SLL photo

occupation. Our approach draws from the civil rights movement's model of sustained civil disobedience, including coordinated work stoppages and mass mobilization.

Concretely, we've called for an outreach day and civil disobedience training. We want to prepare people.

SLL: Is there anything else you would like to add?



Andre Powell: Yes, we have also issued a special appeal to the National Guard troops, calling on them to refuse billionaire Trump's illegal orders.

Instead of deploying the National Guard to suppress working-class communities, these resources should be addressing the ongoing climate disasters that have devastated the

Southeast and West. Months after Hurricane Helene, communities in western North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia are still rebuilding without adequate federal support. Meanwhile, Texas flood victims and California wildfire survivors remain in crisis.

Real security would involve preparing our most vulnerable communities for the next climate emergency: ensuring seniors and working-poor families have access to air conditioning before the next deadly heat wave strikes.

We said, "Do the right thing – go home to your families, children, loved ones and community. Don't defend billionaires! Stop the trillions spent on wars abroad and at home, fight poverty and racism." Those are the things we are saying. #

NO TRUMP NO TROOPS

▶ No Guard ▶ No Troops ▶ No ICE
▶ No Racist Police Occupation

<h3 style="margin: 0;">EMERGENCY RESPONSE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ SAME DAY as troop deployment ▶ Gather 5pm @ McKeldin Plaza ▶ Light & Pratt St. Baltimore 21230 	<h3 style="margin: 0;">CITYWIDE OUTREACH</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Saturday Sept 20 ▶ Gather 10am @ 2011 N. Charles St Baltimore 21218 <h3 style="margin: 0;">CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE TRAINING</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Saturday Sept 20 @ 2 pm ▶ 2pm @ 2011 N. Charles St
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Scan QR code or go to tiny.cc/PeopleFightBack (case-sensitive) to receive announcements

PEOPLES POWER ASSEMBLY

BALTIMORE PORT



At Baltimore's cruise terminal, Sept. 14.

Photo: Tanggol Migrante Movement

Protesters demand protection for Filipino seafarers

By Andrew Matatag

On Sept. 14, members of Baltimore and Maryland-based Filipino organizations and allies of the Tanggol Migrante Movement (TMM) organized a press conference and rally in protest of the deportations of four Filipino Carnival Pride Cruise seafarers who were accused of possession of child pornography but not given due process. The seafarers ardently deny this claim.

ICE and DHS have employed similar harassment and targeting tactics to deport over a hundred documented and

lawfully working Filipino seafarers out of Norfolk and other ports over the past year.

The press conference was held at the gates of Baltimore's cruise terminal, where cars were lined up to board the next Carnival Pride Cruise ship. A large banner facing the road read: "Defend Filipino Seafarers." Other signs read "Marcos: Don't trade our livelihoods for U.S. military deals" and "Money for migrant workers, not flood control fraud."

The Tanggol Migrante Movement calls on the Philippine government to prioritize and protect the rights and welfare

of Filipino migrants, and use its diplomatic power to negotiate with the U.S. on their behalf.

"We just want the Philippines government to be on the seafarers' side," said Felix, a Filipino seafarer. "They can replace us very quick without any due process or investigation."

If the Philippine embassy fails to file a strong diplomatic protest, the TMM commits to taking to the streets to defend these seafarers and all migrants who face neglect and persecution. #

Baltimore Community outrage over police killings

Continued from page 6

an officer with cuffs in his hands ordered Nunis to comply. This led to Nunis' death because of "legal restraint," while the three officers met no repercussions.

The AP has reported over 1,036 deaths after being subdued by police from 2012 to 2021. Not counting the countless cases purposely hidden and filed incorrectly. It shouldn't take a 40-hour training to humanize the community the police swore to serve. Out of 1,036 deaths, only 28 cases had some accountability of officers' charges. A lot of these cases end up with the police getting acquitted in federal jury trials.

We cannot move forward with qualified immunity in the U.S. if we expect to have accountability. The book is con-

stantly being thrown at the marginalized and the poor, but almost always, the police and those with authority skip over the repercussions of the law.

The court filing of Barnes v. Felix is an important case of the use of force. Ashtian Barnes was murdered by Harris County, Texas police officer Roberto Felix Jr. Barnes was pulled over for outstanding tolls in a rental car. Barnes, afraid for his life, drove off, resulting in Officer Felix firing into Barnes' vehicle. The Supreme Court, 9-0, rejected the "moment of threat" doctrine used by some lower courts to allow excessive police force. The unanimous 9-0 decision means officers must be trained with non-lethal tools to prevent situations from escalating to "use of force." #

Mumia had cataract surgery on Sept. 2. Now he can see clearly with his left eye.

We must continue to make demands for his medical care. He needs a retinal specialist to treat additional problems!



Demand urgent treatment from Bernadette Mason

Superintendent, SCI Mahanoy
Call 570-773-2158

Laurel Hardy

Secretary, PA DOC
Call 717-728-2573
ra-crpdocsecretary@pa.gov

Central Office, PA DOC
ra-contactdoc@pa.gov

Big Pharma, RFK Jr. and Trump's war on Public Health

By Gary Wilson

By the time the eleventh wave of COVID-19 swept across the U.S. this summer, the institutions meant to protect public health had been gutted. Pharmacies refused to stock boosters, the CDC was under political occupation, and the FDA restricted access to vaccines on flimsy pretexts.

This wasn't the result of a single mistake or one administration. It grew out of two overlapping forces: Big Pharma, which treated the pandemic as a profit machine, and Donald Trump's Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who seized on public distrust to tear down the very institutions designed to protect health.

The U.S. health system is oriented toward profits and politics, not human need.

From purge to policy

The transformation accelerated in August 2025, when a deadly attack at CDC headquarters provided cover for a purge. CDC Director Susan Monarez was fired after resisting White House pressure and replaced by Jim O'Neill, a tech finance executive with no public health experience but plenty of loyalty.

At the FDA, leadership restricted mRNA vaccine eligibility to those over 65 or with chronic conditions. Pharmacies, in turn, refused shots outright or demanded prescriptions. Mass vaccination was rolled back by bureaucratic decree, just as another deadly surge unfolded.

Meanwhile, RFK Jr. completely replaced the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), removing all 17 existing members and appointing eight new members with vaccine-skeptical views aligned with the Trump administration.

Big Pharma's handprints

The ground for this wrecking crew was laid earlier. During the pandemic, Washington allowed Big Pharma to dictate the response. Billions were poured into the mRNA platform, while ventilation, mask standards, antivirals, and social distancing protections were demoted.

Vaccines were marketed as miracle cures, but decades of coronavirus research made it clear they could not give long-term immunity the way a mea-



Workers who were laid off from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and their supporters, speak at the Georgia Capitol on Feb. 24, 2025.

working class.

