



STOP THE WAR ON IRAN!

Take to the streets and protest!

The Trump regime's massive missile and bombing attacks on the Islamic Republic of Iran are war crimes that only benefit Big Oil and Wall Street.

Among the first victims are 165 young girls who were killed when their school was bombed in Iran's Hormozgan province. Were they terrorists, Mr. Trump?

The foul assassination of 86-year-old Ayatollah Ali Hosseini Khamenei and other Iranian leaders fits a long pattern of U.S. imperialism murdering leaders of the Global South who resist its domination. More than a century ago, white U.S. Marines in blackface murdered Haitian resistance leader Charlemagne Peralte. In 2011, Washington directed militias to brutally murder Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. From Haiti to Libya to Iran, the methods change, but the objective does not.

The Cuban government is absolutely correct in calling these bloody Pentagon actions "treacherous aggression." The People's Republic of China is calling for an immediate stop to the U.S. aggression.

Thousands of poor and working people in West Asia are guaranteed to die unless we stop the war mongers in the White House and Pentagon. Trump is also signing a death sentence for U.S. GIs and sailors.

The attacks on Iran began while the United States was still in negotiations with Iran. It was the same story last June when Trump bombed Iran, killing almost 1,200 people, including schoolchildren. This is an old U.S. tactic that was often used during centuries of genocidal wars against Indigenous nations.

Polls have shown that at least 75% of people in the U.S. don't want a new war. Dictator Trump refuses to even get congressional authorization for this new imperialist slaughter.

Trump claims the Islamic Republic of Iran is a threat to world peace and must be stopped from developing nuclear weapons. For 30 years, the same stale, lying claims have come from different U.S. administrations as well as from apartheid "Israel."

It's no more true today. The Iranian government has repeatedly said it is not developing any nuclear bombs.

The United States is the only country in history to have used nuclear weapons, killing hundreds of thousands in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. The U.S. even refuses to rule out the first use of these weapons that can kill millions.

The real threat to world peace is the billionaire-controlled United States government, which bombed seven different countries within the last year: Iraq, Iran, Nigeria, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela and Yemen.

Both Trump and Biden supplied the bombs to Netanyahu that have killed more than 72,000 Palestinians in Gaza (confirmed deaths, Lancet puts the death toll at 300,000 to 377,000). Trump wants to repeat this genocide in Iran.



Tehran, March 1 – Thousands of mourners gathered in Enghelab (Revolution) Square after the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei by U.S.-Israeli forces.

Our enemies are in the White House and the corporate boardrooms.

Defend Palestine!
PFLP condemns U.S.-Israeli attack on Iran

- It's not the Islamic Republic of Iran that killed Renée Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis. The ICE gestapo must be abolished!
- It's not Iran who has fired hundreds of thousands of union members who work for the federal government – Donald Trump and Elon Musk did.
- The Iranian government isn't kicking millions of poor people off Medicaid and SNAP food benefits. It's the Congress and White House that are committing these crimes.
- Gasoline prices are already rising, handing windfall profits to Big Oil –the same oil and gas billionaires who have long pushed for war on Iran. The oil and gas billionaires want a war just as they want to take over the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Free President Nicolás Maduro and First Combatant Cilia Flores!

It's the white supremacist Trump regime that must be overthrown – not the Islamic Republic of Iran. All out to the streets! Stop this filthy war for oil profits now!
Struggle for Socialism / La Lucha por el Socialismo

Pentagon, Wall Street – **oil grab in Venezuela**

Elections observer in Venezuela: the media is lying

IRAN today, **CHINA** tomorrow. Anthropic is already at war

Stop the war against Black workers

Honoring Malcolm X in Brooklyn

Dwight Hawkins: Baltimore police execution

Honoring Malcolm X in Brooklyn

By Stephen Millies

Sixty-one years ago, the wealthy and powerful had Malcolm X – also known as El-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz – murdered. On the 61st anniversary of his 1965 assassination, activists gathered on Feb. 21 in Brooklyn’s Bedford-Stuyvesant community to continue Malcolm’s struggle.

The militant action was called by the December 12th Movement. Its call for the action proclaimed “Malcolm X Lives! Defend the legacy. Fight American racism, militarism, poverty & imperialism. To the streets.”

People seized the busy intersection of Nosstrand and Harriet Tubman Avenue (Fulton Street), proudly marching with the liberation flag designed by the Honorable Marcus Garvey.

The ruling class continues to cover up Malcolm’s murder. In 2021, Manhattan district attorney Cyrus Vance, Jr. exonerated two men who had been falsely convicted with Malcolm’s admitted shooter, Mujahid Abdul Halim.

Vance said “that on orders from director J. Edgar Hoover himself, the FBI ordered multiple witnesses not to tell police or prosecutors that they were in fact FBI informants.” In addition, there were undercover cops in the audience belonging to the Bureau of Special Services (BOSS), the NYPD’s Red Squad.

None of the dozen or so FBI agents and police inside the ballroom did anything to try to prevent the assassination. The people need to hold their own investigation into Malcolm’s murder.



SLL photo: Stephen Millies

Participants in a Feb. 21 march and rally honoring Malcolm X pose for a group photo in Brooklyn’s Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood.

Marching for Malcolm X and liberation

People marched in tight formation down Harriet Tubman Avenue through Bedford-Stuyvesant. They chanted, “We’re not afraid of Donald Trump – Trump is afraid of us!” People on sidewalks raised their fists while

drivers honked their horns.

A final rally was held at Utica Avenue, where Omowale Clay, the December 12th Movement’s chairperson, spoke. Other speakers included José from Resistance and Solidarity and Jason Corley from the New York-New Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition.

Corley reminded listeners how over 2,000 Cubans gave their lives alongside their African comrades in defeating the Nazi armies of the old apartheid regime in South Africa. In 1960, Fidel Castro met with Malcolm X in Harlem.

During Malcolm’s travels in Africa – where he told the truth about U.S. apartheid – the CIA tried to poison Malcolm X in Egypt.

Malcolm X will always be remembered and will continue to inspire oppressed people everywhere. #

AGAINST FASCISM

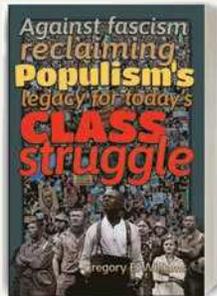
Reclaiming populism’s legacy for today’s class struggle Gregory E. Williams

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

Also: Vince Copeland’s historic pamphlet ‘SOUTHERN POPULISM AND BLACK LABOR’



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Dwight Hawkins: Another execution by Baltimore police

By Colby Byrd

The Baltimore police department has executed another Black man. The Black community could not even close out Black History Month here in Baltimore without a reminder of the ever-present oppressive and deadly system we exist in.