The consequences are tangible: crowded ICUs, preventable deaths, and Long COVID disabilities. Promising mRNA cancer and disease-prevention trials have been stalled or canceled, delaying treatments that could have reduced severe illness and recurrence.

Two phases of failure

Today's crisis stems from two sources. The first was the pandemic-era system, captured by Big Pharma, which treated vaccines as a profit machine while underinvesting in essential public health measures like ventilation, masking, social distancing, and paid sick leave. This commercialization-first approach left gaps in protection and eroded trust, setting the stage for the second source: the MAHA regime, which exploited that disillusionment to dismantle public health institutions outright.

These institutions were won through decades of struggle. Around the world, access to public health is recognized as a basic human right; yet, today, that hard-won protection is under attack.

In 2025, the Trump administration terminated hundreds of health disparities research projects at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), following executive orders banning diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies across the federal government.

Decades of research into differences in health outcomes – such as higher rates of chronic disease, COVID-19 mortality, and reduced access to care among Black, Latine, Indigenous, and low-income communities – were abruptly shut down.

What began as a pandemic response shaped by profit has now been twisted into an assault on public health. Science has been subordinated to the market, public health institutions are being purged, and budgets are being slashed.

If this trajectory isn't reversed, the cost will be measured in preventable deaths, chronic illness, stalled cancer and HIV research. Public health was won through struggle. It will only be saved the same way. #

sles shot can. Coronaviruses replicate quickly in the upper respiratory tract, so vaccinated people could still carry and transmit the virus. What vaccines did exceptionally well was prevent severe illness and death by priming the immune system to respond before infections became life-threatening.

Trust eroded when people continued to get sick despite the miracle cure hype. Vaccines worked – they prevented severe illness and death – but they were never designed to stop every infection, a nuance lost in the messaging. When vaccines didn't completely block infections, anti-vaccine networks claimed the whole system had “failed.”

The real failure wasn't the vaccines themselves, but a policy that prioritized profit over people – rushing lucrative vaccinations while neglecting layered public health measures like ventilation, masking, social distancing, and antiviral access. By focusing on a single pharmaceutical product instead of system-wide protections, trust eroded, leaving gaps that anti-vaccine networks exploited.

The capture of institutions

With ACIP now filled with officials opposed to vaccination, the scientific process is being hollowed out. Evidence-based review has been replaced by rubber-stamp formalities. At the same time, HHS workers have had their union recognition revoked, and channels for public input have been shut down, ensuring policy is shaped by political loyalty rather than scientific evidence or community needs.

The effects are already visible. NIH and CDC budgets are being slashed. The U.S. has withdrawn funding from Gavi, the global vaccine alliance. Thousands of public health workers have been terminated. And pharmacies – amid an ongoing wave infecting millions each week – are denying boosters to most of the

Gaza is our compass

People's Conference unites North

By Andrew Matatag

"Gaza is our compass. Gaza, a tiny strip of besieged land which has transformed into the center of the world. Gaza, whose bravery and courage in the face of total onslaught from the United States and Israel has revealed core injustices at the root of our current reality and has moved millions into action."

These words opened the 2025 People's Conference for Palestine. They are not only an introduction to the conference's theme – Gaza is our compass – but also a summation of the historical moment in which the conference takes place.

The main events of the conference were held in a large hall that was named for Anas al-Sharif, a Palestinian journalist and videographer for Al Jazeera Arabic, who the U.S. and Israel assassinated in their airstrike on al-Shifa Hospital on Aug. 10, 2025, in Gaza City, 19 days before the opening of the conference.

"When Israel and the United States assassinated Anas, their goal was not simply to murder him," said Taher of the Palestinian Youth Movement, the opening emcee. "They intended to cut Gaza off from the world, to break us from our center of gravity, to divide us from our compass. Our presence here today shows that this plan has been a total failure."

Rama of the U.S. Palestinian Community Network, co-emcee of the conference, said, "By gathering in rooms named after martyrs and prisoners, we honor their sacrifices and we ensure their legacies continue."

The convenors of this conference represent a broad section of the Palestine liberation movement in North America. For such a broad section, the political and ideological unity they displayed was militant and anti-imperialist: that the genocide in Palestine is U.S.-manufactured; that this genocide is a feature, not a bug, of the imperialist system; and that beyond stopping the genocide, we must also stop the system that profits from genocide.

United States the primary culprit behind Israel

Throughout the conference, speakers made it clear: Israel is nothing but a United States military base. The dog wags the tail, not the other way around.



Cuban solidarity activists at the conference.

Photo: Bill Hackwell

For regular readers of Struggle-La Lucha, this may seem obvious or a given. The history is clear. SLL editor Gary Wilson, in an article titled "Scorched earth capitalism: U.S. imperialism's genocide in Gaza," wrote:

"U.S. support for Israel cannot be explained simply by the influence of AIPAC or by blackmail scandals surrounding figures like Jeffrey Epstein. It goes back more than a century, to Britain's 1917 Balfour Declaration, when London endorsed a Zionist homeland in Palestine as a way to fragment Arab unity. After 1948, the United States inherited this role, seizing upon Zionism as a means of dividing and suppressing the Arab world."

In a workshop session titled "Unmasking Genocide Enablers in the United States," multiple speakers echoed this position.

One speaker remarked at the beginning of their talk: "It's not as if AIPAC didn't exist, the genocide wouldn't be happening." Ultimately, it is U.S. war profiteers and their federal government who would keep it afloat.

Former U.S. President Biden freely admitted in a 1986 session of the U.S. Senate: "Were there not an Israel, the United States of America would have to invent an Israel to protect her interests in the region." Of course, this does not rule out mass struggle against AIPAC.

Another speaker in this session opened with some conventional wisdom: "If you want to know someone's secrets,

check their laundry. Israel does not do their own laundry. They send it to Washington." They then referenced one of Netanyahu's visits to Washington, in which he and his family really did bring their laundry to be done in the United States.

The two-way arms embargo

Another major call of the conference is to fight for two-way arms embargoes on Israel – the two ways being both exports to and imports from the Zionist occupation.

Besides embargoes between governments, the conference calls for people's arms embargoes, in which communities and workers mobilize to block weapons shipments to Israel.

The panel titled "No Weapons for Genocide: the People Demand an Arms Embargo," which deserves its own report, described just how fragile the supply chain to Israel is, specifically the supply chain to build F-35 fighter jets.

Aisha of the Palestinian Youth Movement, in an explanation of the Mask Off Maersk campaign, described: "The F-35 supply chain functions off of this 'just-in-time' logistics process. It's an inventory management system, and it's called 'just in time,' which means that it delivers the goods right before they're needed. So, what I'm saying to y'all is that if one specific node of the F-35 supply chain is intervened in, it has a huge impact on our people back home."