Dwight Hawkins was killed by Baltimore Police on Tuesday, Feb. 24, while leaving a bar he frequented. The police instigated the stop, escalated the situation and executed Dwight Hawkins with 16 shots to the back. The mainstream media has been quick to highlight the past of Mr. Hawkins, in an attempt to justify his blatant public execution at the hands of the Baltimore Pig Department.

Dwight Hawkins was a worker, a father, and a family man and his life mattered. The police, just like in the cases of 17-year-old father, **William Gardner** on Aug. 5, 2024; 54-year-old **Robert Phillip Nedd Jr.**, on Oct. 9, 2024; 26-year-old **Jai Marc Howell** on May 12, 2025; and **Bilal “BJ” Abdullah Jr.** on June 17, 2025, claimed that the individuals “seemed or were armed.”

These executions are messages to the Black population of Baltimore. That if you are armed, you have forfeited your life. If you are able to defend yourself and your family, you are branded a criminal and hunted by the pigs. This violence is not isolated. Other than the above mentioned cases, there are still the violent vehicle ramming attacks carried out by BPD, one involving Baltimore Pig Robert Parks, who attacked two men in Park heights and the other involving a yet-to-be-named officer who hit a woman with his car in Lexington Market. Also, 35-year-old Baltimore Pig Curlon Edwards has been charged with multiple felony rape and assault charges for his abuse of a 16-year-old girl.

Violence is the only thing this system is readily able to give us. As Black communities continue to suffer from continued disinvestment, food apartheid, shrinkage, and removal, the powers in charge have responded with the heavy hands of more police and a tighter occupation. The police exist to serve white supremacy.

The first-ever police in this country acted as slave catchers. The very nature of policing in the United States is rooted in the Fugitive Slave Act. In the case of Baltimore, the police were controlled by all different levels of government at different points of time.

In the 1850s, the Know-Nothing Party – a whites-only, anti-immigrant movement that trafficked openly in white supremacist politics



Dwight Hawkins was killed by Baltimore Police on Tuesday, Feb. 24, while leaving a bar he frequented.

in Baltimore – controlled the Baltimore police department and city government. After the Civil War, the KKK and allied white supremacist organizations continued to shape the character of Baltimore’s political and police institutions through the Reconstruction era and beyond.

Following an intervention by the state government, BPD was given to the state to run directly. During state control, BPD continued to be known as a racist and corrupt institution.

The brutal torturing deaths of Freddie Gray, Tyrone West and many others happened under state control. Also, the Gun Trace Task Force was terrorizing the city, planting evidence, robbing people, extorting people, and filling communities with drugs during state control of the BPD. In 2017, the federal consent decree was finalized. However, under this decree, there was the illegal operation of spy planes in the skies of Baltimore in 2020. Also, every person listed above and many others have been attacked or killed during this period of the consent decree and returned city control.

This violence carried out by the Baltimore Pig Department against Black Baltimore is the same violence carried out by Federal Pigs in ICE and other agencies that are currently targeting not just Black and Brown immigrants but also working-class citizens of all communities.

Keith Porter Jr. was murdered by an off-duty ICE agent simply for being armed while celebrating New Year’s in Los Angeles. Dwight Hawkins was killed for possibly being armed in his community in Baltimore.

Following the deaths of both Renee Good and Alex Pretti, eyewitnesses say that the officers were counting their “hits” as they gunned down U.S. citizens. They exclaimed and hollered like they had just won a bet or a game. In the death of Dwight Hawkins, officers are heard on video “whooping” after two officers shot him in the back 16 times.

ICE agents use unmarked vehicles, wear civilian clothes and hide their identities while terrorizing communities. The Baltimore Police who killed Dwight behave the same way. Known as “Knockers,” this unit of undercover officers uses undercover vehicles, civilian attire and unmarked gear while they are out terrorizing communities.

In a video released by Dwight Hawkins’ cousin, she is quick to point out the inconsistencies and failures of the Pigs that murdered her cousin. They never told them which hospital he was taken to, and no clear recounting of the events that led up to the shooting. She points out that Dwight was killed for running. She makes the connection to Michael Brown, a Black man who was murdered in 2014 by the Ferguson Pig Department, all while his back was to them and his hands in the air.

This execution is also the second high-profile murder carried out by Baltimore Police’s Group Violence Unit, and even one of its officers, Baltimore Pig Omar Rodriguez, was one of the gunmen in both shootings. The first case was that of beloved Arabber and family man Bilal “BJ” Abdullah, who was gunned down by the Group Violence Unit and the Pig Rodriguez on June 17, 2025, only two days before Juneteenth. In both cases, the men were going about their lives normally, like any other person, before the police arrived and executed them on arrival.

The Baltimore Pig Department will continue to play judge, jury and executioner as long as there is no structure in place to stop them. It is very clear that this will not come from existing governmental power structures.

In Baltimore, across the nation, and around the world, war has been declared on oppressed peoples. Frederick Douglass said that “power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will.” Malcolm X said, “Power never takes a back step. ... only in the face of more power.”

If we want to see an end to racist police terror, we must demand it and act on our demand. We must commit to a struggle that leaves no tactic or strategy on the table. Marches and rallies, civil disobedience, community patrols, and anything else necessary to bring an end not only to racist police practices, but an end to the current system of policing and occupation that prioritizes property relations and profits over people’s lives and replace it with one that truly serves the people. #

THE WAR AGAINST BLACK WORKERS

By Stephen Millies

The latest U.S. unemployment figures confirm that Black workers always have it twice as bad as white workers. While the seasonally adjusted jobless rate for white people in January was 3.7%, the rate for Black people was 7.2% – 95% higher. There's often an even larger gap.

It's been this way ever since pedophile slave masters like Thomas Jefferson founded the country. The labor leader A. Philip Randolph noted that during the 1830s, Black people were twice as likely to be confined in New York City's poorhouse as white people. Randolph helped organize the 1963 March for Jobs and Freedom, at which the Rev. Martin Luther King delivered his "I have a dream" speech.

Before the Civil War, enslaved Black workers produced two-thirds of U.S. exports. In 1860, cotton – which was picked by Black women, children and men from "no see" (before dawn) in the morning to "no see" (after dark) at night – alone accounted for half of all exports.

Wall Street got a big share of the profits. The British, French and Yankee capitalists who owned the cotton textile mills would have gone bankrupt without Black labor on the plantations. Some of them did so during the "cotton famine" of the U.S. Civil War.

As W.E.B. DuBois pointed out in "Black Reconstruction in America," it was the general strike of enslaved Africans during the Civil War that was indispensable to the defeat of the Confederates. So were the 200,000 Black soldiers and sailors serving in the Union army and navy.

Just for this, Black people are owed reparations. We need a coast-to-coast general strike to abolish ICE and overthrow all the Trumps.

The great betrayal

The short springtime of Reconstruction following the Civil War lasted barely a decade. Public schools were brought to half of the United States upon the bayonets of the Union army.

It was often Black leaders who set up school systems. That was the case in Florida, where the Black minister Jonathan C. Gibbs was the state's superintendent of public instruction between 1873 and 1874.

According to DuBois, Gibbs "virtually established the public schools of the state as an orderly system" that benefited both Black and white students.

This brief flowering of democracy in the South benefited all poor and working people. South Carolina's Black-majority state legislature – dubbed the Black Parliament – was the best government poor whites ever had in the South.

Railroad tycoons and Wall Street banksters gave Reconstruction's bloody overthrow the green light. Pennsylvania Railroad President

Tom Scott helped broker the rotten deal in 1877 that allowed the Republican presidential candidate Rutherford Hayes to take office.

Federal troops were pulled out of the South in exchange. Ku Klux Klan terror killed thousands. Within a generation, the right to vote was taken away from Black people throughout the Deep South.

The same year President Hayes took office, the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 broke out. Workers revolted against pay cuts. The Black educator Peter Clark, a co-worker of Frederick Douglass, spoke to strikers in Cincinnati.

"Put the strikers on a rifle diet," declared railroad boss Tom Scott. Dozens were killed in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Reading, Pennsylvania. At least 20 were killed in Baltimore.

Cops and private gunmen killed workers in almost every big strike before World War II. Twenty coal miners and their family members would be killed in the April 20, 1914, Ludlow massacre during a strike against the Rockefeller-owned Colorado Fuel and Iron Co.

The next day, hundreds of Mexicans were killed when the U.S. Navy shelled Veracruz. The same capitalist class committed both atrocities. Among those with bloody hands was future president Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was then the Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

While hundreds of strikers would be killed in the North – largely white workers, many of whom were immigrants – thousands of Black workers were lynched in the South. As Karl Marx wrote, "labor in the white skin can never free itself as long as labor in the Black skin is branded."

The Great Migration

Andrew Carnegie sent agents throughout Eastern Europe to recruit workers for his Pittsburgh steel mills. Why didn't the tycoon just go south?

That's because both Black and white workers were needed there. Cotton production increased fourfold in the years following the Civil War to reach 16 million bales.

Even though the United States had become the world's largest manufacturer, cotton still accounted for 29% of U.S. exports in 1911. (The socialist People's Republic of China now produces twice as many factory goods as the U.S.)

World War I largely stopped European immigration. Big capital summoned Black labor to come north. The Great Migration of Black workers had begun.

By 1917, Black workers accounted for a quarter of the 50,000 employed in Chicago's Union Stockyards. Four thousand Black workers labored in the Newport News shipyards.

Black workers became absolutely essential to steel mills and foundries. In 1930, there were 55,000 Black coal miners, 25,000 of whom

Chicago, March 19, 2025 – Federal workers rally against Donald Trump and Elon Musk's mass layoffs outside the Kluczynski Federal Building. A Pew report found that, as of late 2024, Black people made up 18.5% of the federal civil service, compared to 12% of total civilian employment.

were in West Virginia.

The Pullman Company's railroad sleeping cars had been for decades the largest private employer of Black labor. For many Black college graduates, the best job available was being a Pullman porter. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, led by A. Philip Randolph, played a vanguard role in the freedom struggle.

Now, U.S. Steel became the biggest boss of Black workers. Eventually, even more Black workers were employed by General Motors, which was then the world's biggest corporation. Ford, Chrysler and Bethlehem Steel also hired thousands of Black workers.

By 1968, one quarter of all U.S. auto workers and steelworkers were Black. ("Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619-1981," by Philip Foner.)

Police brutalized and killed Black people in Northern ghettos. Black workers continued to be twice as likely to be jobless. But they were also twice as likely to work in what were then the two biggest U.S. industries: auto and steel.

A Black union vanguard

Black workers became the bedrock of the U.S. labor movement. Labor organizers in Southern textile mills felt they needed at least 40% of the workers in a plant to be Black in order to win a union representation election. ("Hiring the Black Worker," by Timothy J. Minchin.)

Ford's gigantic Rouge complex – which had its own steel mill and employed 100,000 workers during World War II – depended on Black workers.

By 1974, 50% of the workforce there was Black. So were 65% of those working on Rouge's assembly lines. ("Black Worker's Struggles in Detroit's Auto Industry, 1935-1975," by Kuniko Fujita.)

Representing these workers was UAW Local 600 – the United States' largest union local – which had a Black communist leadership even in the early 1950s during the McCarthy witch hunt.

Ford and GM only hired Black workers in their Atlanta assembly plants because Black workers in Detroit threatened to go on strike. Detroit became home to the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, which, like the Black Panther Party, was a nightmare to the capitalist power structure.

U.S. "blue chip" corporations hated and feared that they were dependent on Black workers. The 1% feel the same way about their

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Latine and immigrant employees.

Sixty years ago, GM built an assembly plant in Lordstown, Ohio, to make the subcompact Vega because it was miles away from a major Black community. Management wanted to make white workers to turn out 100 cars an hour.

That's a car rolling off the line every 36 seconds! White workers at Lordstown rebelled at this speed-up and became allies of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in Detroit.

Fifty years of attacks

The counter-attack against Black workers accelerated in the mid-1970s, taking advantage of severe economic recessions. Wall Street demanded and got 50,000 New York City public workers, including 10,000 teachers, fired in 1975.

Trump has fired hundreds of thousands of federal workers, many of whom are Black women.

The Chrysler plants in the Detroit area were 70% Black. The U.S. Government's bailout of Chrysler demanded their closures, a death sentence for Motown.

The Midwest was the industrial heartland of the United States. The thousands of plant closings in the region were devastating to the working class.

White families' median income fell by 7.1% there between 1978 and 1982. That was a deep recession.

But Black families' median income in the same region fell by 35.8% – five times as much. That's a great depression. (U.S. Census historical income tables.)

In 1982, Black median income in the Midwest actually became lower than in the South. Hundreds of thousands began a "reverse migration" there.

Many cities outside the Midwest were also hard hit. The closing of Bethlehem Steel's Sparrows Point facility just outside Baltimore – which had been the largest U.S. steel mill – and its shipyards cost 35,000 jobs.