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American movement for Palestine

Our responsibility in North America

“Where to now for the movement for Palestinian liberation in North America?” asked Lubna of the Palestinian Feminist Collective during the panel titled “The Struggle Continues: the Fight for Palestine in North America.”

“First, we turn to our beautiful people in Gaza who, over the course of history, but especially the last two years, have risen from the rubble time and again to teach us lessons in honesty, courage, and resistance.”

Throughout the conference, speakers and participants consistently reaffirmed that we here in the heart of the empire have a particular responsibility, whether Palestinian or Arab diaspora or not.

“I want to offer three core tasks that

I see us having specifically as the North American movement for Palestine right now,” said Jemma of Jewish Voice for Peace. “The first and foremost, which I’ll return to in a moment, is to do everything we can to immediately stop the genocide and find those levers that can do so most effectively.

“We also need to be defending our people and our communities here against rising authoritarianism and fascism in ways that continue to forge across movements in real ways, that embed Palestine, that build relationships and understand that shared stake.

“And the third is to build durable movements for the long haul that are both wide and deep that are really oriented towards scaling up at new levels.”

Speakers and participants also reaffirmed throughout the conference that the movement to free Palestine must escalate.

firm

The revolutionary left

The revolutionary left in North America must take the lessons of the conference back to their organizations and local struggles. We must remain scientific in our analysis of the situation because of what it means for our strategy.

The best thing we can do for Palestine is to win our revolution.

Make no mistake: It is the people of Gaza who will free Gaza. It is the people of Palestine who will free Palestine. But because we are here in the heart of the empire that is conducting the genocide, there is much we can do to smooth the way for Palestine’s victory. #

British police guard genocide profiteers, jail Gaza protesters

By Lev Koufax

Much has been made in the media about Keir Starmer and the British government’s impending recognition of a Palestinian state, within the framework of a two-state solution. However, Starmer’s pledge to recognise the Palestinian Authority has not resulted in an easing of political repression in Britain.

On Sept. 6, the London Metropolitan Police arrested 890 people for joining a Palestine Action protest. Britain’s parliament banned Palestine Action in July under anti-terrorism legislation. That’s right, according to the British government, to stand against genocide is to be a terrorist.

Palestine Action is not a paramilitary group, nor a neo-Nazi sect, nor a polygamist cult. They are a direct action group that targets the British arms industry with protests and civil disobedience for their fueling of the genocide in Gaza. The group explicitly describes itself as “non-violent yet disruptive.” This is



strangely restrained for people that the British government has labeled as evil terrorists.

All 890 demonstrators could face charges that result in up to 14 years in prison – for protesting the brutal and escalating U.S.-backed genocide in Gaza.

Starmer and his parliament have made their position clear with this repression. As long as pro-Palestine activists face police brutality and terrorism charges, recognition of a Palestinian state is performative. If Starmer and company really wanted to support a Palestinian state,

they would stop supplying arms to Israel. They would stop joining U.S. bombing campaigns against Yemen. They would cease trade with any country that maintained diplomatic relations with Israel or the United States.

Parliament and Starmer have not taken those steps and will not take those steps. They are completely at the will of the U.S. imperialists and Britain’s own banks, both of which have raked in profits from arms sales to Israel. Barclays alone has spent billions in investments and

loans to defense companies providing Israel with planes, tanks, and artillery.

Have no doubt, Keir Starmer and the British capitalist establishment wholeheartedly support the U.S.-Israeli genocide imposed on Palestine. Capitalist politicians like Starmer are simply servants of the banks, the defense conglomerates, and other billionaires. Starmer is not a friend of Palestine.

Starmer’s police arrested the friends of Palestine by the hundreds on Sept. 6 for simply demonstrating against a holocaust. #

Capitalism's fascist martyr: Why the

Continued from page 1

ed in their defense of Kirk in the wake of his death.

Joe Biden, former war criminal in chief, released a statement stating that “There is no place in our country for this kind of violence. It must end now. Jill and I are praying for Charlie Kirk’s family and loved ones.”

President Biden notably lacked this empathy for the tens of thousands of Palestinians that his administration murdered via the apartheid state of Israel.

Barack Obama referred to Kirk’s killing as “despicable violence that has no place in our democracy.” The irony is thick: a man responsible for drone strikes in Pakistan that killed thousands of people, including dozens of children, strongly condemns the assassination of a prominent Nazi.

Praise of Kirk was not limited to U.S. capitalist politicians and demagogues. Benjamin Netanyahu described Kirk as a “lion-hearted friend of Israel.” Fascist Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni declared Kirk’s death a “deep wound for democracy.”

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer of the Labour Party declared there is “no justification for political violence.” Yet, his government joined a U.S. military offensive against Yemen for its solidarity with Palestine. When an Israeli airstrike – using British and U.S. support – assassinated Yemeni Prime Minister Ahmed al-Rahawi in August, that act of “political violence” was apparently justified.

Along with the political sphere, the entire media and the entire ruling class establishment have crowned Kirk as a champion of open debate whose life was tragically cut short. Since Kirk’s death, the New York Yankees, several NFL teams, and even McDonald’s have held some sort of display in commemoration of the slain fascist organizer. Donald Trump, Joe Biden, the New York Yankees, and McDonald’s would have us believe that Kirk was an innocent victim and a martyr for the cause of free speech.

He was no such thing.

So, who was Charlie Kirk? Who was this hero for free expression being deified across mainstream society? Charlie Kirk was a hateful racist and fascist. Kirk’s actions and statements over the years have made this reality abundantly clear.

Kirk’s role in the fascist movement was prominent and expansive. Understanding the current media campaign around Kirk’s fatal shooting requires an examination of his life and fascist beliefs. In 2019, Kirk founded “Turning Point USA,” an organization that has become the vanguard for the growth of Trumpism among Gen Z. Since then, Kirk has personally run and grown the organization into a national fascist mobilization operation. Turning Point USA’s core mission is the conversion of college students to MAGA ideology and Christian nationalism.

In the buildup to the Jan. 6, 2021, “Stop the Steal” march on Capitol Hill, Kirk announced that Turning Point USA would send 80 buses of young conservatives to the attempted Trump coup. Reports surfaced later that Turning Point USA also funneled significant funds to the organizers of the insurrection.

A record of racism, transphobia, and hate

Kirk’s support of Jan. 6 is just the tip of the iceberg. Over the years, Kirk pushed vicious fascist views on a number of issues. Shortly before his death, Kirk openly denied that Israel was committing any violence against civilians or children in Gaza. At one point on his tour of college campuses, Kirk went as far as to assert that “Palestine doesn’t exist.”