Over the decades, 200,000 jobs were lost in New York City's Garment District. They were among the 900,000 manufacturing jobs lost in the Big Apple.

Hundreds of textile mills, where Black workers had struggled to get hired, were shut down from Virginia to the Carolinas to Georgia.

Black workers never recovered from these

Don't strangle voices defending Palestine!

By Stephen Millies

New Yorkers denounce anti-protest legislation

Feb. 25 – The front steps of New York City's City Hall were filled with people this morning protesting attempts to muzzle protests against the theft of Palestinian land.

The rally and news conference opposed City Council bills Int. 1-A and 175-A. These would mandate "buffer zones" to keep demonstrators away from the sites of these stolen land sales, which violate international and U.S. civil rights law.

The corporate media, in keeping with these censorship proposals, boycotted the event.

The sponsors of this anti-free speech legislation are City Council speaker Julie Menin and City Council member Eric Dinowitz. Since Zionist real estate companies often hold these for-profit sales of seized Palestinian land in synagogues, Menin and Dinowitz demagogically claim they are protecting the "right to worship."

This ignores that many of the protesters at these illegal auctions have been Jewish supporters of Palestine. And it covers-up the violent attacks of Zionist vigilantes during the demonstrations.

The bills also restrict protests outside of schools, including universities.

Remember the Al-Khalil massacre!

Menin and Dinowitz also didn't care that they were introducing this legislation on the 32nd anniversary of the Feb. 25, 1994, massa-



cre at a mosque in Al-Khalil (Hebron), Palestine. Twenty-nine Palestinians were murdered by the Zionist settler Baruch Goldstein, who was born and educated in the United States.

Didn't they have a right to worship? The Zionist Minister for National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir considered Baruch Goldstein to be a hero. Ben-Gvir even used to have the terrorist's picture in his living room.

The New York City Police Department, which is supposed to enforce these buffer zones, has a long history of anti-Muslim harassment. This includes spying on the large mosque Masjid-At-Taqwa in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant Black community.

The protest was called by a diverse coalition of groups, including PAL-Awda NY/NJ, which has organized protests against the sale of stolen Palestinian land in New York City. Other groups included UAW locals 2710 (Columbia grad student workers) and 2325 (legal aid attorneys), Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, Jews Against White Supremacy (JAWS), the National Lawyers Guild, CUNY for Palestine, Transformative schools and New York for Abortion Rights.

People carried banners and signs saying "Protect our right to protest!", "Stop the sale of stolen Palestinian land" and "Stop buffer zone bills." One banner read "Jews say stop land theft not dissent."

Afterwards people went inside the City Council to testify against this legislation to suppress support for Palestine. #

SLL photos: Stephen Millies

attacks. Deliberate deindustrialization closed nine of the 10 GM plants in the Black-majority city of Flint, Michigan.

Instead of Black workers being hired in the big factories, many young Black workers were railroaded to the big prisons. Prisoners are members of the working class, too. (Even though they're not counted in the jobless figures, which falsely lowers the unemployment rate.)

Today, the largest private employer of Black workers is anti-union Walmart. It's because

Walmart workers are so poor that the Walton family is filthy rich with a \$513.4 billion fortune as of December 2025.

Yet there are more Black workers than ever. They played a vital role in the victorious 2023 UAW strike against the Big Three automakers. They're helping to lead the way in union organizing drives at Amazon and Starbucks.

Black workers and immigrants will lead the entire working class in defeating fascist Trump and overthrowing capitalism. #

Cuba will not fall: The fight against

By Gary Wilson

The lights are going out in Cuba – and people are organizing their lives around the outage schedule.

In towns and cities outside Havana, families cook when power returns, charge phones in bursts, and sleep in the heat when fans go dead. Clinics and hospitals ration generator fuel and prioritize the most urgent care. Ambulance crews and ER staff work under conditions where a delayed response means a patient may not make it. Airports face the same reality: When fuel is absent, flights are canceled, routes break, and the island's connection to needed supplies narrows.

Cubans are not confused about what this is. They call it a siege, because Washington is waging one: Cut the fuel, and everything downstream – electricity, water pumping, transport, refrigeration, hospital logistics – begins to fail.

This is deliberate policy.

On Jan. 29, 2026, the Trump administration declared Cuba a national emergency and threatened penalties on any country or company that supplies the island with fuel.

This policy is not new. The U.S. blockade against Cuba was established in 1962. For 64 years it has been the constant backdrop of Cuban life – tightened, loosened, updated in 1992 and 1996, weaponized through secondary sanctions. What is happening now is not a departure from that policy. It is that policy at full force: from economic strangulation by degrees to a naval blockade designed to cut the island off entirely.

Washington's objective is simple in practice: Starve the island of energy. Since late 2025, Washington has tightened the blockade on Cuba's fuel supply and on any country or company that tries to deliver it. The point is exhaustion – to make daily life unworkable, to force a breaking point, and to brand that breaking point as “collapse.”

The cruelty is deliberate. Cuba requires roughly 100,000 barrels per day of fuel and refined products to keep basic systems functioning. When that flow is choked off, the damage is predictable and cumulative: A blackout means stalled transport, spoiled food, interrupted surgeries, dry taps, and a health system pushed into triage.

Cubans are living the consequences in real time – and still holding society together in real time. Neighborhoods share food and ice. Workplaces reorganize shifts around the blackout

schedule. Health workers stretch supplies, improvise, and make hard choices about what can be postponed and what cannot. That is resilience under siege: a daily practice of collective discipline.

How the siege was built

To understand the mechanics of the current blockade, you have to start with what Washington did to the region on Jan. 3, 2026: the seizure of Venezuela's elected president, Nicolás Maduro, and Cilia Flores, in Caracas. Cuba has long depended on Venezuelan oil – the product of political solidarity and economic agreements forged across decades. Washington understood the dependency and immediately cut the lifeline.

The U.S. attack on Caracas killed 32 Cuban combatants who were there fulfilling an internationalist mission – protecting Maduro and Cilia Flores from a threat that had been openly declared. Mariela Castro, who heads Cuba's National Center for Sex Education and is a militant in her own right, described what happened: 21 of the 32 fought directly.

“Just 21 soldiers faced 200 robots,” she said – her word for the heavily armored, technology-laden U.S. special forces troops. “They fought to the death.”

The next morning, Trump was gloating. “Cuba is ready to fall,” he said. “Cuba now has no income. They got all of their income from Venezuela, from the Venezuelan oil. They're not getting any of it.” That is a war communiqué.