Kirk seemingly has an endless repertoire of violent, offensive statements. The Guardian newspaper compiled a list of Kirk’s positions on issues ranging from race to gender to immigration. On April 1, 2024, Kirk compared all gender-affirming health care clinics to German Nazi doctors, demanding that all gender affirming care providers be tried “Nuremberg style.” Later that year, Kirk implied that he would force his 10-year-old daughter to deliver a child conceived from rape.

One of Kirk’s greatest concerns was the very existence of the Black community. He targeted Black people with vicious, racist lies again and again. In the world of Charlie Kirk, one of the biggest problems in the U.S. was “prowling Blacks [who] go around for fun to target white people.”

Kirk often honed his attacks against Black women, declaring that Joy Reid, Michelle Obama, Sheila Jackson Lee, and Ketanji Brown Jackson “stole their

slot” from a white person. All of these anti-Black statements are patently lies, but that never stopped Kirk.

Anti-immigration also played a central role in Kirk’s ideology, as he was an explicit believer in “great replacement theory” – the idea that a Jewish and / or socialist conspiracy is underway in the U.S. to replace white people with Latine migrants. In 2024, Kirk boldly declared, “The great replacement strategy, which is well under way every single day on our southern border, is a strategy to replace white rural America with something different.”

Open debate was supposedly Kirk’s calling card. He consistently advocated for his own right to speak freely, while always trying to intimidate and silence ideological opponents.

He viciously attacked all of those who spoke against MAGA fascism or U.S.-Israeli genocide in Gaza. When Zohran Mamdani won the New York mayoral primary with popular demands around health care, education and against the genocide in Palestine, Kirk immediately unleashed his rage. Kirk tweeted, “24 years ago a group of Muslims killed 2,753 people on 9/11. Now, a Muslim Socialist is on pace to run New York City.” The comparison between Mamdani and the attack on the World Trade Center is as incorrect as it is racist.

One unassailable conclusion is easily drawn from Kirk’s words and fascist activism. Charlie Kirk was an absolute and complete monster. Kirk held fascist values deeply in his soul and was a white nationalist preaching that white Western society was inherently superior to the rest of the world. This conception is foundational to Nazi ideology, dating back to Adolf Hitler. In Kirk’s own words: “Western civilization is the best that humanity has produced. It’s an outgrowth of the Bible.”

Given the mountain of evidence that demonstrates Kirk’s political nature, a question must be posed. Why is this fascist maniac being lionized and commemorated?

When progressive activists or even Democratic Party politicians are attacked or assassinated, they do not receive nearly the mass exultation that Kirk has in the past week. Donald Trump insisted that there were “fine people” within the neo-Nazi crowd that

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system sanctifies Charlie Kirk

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marched on Charlottesville in 2017 and murdered DSA member and anti-fascist activist Heather Heyer.

On June 14, 2025, Minnesota House Speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman, a Democrat, and her husband were murdered in their home by a MAGA terrorist, who also shot and seriously wounded Democratic State Senator John Hoffman and his wife.

The mainstream political world was relatively calm when compared to the circus around Kirk. There was no moment of silence at Yankee Stadium. JD Vance did not visit the Hortman or Hoffman families. McDonald's kept its flags at full mast.

Yet, the current reaction to Kirk's death is reaching a complete fever pitch, with the right wing demanding retribution against the broad progressive movement. JD Vance hosted Charlie Kirk's Monday podcast from the White House, promising there will be no unity with the "radical left." Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth is firing any Department of War staffer who posts negative statements about Kirk on social media. The billionaire class and their political mouthpieces have made clear that Charlie Kirk is now a figure of national salvation, not to be questioned nor criticized.

Widespread praise and outrage over Kirk's death seem particularly ridiculous when analyzed in the context of current U.S. imperialist violence across the globe. Political hacks like Trump and Biden pour out tears for a Nazi agitator when their own policies murdered thousands upon thousands of children in Gaza. As these tears flow, the U.S.-backed project of Israel unleashes its ground offensive into Gaza City and renews the bombing of Yemen's crucial Hodeidah port. These actions will directly or indirectly result in the deaths of thousands of innocent people.

Even so, the billionaires and the politicians they bankroll cry no tears for the people of Palestine or Yemen.

They cry no tears for Venezuela or Cuba, which they have starved through sanctions for decades. The billionaire oligarchs and their flunkies cry no tears for the thousands of dead soldiers scattered across Ukraine, who die only for the profits of defense conglomerates. When it comes to a hateful Nazi orga-

nizer, the billionaires and their minions suddenly have boundless empathy.

The capitalist embrace of fascism

This unity of wealthy interests and political figures around Kirk is entirely based on capitalism's current tendency to rely on fascist rhetoric and tactics to maintain control domestically and internationally. The last decade has seen several challenges to U.S. imperialism's iron fist both at home and abroad. Russia has defied NATO aggression on its Western border. Yemen, Iran, and Gaza have refused to bow to the Zionist offensive. Burkina Faso expelled French and U.S. corporate interests.

Domestically, the entire country rebelled against racist police terror after the murder of George Floyd. This was the peak of a Black Lives Matter social movement that began over a decade ago with the murders of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, and Eric Garner.

The U.S.-escalated genocide in Palestine also triggered a massive protest movement in the U.S. against imperialist war and genocide. College students built encampments. Pro-Palestinian organizations marched on D.C. The Jewish community showed its first sign of substantial internal division around Zionist apartheid for the first time since Israel's founding.

The first Amazon labor union was formed. "Striketober" rocked the halls of power with its displays of cross-industry worker unity in 2021. Starbucks workers united not just to form a union, but to fight for Palestine.

Facing economic and political insta-

bility that threatens their profits, the capitalist class is once again looking at fascism. This is a historical tactic: In the 1920s, German and Italian industrialists supported Hitler and Mussolini to crush widespread strikes and suppress growing socialist movements, thereby maintaining their power and control.

Trump and Vance are playing that same role. The Trump era has seen the growth of fascist rhetoric. And as shown by the outpouring of love for this Nazi maniac, Charlie Kirk, the entire ruling class is united behind Trump's fascist vision. This acceptance of fascism can be seen not just in Kirk's anointment as national hero, but also in the Democratic Party's response, or lack thereof, to Trump's invasions of major cities. Gov. Gavin Newsom and Mayor Karen Bass used the brutal LAPD and other local agencies against the anti-Trump rebellion that broke out after mass ICE raids. D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser has completely surrendered to Trump regarding the National Guard occupation of the capital city.

The fight ahead

There is no doubt that Trump and Vance and others will use Kirk's death as pretext for already planned repression against left-wing organizing. Now, more than ever, the working class must reject the lionization of individuals like Kirk. To accept the view of Kirk as a national hero is to accept the normalization of fascism.