Within hours of Maduro's capture, Trump announced American companies would begin investing in Venezuelan oil. Six days later, the CEOs of ExxonMobil, ConocoPhillips, and a representative from Chevron were at the White House discussing investment terms. One week after the raid, \$500 million in Venezuelan oil sales were completed. On Jan. 29, 2026, a new Hydrocarbons Law was signed in Caracas, handing Chevron operational control over Venezuelan production while routing oil revenues through the U.S. Treasury – dismantling the legal architecture Hugo Chávez had built to keep Venezuelan oil wealth in Venezuelan hands.

That same day – Jan. 29 – Trump signed an

executive order declaring Cuba a national emergency and threatening tariffs against any nation supplying the island with fuel. The Venezuela operation and the Cuba blockade are two instruments of one project. Energy Secretary Chris Wright made the connection explicit. “The leverage we have,” he told CNN, “is we control the flow of the dominant industry of Venezuela. We control the flow of funds from oil.” The leverage over Venezuela is the lever on Cuba.

The blockade in practice

Blockades are not new to U.S. foreign policy. What is new is the completeness of this one. Satellite surveillance and commercial shipping intelligence have made maritime anonymity a thing of the past – every tanker is visible, every course change is tracked, every falsified manifest is flagged before the vessel reaches Cuban waters.

Tariffs work as a fuel weapon because they don't just target Cuba – they intimidate the entire supply chain: shipowners, insurers, brokers, refiners, and banks, all of whom risk U.S. penalties if they touch a cargo bound for the island.

That pressure has already altered voyages. The U.S. Coast Guard intercepted the Ocean Mariner 70 miles from Havana and escorted it to the Bahamas. Another tanker, Sea Horse, is carrying roughly 200,000 barrels of gas oil toward Cuba after a ship-to-ship transfer near Cyprus, with an expected arrival in early March; whether it reaches port is an open question precisely because the point of the blockade is to make every delivery uncertain.

Russia calls it piracy. For Cubans, the meaning is simple: If a tanker is forced to turn back, the power plant goes short, buses stop running, and hospitals burn through generator fuel.

The same weapon works on governments. Mexico – after Venezuela's shipments stopped – became Cuba's largest supplier, and President Claudia Sheinbaum has confirmed that Mexico's oil shipments are currently paused as Washington threatens tariffs (and more) on countries that send fuel to the island. Colombia's President Gustavo Petro has condemned

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Hundreds of thousands march in Havana to honor 32 Cuban combatants killed in the Jan. 3 U.S. assault on Caracas, as Washington escalates an energy blockade aimed at cutting Cuba's fuel supply.

Washington's energy blockade

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the blockade as illegal, but condemnation does not refuel a generator. Nicaragua, under intense pressure, has canceled visa-free travel for Cubans.

Why Cuba

Cuba holds no oil reserves that Washington is trying to seize. Washington has a different reason for targeting Cuba.

For over six decades, the Cuban people have built a society organized around human need rather than private profit.

What that means concretely: universal health care that survived a 64-year blockade and produced five domestic COVID vaccines. A literacy campaign that transformed one of the hemisphere's most illiterate countries into one of its most educated. A public health system that sent doctors to over 160 countries while its own people were under siege.

These are the institutions the blockade is now attacking. When fuel runs out, it is this system that begins to fail: the hospitals that cannot run generators, the ambulances that cannot respond, the clinics rationing supplies.

Nelson Mandela knew what Cuba's internationalism meant in practice. Visiting Havana in 1991, he said that Cuba's contribution to African freedom was "unparalleled for its principled and selfless character" – and credited Cuba's defeat of the South African army at the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1988 with destroying "The myth of the invincibility of the white oppressor." That victory broke apartheid South Africa's military power and opened the road to Namibian independence.

What Washington cannot tolerate is a living example. When nearly 500,000 people marched through Havana to honor the 32 Cuban combatants killed in Caracas, Abel Prieto, president of Casa de las Américas, said what many were thinking: "The Yankee Empire is in irreversible decline, and this makes it more violent and rabid."

Trump has stated his goal openly: regime change in Cuba by the end of 2026. The method is economic strangulation, and energy is the choke point – because when fuel is cut, everything else follows. Washington's demand is total: no independent economic relationships, no alternative models, no exceptions.

In Washington's view, Cuba must be made to fall. That is what this blockade is for.

Cuba's Response

Cuba has not been passive in the face of the siege. President Díaz-Canel has been direct: Since Dec. 3, not a single drop of fuel has reached the island. His administration's



Jan. 17 – Cubans mark the anniversary of the 1959 revolution and march against Washington's 'state sponsor of terrorism' designation, a big lie used to tighten the blockade on the island.

response to that fact has been organizational, not rhetorical.

The Council of Ministers approved a contingency plan to transform Cuba's energy matrix. In 2025, Cuban authorities completed construction of 49 photovoltaic solar parks, adding roughly 1,000 megawatts to the national supply – those parks have become a major share of current electricity generation at the moment the island needs them most. More than 900 megawatts of generation capacity have been restored. Photovoltaic systems are being installed in homes, nursing homes, polyclinics, and schools. Cuba is developing a national shipping fleet. Higher national crude oil production and electricity generation from associated petroleum gas are underway.

Díaz-Canel has stated the principle plainly: "Cuba will not renounce receiving fuel. It is a sovereign right." Mariela Castro put it another way: "Principles are not negotiable. There is no possibility of negotiation with imperialism and all its facets."

This is not the first time Cuba has been here. Over six decades the U.S. has tried everything – CIA-armed gangs, biological warfare, the Bay of Pigs, six decades of blockade.

Cuba protected itself, evacuating more than 700,000 people before Hurricane Melissa in October 2025 without a single death. It has sent doctors to over 160 countries.

As Dr. José Ramón Cabañas, director of Cuba's Center for International Policy Research, put it: "They have tried to use all means to destroy us, and have failed in their essential purpose."

Cuba has taken that case to the world. Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez reported to the UN General Assembly that damages from the

U.S. blockade between March 2024 and February 2025 totaled \$7.5 billion – a 49% increase over the previous period. Cumulative losses now exceed \$171 billion.

What the Working Class Must Understand

It is tempting to treat what is happening to Cuba and Venezuela as a one-administration frenzy that will disappear when the political winds shift. The continuity is structural: The largest U.S. oil firms and the U.S. state move together, and the tools of enforcement – finance, sanctions, and military power – are built to punish and isolate any country that refuses Washington's terms.

The names change. The machinery remains. Secondary sanctions, tariff threats, and financial choke points are the routine instruments of imperialist rule in the hemisphere, updated for a world of satellite tracking and globally integrated banking.