Now is the time to reject the pernicious lies of Republicans and Democrats alike. Now is the time to fight for a better world, to fight for socialism. #



Pro-Trump insurrectionists on Jan. 6, 2021, in Washington, D.C. Kirk's Turning Point USA sent buses of his supporters to the attempted Trump coup.

In Los Angeles, as militarized, racist federal agents attack: Significance of Japan's Kantō Massacre

By Tsukuru

On Sept. 1, 1923, a magnitude 7.9 earthquake struck the Kanto region of Japan, claiming the lives of more than 105,000. Conveniently concealed behind the death toll of the Great Kantō Earthquake was the massacre of over 6,000 Koreans and more than 800 Chinese, based solely on their ethnicity.

In the aftermath of the quake, false rumors were spread by the Japanese authorities that the Koreans were poisoning wells and rioting, which incited civilian vigilantes to take up arms and slaughter anyone who did not look or sound Japanese.

The large-scale killing spree ravaged Tokyo and the surrounding region and lasted for three weeks, encouraged and aided by the Japanese military and police. A few hundred arrests were made in connection with the massacre, but most, if not all, were given only light sentences. The Japanese government has denied or significantly minimized the massacre to this day.

The Empire of Japan

Leading up to the state-sanctioned mass killing known as the Kantō Massacre, Japan had been steadily paving the way toward further nationalism and militarism. The colonial expansion of the Empire of Japan began in 1895 with Japan's victory over the Chinese Qing dynasty in the first Sino-Japanese War.

Japan continued to assert itself as a military power through the Russo-Japanese War and World War I, colonizing Taiwan (1895) and Korea (1910) in the process. Thus, in 1923, many Korean and Chinese laborers lived throughout the Kantō region; the Empire of Japan regarded them as disposable labor and enslaved them under heinous living and working conditions.



One could argue that, by the time the quake happened, a sense of racial superiority had been firmly implanted into the minds of the Japanese populace, giving them the moral and racial justification to oppress and even kill Koreans and Chinese, whom they saw as inherently criminal and a threat to the Japanese people.

International solidarity commemorations

In Los Angeles and Vancouver, international solidarity commemorations were held with two main objectives: to condemn efforts by the Japanese government and some Japanese immigrant communities to deny the history of the Kantō Massacre, and to raise the voice of active opposition to Japan's increasing militarization in East Asia.

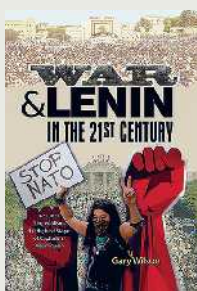
The actions were initiated by the Nikkei Decolonization Tour, a network of diasporic Nikkei grassroots organizers with diverse backgrounds, including people of Japanese ancestry, as well as the diaspora of all subjects of the Japanese Empire and their descendants in Japan today.

As such, NDT rejects nostalgic identifications with imperialist Japanese history, but instead strives to strengthen solidarity with those oppressed by Japan and their continued struggle for truth and justice.

The Kantō Massacre commemoration and teach-in in Los Angeles was co-hosted by J-TOWN Action – Solidarity (JAS) and Trans Rescue Action (TRA), and endorsed by Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice. It was held on Aug. 30 in Little Tokyo, the site of a highly militarized, racist, and unlawful raid staged by federal agents a little more than two weeks ago.

Currently, in the name of ridding the streets of “criminal aliens,” masked kidnappers are committing daily acts of terrorism against communities of color. The racially motivated nature of the state violence, with the participation of civilian vigilantes, made the act of commemorating, remembering, and denouncing the historical event in Japan 102 years ago all the more significant and urgent.

The crowd that took part in the commemoration was people who gathered for JAS's weekly mutual aid program, consisting largely of immigrants, descendants of immigrants, people of color, the unhoused, and queer / trans people who are often the target of state violence and dehumanization. The convergence of marginalized groups and struggles at the action in L.A. mirrored the social cli-



WAR & LENIN in the 21st Century

Included in Gary Wilson's new book is VI Lenin's pamphlet: **'Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism'**

Vladimir Lenin, the revolutionary leader of the Soviet Union and a key contributor to Marxist theory, wrote **"Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism"** in 1916, more than a century ago. It remains an influential critique of imperialism. As in Lenin's time, the conclusion is that socialist revolution will end imperialist war, enabling workers to meet their needs.

Paperback or kindle at tinyurl.com/LeninAndWar



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Photo: Hidden Scars: The Great Kantō Earthquake Korean Massacre, A Documentary



Koreans being taken away by vigilantes and Kantō police, 1923.

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mate of Japan in 1923 as well.

In the 1920s, Japan was experiencing a social awakening of sorts. Certainly not the entire nation, but the people's movement who were pushing back against the surging nationalism, militarism, and imperialism that ruthlessly oppressed and impoverished those who were at the bottom of the social ladder.

After World War I ended, Japan went into a post-war recession; people were struggling. In 1919, inspired by the March First Movement (a series of protests against Japanese colonial rule throughout Korea and internationally by the Korean diaspora beginning on March 1, 1919), Korean laborers in Japan started to organize labor strikes with increased frequency.

1922 saw the first human rights declaration in Japan published by Suiheisha (the Levelers Association), a group of undercaste activists who challenged discrimination and demanded emancipation. Also in 1922, a Chinese student activist by the name of Wang Xitian founded the Mutual Aid Association of Chinese Workers in Japan to improve Chinese migrant workers' lives.

Wang himself was born into an affluent family; however, he became a tireless advocate for workers' rights, blurring the socioeconomic borders between students (the elite) and migrant workers, and uniting the two. In his social circles were also Japanese socialists, anarchists, and labor organizers.

Intersectional organizing work, such as Wang's, was seen as a threat to the stability of the Empire and had to be exterminated. On Sept. 9, 1923, Wang Xitian, concerned about the condition of workers, traveled to Oshima-machi (a

district in Tokyo highly populated with Chinese migrant workers at the time) on a bicycle and never returned. He was abducted and assassinated by the Japanese police on Sept. 12.

In the midst of mind-numbing violence that's being launched against our communities, if hope can be found, it is in the people gathering our forces and fighting back. There is nothing more threatening to the state than all of us marginalized and oppressed people recognizing our rights and reclaiming our power. That is why we are seeing the attacks on our communities increasing in scale and cruelty every day. They want us to be paralyzed with fear, give up hope, crawl up in the corner and / or die. The persecution may grow more brutal, but may we continue to stand firmly by and for each other. "We protect us." #

Currently, in the name of ridding the streets of "criminal aliens," masked kidnappers are committing daily acts of terrorism against communities of color.



Photos: Susan Fried



The U.S. campaign to overthrow Venezuela's

By Lev Koufax

Recent weeks have seen a marked U.S. escalation against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its President, Nicolás Maduro. Donald Trump and his generals have significantly increased U.S. naval activity throughout the Caribbean Sea.

This activity has included the transit of U.S. warships through the Panama Canal for deployment in the waters around Venezuela and a drone strike on a small boat allegedly carrying drug traffickers. President Maduro has sworn that the Venezuelan people will defend themselves against imperialist aggression.

Trump and company have justified this escalation with the stated goal of preventing alleged NarcoBaron Nicolás Maduro and his drug trafficking network from flooding narcotics across the Mexican border. These allegations are patently false. As in the past, these reasons are mere pretexts for an attempted overthrow of Venezuela's democratically elected government, led by the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV).

Since 1999, the U.S. military and intelligence community have targeted Venezuela for regime change. 1999 is when Hugo Chávez led a socialist movement to seize control of the country's government and resources on behalf of the Venezuelan people. Eventually, Chávez united socialist forces in Venezuela to form the PSUV in 2007.

The Bolivarian Revolution

Hugo Chávez's vision, known as the Bolivarian Revolution, declared a war of economic independence. Its first casualties, in the eyes of Washington and corporate boardrooms, were the lucrative privileges long held by U.S. oil barons.

From the outset, Hugo Chávez sought to end the plundering of Venezuelan resources by Western companies and to reinvest the profits of those industries into the people's needs. To that end, Chávez's first moves were to nationalize key industries, using the profits to fund poverty reduction and social welfare programs.

Over the last 26 years, there have been three major U.S.-backed attempts to overthrow the Bolivarian Revolution: in 2002, 2019, and 2020. Since Chávez died in 2013, U.S. efforts against Venezuela have escalated.



Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro

The Bolivarian Revolution, whether led by Chávez or Maduro, is an unacceptable roadblock for U.S. big oil and investment banks. In the minds of the imperialists and oil barons who run Exxon Mobile, Chevron, BP, and Shell, no one should profit from Venezuelan oil if they can't profit from Venezuelan oil. It doesn't matter that the oil isn't theirs. It doesn't matter that Venezuela is a sovereign nation.

All that matters is that someone is profiting off Venezuela's oil who is not a Western oil magnate or banker.

It is for that reason – not allegations of corruption or dictatorship or drug trafficking – that the U.S. has kept Venezuela under siege and waged covert war to overturn the Bolivarian Revolution for two decades. U.S. attempts to unseat the socialist movement in Venezuela began soon after Chávez took power and have continued to the present day.

2002 coup attempt

In 2002, then-President Hugo Chávez was briefly ousted by a CIA-assisted military coup. Venezuelan business owners pressured a group of generals and officers in the Venezuelan military to arrest Chávez and institute martial law. The military installed the head of the Venezuelan Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Production (Fedecamaras), Pedro Carmona, as the new president. Fedecamaras is a coalition of wealthy Venezuelan businesses and capitalists who sought to stop Chávez's investments in

social welfare. Fortunately for the people of Venezuela, Carmona's presidency only lasted 47 hours.

In response to the coup, the lower ranks of the military and mass demonstrations by Venezuelan workers came to Chávez's defense, demanding that he be reinstated. Without this intervention from the masses, the moment could have been lost.

After Chávez died in 2013, Nicolás Maduro was elected president in a free and democratic election. Maduro continued Chávez's policies of oil nationalization and Venezuelan independence from U.S. imperialism.

2019 coup attempt

January 2019 saw a U.S.-backed attempt to topple Nicolás Maduro after he was reelected the year prior. This coup was centered around a right-wing opposition figure, Juan Guaidó. Guaidó rose to the head of the opposition in Venezuela's Parliament in 2018.

Upon Nicolás Maduro's inauguration in January 2019, Juan Guaidó declared himself President at a separate ceremony. Guaidó's inauguration had no basis in the people of Venezuela. It was simply an attempt by the Venezuelan right wing, with U.S. support, to overthrow the gains of the Bolivarian Revolution.

In the days before Guaidó's "inauguration," U.S. Vice President Michael Pence assured Guaidó of complete U.S. support. Within minutes of Guaidó's oath, the

Continued on page 17

Bolivarian Revolution since 1999

United States government recognized him as the President of Venezuela. The U.S. recognized this man, who had never stood for a national popular election and had only served a short time as opposition leader in Parliament.

The situation between the legitimate Maduro/PSUV government and Guaidó's coup government continued to deteriorate for several months before coming to a head. On April 30, Juan Guaidó called upon the military to overthrow Nicolás Maduro. Dissident military officers, joined by a moderate crowd of demonstrators from Caracas's wealthier eastern districts and a handful of police supporting Guaidó, attempted a march on the Miraflores Presidential Palace.

In response to the armed coup march, Maduro called upon the collectivos, or people's militias, along with the rest of the military, to defend the democratically elected government. That is exactly what happened. By the end of the day, the coup attempt dissolved after high-ranking Venezuelan officials maintained their loyalty to Maduro and the PSUV. Marches of millions in support of Maduro and PSUV occurred throughout the country in the days following the attempted coup.

On May 2, the illusion that this coup was remotely separate from the U.S. military and intelligence apparatus completely dissolved. CNN published an article reporting that President Trump sought to funnel cash to Juan Guaidó to revive the coup. Before this report, multiple U.S. officials, including Mike Pompeo, John Bolton, Marco Rubio, and Donald Trump himself, had all been on record teasing potential military action in support of the Guaidó coup.

Between the instant recognition of Guaidó's presidency, the saber-rattling



in the press, and the planned cash injection, it is pretty clear that the U.S. imperialists and their cronies in the Venezuelan opposition are the ones who would benefit from the overthrow of Nicolás Maduro.

A year later, another attempt

Just over a year later, U.S. mercenary company Silvercorps attempted a coup against Maduro's government. Silvercorps owner Jordan Goudreau financed and supplied a group of fascist former Venezuelan soldiers. The Silvercorps plotters actually attempted to work with Guaidó and his small government in exile, but negotiations broke down over financial issues.

In May 2020, roughly 60 militants, including two U.S. Green Berets, landed on beaches in northern Venezuela. The Venezuelan Navy quickly thwarted the attempt and arrested the individuals involved. The coup's goal was to kidnap

Nicolás Maduro, thus forcing a transfer of power to the opposition.

While sanctions against Venezuela persisted through the Biden administration, Trump signaled another provocative escalation against Venezuela.

It's not a secret that Venezuela has grown substantial diplomatic and economic ties with the People's Republic of China. Trump and his allies in the ruling class view the PRC as their fundamental enemy and an existential threat to their profits. As such, Trump is again attempting to ratchet up the pressure on Venezuela – this time by supporting an economic siege with a naval one.