Solidarity in Practice

The Nuestra América Flotilla, a civilian-led effort modeled on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla, has announced plans to try to break the blockade. Countries including China, Mexico, and Spain have sent emergency shipments of food and medicine. Cubans have welcomed that help – but what the island needs most is energy: fuel and the parts to keep power generation, water pumping, hospitals, and transport running. That is exactly what the blockade is designed to deny.

Cuba has survived 64 years of U.S. economic warfare. The Cuban people's resilience is the product of a social solidarity that capitalism cannot manufacture. As Mariela Castro said: Principles are not negotiable. #

Blockade, then bullets: Cuba repels armed attack

By Gary Wilson

Cuban border guards repelled an armed attack off the northern coast of Villa Clara province on Feb. 25, killing four men, wounding six and detaining others after a Florida-registered speedboat opened fire on a Cuban patrol craft. The vessel, registration FL7726SH, was operating roughly one nautical mile from shore – far too close for any plausible “navigation error.”

According to Cuba’s Interior Ministry, the patrol craft moved to identify and intercept the boat when those aboard opened fire first, wounding the Cuban commander. Guards returned fire. Authorities seized assault rifles, sniper rifles, pistols, Molotov cocktails, handmade explosives, ballistic vests, night vision equipment, telescopic sights, camouflage uniforms and combat food supplies – the full kit of a paramilitary infiltration unit. Monograms of known counterrevolutionary terrorist organizations were also found aboard.

Cuba’s Deputy Foreign Minister, Carlos Fernández de Cossío, named all 10 individuals involved at a press conference on Feb. 26. Most are Cuban nationals residing in the United States. CBS News, citing a White House source, reported that one of the dead was a U.S. citizen, as was one of the wounded. A seventh suspect – Duniel Hernández Santos – was arrested on Cuban soil and has reportedly confessed to being sent from the United States in advance to prepare the way for the group, a ground operative placed inside the country ahead of the attack.

Cuba’s Interior Ministry described the operation as an “infiltration with terrorist objectives.”

Washington already had their names

Two of the assailants, Amijail Sánchez González and Leordan Enrique Cruz Gómez, were already on Cuba’s national list of individuals wanted for prior involvement in promoting and financing violent acts against Cuba. That list was formally transmitted to the United States government in 2023 and again in 2025, pursuant to UN Security Council Res-



Cuban Coast Guard boat.

Photo: Cubadebate

olution 1373 – the same resolution the U.S. routinely invokes to demand counterterrorism cooperation from other countries.

As of the Feb. 25 attack, Cuba was still awaiting a response.

These two men were not unknown quantities who slipped through the cracks of an overwhelmed bureaucracy. They were named, documented, flagged and handed to U.S. authorities – twice. They then participated in an armed attack launched from U.S. territory, on a U.S.-registered vessel, against a Cuban naval patrol. Fernández de Cossío confirmed on Feb. 26 that Cuban authorities had maintained communication with the State Department and Coast Guard from the moment the vessel was detected, and that the U.S. government had indicated willingness to cooperate in the investigation. What the U.S. government had not shown, in the two years prior, was any willingness to act on the information it had already been given.

The broader siege

The Feb. 25 attack came at a moment of carefully engineered Cuban vulnerability. Since Dec. 3, 2025, virtually no fuel has reached the island. The Trump administration’s Jan. 29 executive order has threatened punitive tariffs against any country supplying oil to Cuba. U.S. vessels have intercepted tankers bound for Havana – including the Ocean Mariner, escorted to the Bahamas 70 miles from port. Blackouts have become routine across the island, with hospitals rationing fuel for generators.

Into this condition – maximum economic pressure – comes an armed paramilitary cell,

trained on a farm in South Florida, organized via TikTok, crewed in part by individuals the U.S. government had been asked to investigate and declined to touch.

The economic siege and the armed attack are not parallel tracks. They are the same operation.

The U.S. Treasury has meanwhile announced it will allow limited fuel exports to private Cuban entities – explicitly excluding the state. This is a regime-change mechanism dressed as a humanitarian concession: cultivate a private sector dependent on Washington while the broader population remains under siege.

The pattern

The 1960 Mallory Memorandum, a State Department planning document, stated the goal plainly: deny Cuba money and supplies, produce hunger and desperation, bring down the government. The document was not a historical aberration. It codified U.S.-Cuba policy, with varying intensity, ever since. Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch, responsible for the 1976 bombing of Cubana Flight 455 that killed 73 people, lived freely in Miami for decades while the U.S. blocked extradition. The organizational line runs through Miami: yesterday’s bombers, today’s paramilitary crews – and decades of U.S. support and protection for anti-Cuba terrorists.

The Mallory Memorandum’s prescription was simple: make the majority suffer until the government falls. What its authors did not anticipate – and what six decades of failure has not resolved – is that Cubans don’t submit under siege. They organize, resist and fight back to defend the revolution’s gains. #

CUBA It's a target
not a terrorist

Off the 'State Sponsor of Terrorism' list

#DeList & #UnblockCuba
#BetterWithoutBlockade

Washington sent Israel

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“the largest American aircraft carrier in the world that cannot be sunk” — a U.S.-funded, U.S.-armed settler-colonial state that functions as Washington’s forward military base in West Asia.

The strategic drive to attack Iran does not originate in Tel Aviv. It originates in Washington — in the Pentagon, in the Treasury Department, in the oil boardrooms where industry consultants openly describe Iranian regime change as a “wonderful day” for U.S. energy companies. It originates in the strategic imperative to eliminate any regional power capable of maintaining an independent foreign policy, supporting Palestinian resistance, and refusing to submit to U.S. domination. Israel is the instrument of that project. It is not its author.

Rubio’s “Israel made us do it” story serves several purposes, none of them honest. It deflects accountability from the administration that ordered the strikes. It feeds a narrative of U.S. helplessness — a superpower supposedly dragged into war by a much smaller ally — that insults the intelligence of anyone paying attention. And it recycles a reactionary framework — the idea of disproportionate Israeli influence over U.S. foreign policy — that lets Washington off the hook. The question of who controls whom is answered by looking at the money, the weapons and the chain of command.