This escalation should not be viewed as an independent crisis allegedly caused by Venezuelan narcotics smuggling. Trump's naval aggression against Venezuela is another move in a long-played chess game, a game with the goal of reopening Venezuelan oil reserves and markets to imperialist plunder. #

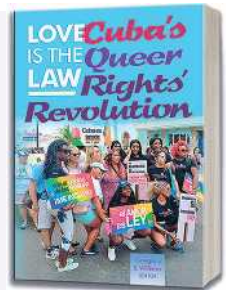
**LOVE
IS THE
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**Cuba's
Queer Rights
Revolution**

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What you'll find in this book

- A chronicle of Trump's return, presenting the incredible danger of fascist rule. This is the government that cruelly keeps Cuba on the terrorist list and under economic blockade. Together with its Zionist appendage, it is committing genocide against the Palestinian people. Cuba doesn't bomb anybody. Cuba sends doctors.
 - The process of winning approval of the Families Code referendum. Cuban writers are included and a webinar discussion on: "What We Can Learn from Cuba's 'Code of Freedom' for Families;
 - Reports from the U.S. Friends Against Homophobia and Transphobia delegation to Cuba;
- Reports from Cenesex – the National Center for Sex Education / Centro Nacional de Educación Sexual director Mariela Castro Espín
- Cenesex has been at the center of gender and sexual liberation in the country, an international hub, facilitating exchanges between activists, academics, researchers and progressive religious groups.



World leaders unite in China to build alternative to U.S.-led financial system

By Lallan Schoenstein

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Tianjin, China, from Aug. 31 to Sept. 1, was attended by 25 heads of state representing nearly half of humanity.

There were 10 SCO members – Belarus, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan – at the summit. The members were joined by numerous others from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, as well as the UN secretary-general.

Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico and Serbia's Aleksandar Vucic, both critical of U.S. / NATO sanctions on Russia, were the only Western leaders attending.

The meeting was intended to provide a forum for countries to explore ways to collaborate in freeing their economies from U.S. trade and dollar dominance, which has been intensified in more than a dozen countries by U.S. sanctions. Currently, Donald Trump's belligerent program, including tariffs and the threat of direct U.S. military intervention, is exacerbating a crisis of survival for many of the world's people.

The SCO was formed more than two decades ago as a regional security bloc by China, Russia and four Central Asian states. In June 2017, it expanded to eight states, with India and Pakistan. Iran joined the group in July 2023, and Belarus in July 2024.

In his speech at the Summit, Chinese President Xi Jinping called on the SCO to “step up and play a leading role. ... become a catalyst for the development and reform of the global governance system.”

He outlined China's new collaborative platforms within the SCO framework, designed to advance cooperation across energy, green industry, digital econo-



Banner over gathering reads: 'Respect for diversity of civilizations and pursuit of common development'

my, technological innovation, and both technological and vocational education. These initiatives aim to foster greater equality among the world's peoples while strengthening global cooperation.

According to Beijing's data, China's trade with other SCO member states reached USD 512.4 billion in 2024, and the grouping now represents roughly a quarter of global GDP.

A proposed SCO Development Bank would provide financing for infrastructure projects without the strict conditions typically imposed by Western finance capital-led institutions, such as the IMF and the Asian Development Bank. Working alongside the BRICS New Development Bank, these alternative financial institutions aim to offer Global South countries more viable funding options.

The principles announced by Chinese President Xi, Russian President Putin, and other SCO members outline a detailed framework for a new international economic order that echoes the promises made 80 years ago at the end of World War II.

End of WW2 commemoration

The summit culminated on Sept. 1 with an extraordinary celebration of the 80th anniversary of victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War, the end of World War II.

The military parade in Beijing was a reminder to the world that the international agreements at the end of World

War II were supposed to end fascism and introduce a fair and equitable world order. It was the U.S. and NATO military alliance that abandoned and reversed those promises.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi summarized the “major outcomes” of the SCO summit by reflecting on the SCO's role as “a just voice for defending the achievements of the victory in World War II.” SCO leaders issued a joint statement declaring that “the SCO will stand firmly on the right side of history.”

Xi has portrayed the war as a pivotal moment in China's “great rejuvenation,” marking the nation's triumph over Japanese invasion and its subsequent rise as an economic and geopolitical powerhouse.

On Sept. 2, the day after the SCO summit, Chinese President Xi hosted his country's largest-ever military parade alongside Russian President Vladimir Putin, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, and Korea's President Kim Jong Un. It is the first time a North Korean leader has attended a Chinese military parade in 66 years.

During the summits, Xi met with several leaders, including a notably significant discussion with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, where he publicly characterized the China-India relationship as one of “partners, not rivals.”

Their statements stressed dialogue on differences and cooperation on development – language that marks the clearest thaw since the 2020 Ladakh border crisis. China and India say the rapprochement has opened new opportunities for cooperation. The SCO platform makes it easier for New Delhi and Beijing to co-fund “small and beautiful” cross-border projects that de-risk supply chains.

The U.S. has promoted divisions between India and China by supporting development initiatives in India that are directly aimed at constraining China's economy.

China and India are the biggest buyers of crude oil from Russia, the world's second-largest exporter. Now, Trump has imposed devastating 50% tariffs on India to try to force it to buy U.S. fuel.

This type of aggressive economic war was epitomized by the destruction of the Russian North Sea pipeline, intended to

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CHINA Celebrating 75 years of liberation

October 1, 2024, marks the 75th anniversary of China's revolution, which liberated the nation from feudal oppression and imperialist control. Today, China stands as a global scientific powerhouse, with gains in healthcare, education, and sports as well as pollution reduction, and space exploration. This book aims to illuminate the dangers posed by a potential U.S. war against China and to reveal the real enemies of the working class.

<https://tinyurl.com/USWarChina>



French police arrest 473 as 'Block Everything' sweeps France

By Gary Wilson

French police reported 473 arrests by 5 p.m. as over 250,000 protesters (number provided by the CGT labor federation) rallied nationwide on Sept. 10.

In the Paris region alone, 203 people were arrested as authorities deployed 6,000 officers; nationwide, 80,000 police were mobilized as nearly a thousand actions took place.

Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu, a Macron loyalist and former defense minister, took office after François Bayrou's government collapsed on Sept. 8, toppled by a no-confidence vote over a 2026 budget plan featuring more than \$50 billion in cuts, the scrapping of two national holidays, a 2026 pension freeze, and reduced health care spending.

Transport and city centers snarled

Protesters targeted transport arteries across the map. They blocked the Toulouse–Auch rail line and tried to storm tracks at Paris' Gare du Nord, where police fired tear gas as hundreds chanted "Step down, Macron."