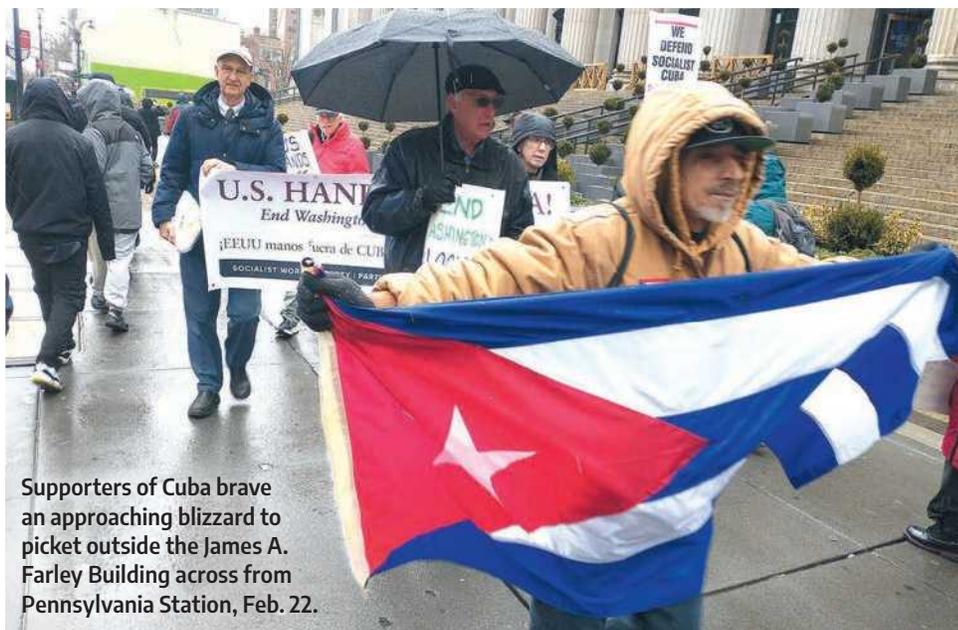
The lies around this war have been notably sloppy. Rubio and Trump contradicted each other within 24 hours on the most basic question of why it started. The rationale has shifted between disarmament and regime change without settling on either. And the Pentagon has been visibly rattled by Iran’s actual fighting capacity.

Defense Secretary Hegseth and Joint Chiefs Chair General Caine admitted in a briefing this week that Iran’s Shahed drones “are posing a bigger problem than anticipated.” That admission deserves to be held up to the light. The asymmetric threat posed by Iran’s low-cost drone arsenal has been a documented, analyzed, publicly known factor for years.

The Pentagon was not caught off-guard by something it didn’t know. It was caught off-guard by something it chose not to take seriously — the determination of a country that has spent decades preparing for a U.S. and Israeli assault.

The scale of that preparation is becoming harder to hide. Israeli journalist Alon Mizrahi, writing from an anti-Zionist perspective, argues that U.S. bases in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia have taken sustained, serious hits — facilities representing, as he puts

Defying a blizzard, New Yorkers demand: **HANDS OFF CUBA!**



Supporters of Cuba brave an approaching blizzard to picket outside the James A. Farley Building across from Pennsylvania Station, Feb. 22.

SLL photo: Stephen Millies

By Stephen Millies

New York — An approaching blizzard didn’t stop nearly 100 supporters of Cuba from rallying on Feb. 22 in Manhattan to say NO! to the U.S. blockade of the Caribbean country. Protesters picketed in front of the old Farley Post Office across from Pennsylvania Station. The militant action was called by the NY-NJ Cuba Sí Coalition.

Ever since the Cuban Revolution triumphed in 1959, the United States capitalist government has tried to overthrow it. The liberal icon JFK not only allowed the Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) invasion to proceed. He also imposed a trade ban in 1962 that has since cost Cuba at least \$170 billion.

Now, Trump says he will impose additional tariffs on any country that sells oil to Cuba. That’s economic terrorism. It follows the kidnapping of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela’s President Nicolás Maduro Moros and

it, “a major chunk of military expenditure for over 30 years.” He notes something more telling than any damage report: the near-total absence of reporting.

During the first Gulf War in 1991, footage of U.S. air operations ran every night. Now, four days into a war that Washington insists it is winning, there is almost no video evidence of U.S. air dominance over Iranian skies. The Strait of Hormuz, through which one-fifth of the world’s oil moves daily, is effectively closed. The administration is floating the idea

First Combatant Cilia Flores.

A member of Radical Elders explained how the trade blockade also hurts poor and working people in the United States who are cut off from medicines treating meningitis and other diseases. The Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo, New York, works with Cuban researchers to fight cancer.

The U.S. State Department is even pressuring the Italian region of Calabria to fire nearly 500 Cuban doctors who are essential to the area’s health system. Meanwhile, Cuba has trained over 200 doctors to treat poor people in the United States.

Other speakers included Roger Wareham from the December 12th Movement and Jason Corley from the NY-NJ Cuba Sí Coalition. Both linked the attacks on Cuba with Trump’s cut-backs against poor and working people in the United States. Bill Sacks from the Venceremos Brigade urged people to visit Cuba and see for themselves the revolution’s accomplishments. #

of arming Kurdish militias to pressure Iran from within — a suggestion that reflects either strategic confusion or desperation.

None of this fits the story of a reluctant empire dragged to war by an uncontrollable ally. It fits the story of an empire that chose this war for its own reasons and is now discovering that the country it chose to attack was ready for it.

Rubio’s story doesn’t hold. Israel didn’t make Washington do anything. Washington funds, arms, and directs the enterprise. The responsibility is its own. #

Pentagon knocks, Wall Street enters: The U.S. oil grab in Venezuela

By Gary Wilson

The U.S. war on Venezuela escalated rapidly – from lethal strikes on small boats in late 2025 to the Jan. 3, 2026, assault aimed at paralyzing Venezuela’s leadership and command structure – amid growing fears of a Gaza-style campaign of genocidal bombardment.

Beginning in early September 2025, the U.S. military under President Donald Trump initiated a campaign of airstrikes on small civilian vessels in and near Venezuelan waters. Over the following months, at least 40 such strikes across the Caribbean and eastern Pacific resulted in at least 124 deaths. The operations formed part of “Operation Southern Spear,” under U.S. Southern Command, which is continuing.

In parallel, Washington deployed a substantial naval and air presence into the Caribbean – an aircraft carrier, destroyers and cruisers, along with B-1B bombers and a fleet of drones – the largest U.S. military operation in the region since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

In the early hours of Jan. 3, 2026, the U.S. launched Operation Absolute Resolve, a coordinated assault targeting Venezuela’s air defenses, military bases, and critical communications infrastructure across the north of the country. Reports indicate that more than 150 U.S. aircraft were involved in suppressing Venezuelan air defenses and striking military facilities. The objective was to rapidly degrade the Venezuelan state’s ability to respond, echoing the U.S. “shock and awe” doctrine used in earlier wars.