Ring roads and major highways in Paris, Lyon, Marseille, and Rennes saw rolling blockages. Parts of central Paris were closed to traffic. In the east of the capital, protesters set garbage bins ablaze and attempted to halt highway traffic, while students blocked entry to a local high school. Graffiti hit luxury storefronts, including a Jean Paul Gaultier shop tagged: "People are hungry, Death to luxury!"

SCO summit

Continued from page 18

supply fuel to Europe. Now, Siberian gas will go to Mongolia and China. It powered European industry in the past; now it will do the same for China and Mongolia, leaving Europe to depend on U.S. LNG exports and declining North Sea supplies at much higher prices.

The SCO/BRICS initiatives, including a potential SCO development bank, offer developing countries cheaper credit, faster logistics, and predictable rules, including the revival of border trade and flight connections, while allowing each nation to pursue its own national priorities. #



A protester holds a placard that reads, "let's tax the rich," during a rally of the "Block Everything" movement in Strasbourg, eastern France, Sept. 10.

Austerity backlash fuels anger

Endorsed by Jean-Luc Mélenchon, leader of the left-wing France Unbowed party, the "Block Everything" strategy was driven on the ground by unions like SUD-Rail and militant sectors of the CGT, who targeted strategic infrastructure like railways and oil refineries. France's more moderate union federation, CFDT, mobilized only for the marches.

The "Block Everything" actions had wide working-class support.

"This is the frustration we've felt all summer – fed up and angry since the Bayrou budget plan," said Eric Challal of SUD Rail-Paris. "We're working hard and barely staying afloat. Being told the deficit is our fault is unbearable."

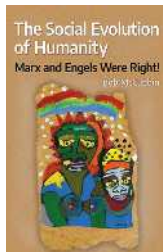
Crowds massed at Place de la République, cordoned off by police, for

one of the day's biggest gatherings. An 18-year-old student compared today's politics to the grievances of 1789: "The government doesn't listen to us and acts as it pleases."

Rachid, a 56-year-old contractor draped in Lebanese, Palestinian, and Algerian flags, blasted the wealth divide since 2017: "There's money in this country, but it's badly distributed. The same people get richer and richer while ordinary citizens can't make it to the end of the month."

Echoes of the Yellow Vests

Like the 2018 Yellow Vests, "Block Everything" is nonpartisan, organized outside party structures, and powered by social media. With unions calling fresh strikes for Sept. 18, protesters are already gearing up for the next round. #



Paperback or Kindle <https://tinyurl.com/vwarcv7>

The Social Evolution of Humanity Marx and Engels were right! Bob McCubbin

This study of the evolution of humanity focuses on human social/sexual relations and, in particular, the social status of women. It offers a selection of scientific evidence that updates and augments the viewpoint expressed in Frederick Engels' masterful work, 'Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.'

McCubbin is the author of 'Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View.' Published in 1976, during the first wave of the modern LGBTQ2S movement, McCubbin's unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of how LGBTQ2S oppression developed.



El desarrollo socialista es un diálogo: activistas LGBTQI+ cubanos presionan por más derechos y ganan

By Mariela Castro Espín

A continuación se presentan los comentarios de seguimiento realizados por Mariela Castro Espín luego de una charla el 29 de julio en la Casa de la Amistad del ICAP (Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos), en La Habana, Cuba, con la participación de la Brigada Venceremos y activistas LGBTQI+ de Estados Unidos, junto a miembros de las redes comunitarias vinculadas al Cenesex (Centro Nacional de Educación Sexual), entre otras personas invitadas.

Este evento marcó el lanzamiento en Cuba del libro publicado en Estados Unidos por Struggle-La Lucha, “El amor es la ley: La revolución de los derechos queer en Cuba.” Castro Espín colaboró en el libro y es director del Cenesex, organización que ha liderado el avance de los derechos LGBTQI+.

Transcrito por Gregory E. Williams

Me quedó una cosa por decir. Cuando estábamos discutiendo la Constitución y el Código de las Familias, teníamos mucho susto. Y a veces pensábamos, ¿te acuerdas, Paquito, cómo discutíamos entre todos? ¿Qué vamos a hacer si no se aprueba? ¿Qué vamos a hacer si el Código de las Familias no se aprueba en el referéndum y en la Constitución?

No voy a decir lo que me dijo, pero pensamos sobre eso. Pensamos sobre qué vamos a hacer si no se aprueba en el referéndum popular.

Los debates fueron muy interesantes. Hubo que hacer una campaña comunicacional muy fuerte. Cuando todavía no había mucha experiencia en Cuba de hacer campañas comunicacionales, ¿cómo se hace?

Cuando todavía no había mucha experiencia en hacer campañas comunicacionales, empezamos a aprender paso a paso, pero con la voluntad de convencer. Y lo logramos. Sin embargo, ahora, en las últimas leyes que se han aprobado, ha sido lo más interesante la flexibilización que existe.

Ya la gente está convencida. Y voy a ponerles un ejemplo. En la ley del Sistema Deportivo Cubano, del deporte, le habíamos puesto más energía a la Ley de Infancia, Adolescencia y Juventud. Al

Registro Civil, que era un reto de muchos años. Y, sinceramente, al deporte no le habíamos puesto mucha energía.

Así que fue escrito de una manera muy general, así que en las normas que se suponía que iba a venir después, esa situación podría ser resolvida.

Así que la gente estaba muy relajada. Así que, en el último minuto, [nombre] me envió, a través de WhatsApp, un número de ideas y cambios, consciente de que era bastante tarde, porque ya se había discutido mucho esa ley. Ese proyecto de ley ya estaba casi perfecto para llevarlo a la Asamblea.

Él era consciente, él era consciente de ello. Aún así, un apoyo del equipo jurídico en Cenesex, se preparó una carta a la Comisión Redactora, informando que este grupo de activistas trans masculinos estaban haciendo esta propuesta, y que considerábamos justo que se incluyeran.

La Habana, Cuba, 10 de mayo de 2023 –

La directora del Cenesex, Mariela Castro Espín, conversa con la delegación Amigos Estadounidenses Contra la Homofobia y la Transfobia. Esta delegación impulsó la publicación de ‘El amor es la ley.’



Foto de SLL: Gregory E. Williams

Así que la Comisión Redactora, inmediatamente, respondió a nosotros. Así que, ¿cuáles se incluyeron en la ley? ¿Y cuáles se incluyeron en las normas que se aplicarían más tarde? No hubo discusión. Se asimilaron.

Pensaron que era muy justo y que estaba en línea con la Constitución. Que no modificaba la esencia de lo que ya estaba escrito, al contrario, en el país, lo fortaleció. Y, como Paquito puede decir, fue impresionante. Ya cambiamos, la sociedad ya cambió.

No tanto como esperábamos. Pero desde nuestro punto de vista legal, eso es evidencia de los cambios que estas instituciones y estas leyes están produciendo en la sociedad cubana. #

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