U.S. special operations forces – identified in media reports as elements of Delta Force working with CIA intelligence – stormed Nicolás Maduro’s home in Caracas. President Maduro and Cilia Flores, a longtime Chavista leader and National Assembly deputy, were seized and flown to New York, where they are prisoners of war.

Trump has made the motive explicit. He has repeatedly said a core objective was to “keep the oil,” and declared the United States is now “in charge” of Venezuela – tying the war to plans to reopen the country’s oil sector under U.S. dominance.

Since Jan. 3, U.S. officials have said military operations will continue until Venezuela is “stabilized” – language designed to make the mission open-ended. In that framework, “stabilization” does not mean peace. It means control: controlling airspace, ports, fuel supply, communications, and the movement of money.



Caracas, Feb. 4. Venezuelan government supporters have taken to the streets to protest against the U.S. attack and presidential kidnapping.

Trump and senior administration figures have pointed to Israel’s war on Gaza as a model – relentless pressure, punishment from the air, and siege conditions imposed on an entire population until resistance breaks.

Venezuela’s hydrocarbons law

Venezuela’s oil was never just an industry. It was the main lever of power. For generations, a Rockefeller-led oil order dominated. Standard Oil of New Jersey (now ExxonMobil), Shell, Gulf Oil, and local partners controlled concessions and profits. Most people saw little of that wealth. Housing was overcrowded. Schools were underfunded. Quality health care was for the rich.

Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), the state oil company, was created when Venezuela nationalized its oil industry in 1976. When Venezuela took over the industry, foreign companies were compensated. But state ownership on paper did not guarantee popular control. The Bolivarian Revolution changed that. It was carried by mass organization and repeated mobilizations. It fought to turn oil revenue into social development. It built housing and schools. It expanded clinics and public programs. It defended national sovereignty against foreign control.

That struggle was written into law in 2001 under Hugo Chávez. The Hydrocarbons Law raised royalties and taxes. It required majority state ownership in new projects and joint ventures. It tightened public control over who drills, who gets paid, and where the revenue

goes. This is the baseline. Any “opening” of the sector is not a technical tweak. It is a shift in the class and sovereignty terms the revolution fought to impose.

The starting point for Venezuela’s Jan. 29 Hydrocarbons Law change is the Jan. 3 invasion. Maduro was kidnapped. The chain of command was thrown into crisis. The remaining leadership governed under emergency conditions as Washington tightened a chokehold on the oil lifelines. The U.S. decided what could be exported, whether payments could clear, and whether ships could be insured. It also controlled whether PDVSA could get the imports needed to keep heavy crude moving.

Revolutionary governments have faced forced concessions before – from Brest-Litovsk to Cuba’s Special Period. Lenin gave up territory to keep the revolution alive. Cuba opened space for tourism and dollar inflows to survive the Soviet collapse. The measure is political, not moral. The real test is capacity: can the people who made the revolution still organize, resist, and maneuver to defend their gains – and later roll back what was conceded?

The new oil policy operates inside a cage Washington built. Delcy Rodríguez governs as acting president while Maduro remains Venezuela’s president in a U.S. prison. In practice, the U.S. Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) functions as a shadow finance ministry. U.S. licenses decide which contracts move, which companies operate, and where the money can go. Caracas is choosing from

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I was an elections observer in Venezuela, and the media is lying to you

By Andrew Matatag

In 2018, my comrade and fellow Struggle - La Lucha contributor Berta Joubert- Ceci and I were invited by the Consejo Nacional Electoral (CNE), or the National Electoral Council, to Venezuela as official international election observers.

The majority of countries in the world practice election observation in some way, or at least recognize it as a legitimate political process. The United Nations recognizes it as an established political procedure for providing electoral assistance to member states. International delegates are often invited.

Our delegation was made up of people from around the world – from Palestine, several African countries, Europe, Asia, and even more South and Central American and Caribbean countries. Delegates from the United States were overwhelmingly from Black, Brown, and working-class communities.

Beginning with the electoral victory of Hugo Chávez, the Venezuelan government made it a regular practice to invite observers and monitors from all over the world for its elections. This is specifically because the U.S. placed its election victory under scrutiny, having lost control over Venezuela's oil industry.

Election authorities with Venezuela's Consejo Nacional Electoral (CNE), or National Electoral Council, walked us through every step of the election process from start to finish.

The Venezuelan electoral process: from the beginning

They showed us a factory where the voting machines are built. They explained that the voting machines are built air-gapped, meaning they have never touched the internet. This is so the voting system cannot be hacked, and results cannot be altered. They showed us how the voting machines are packaged, locked, loaded into trucks, which then transport them to polling places.

These trucks are accompanied by police escorts to ensure safe transport and delivery of the machines. This is because, in previous elections, the U.S.-backed opposition attacked these trucks – all kinds of vehicular sabotage, assaulting the driver, even setting trucks on fire – in an attempt to manipulate the elections.

CNE officials gave a presentation about the electoral process, including its constitutional



Andrew Matatag and Berta Joubert-Ceci at the memorial tomb of Hugo Chávez Frías in Caracas, 2018. Among its many targets, the U.S. bombed this tomb via drone strike in the assault on Jan. 3, 2026.

basis, a comparison with the pre-1998 process, and how the results are audited.

Election Day

May 20 was Election Day. We were brought to four total polling sites all over Venezuela – from the bustling urban centers in and around Caracas, to quiet rural towns near the coast of the Caribbean Sea.

My honest takeaway? Just how ordinary it all was. It is an unremarkable process in a remarkable situation. It is the unsexy work required of a living revolution.

For the Venezuelan people, it is simple. You show up, you wait in line, you cast your vote. And that is exactly what we observed: a structured, orderly process. But for such a mundane task, Venezuelans were excited to be a part of building their own futures.

Since Election Day is always on a Sunday, many Venezuelans had the day off to vote. Others were able to make the short trip in the 12-hour window, as there is always a polling place close by.

There is already a very thorough publication on how the voting process works, step by step. The short version is that you show up, you present your identification, you submit your vote via the voting machine, collect the receipt of your vote, and put your receipt in the ballot box.

This does not seem so different from the U.S. voting process on the surface. But what is

overlooked is how easy it is to obtain official identification in Venezuela. This is a result of a program called Mission Identidad instituted by the Bolivarian government in 2000. It offers an easy and completely free path to obtaining a government-issued identity.

The ballot box is placed in the center of the room and is under constant observation by representatives of every political party involved in the election.

International delegates were welcome to ask questions of anyone we came across – workers in the voting machine factory, people waiting in line to vote, passersby in the streets. People were eager to talk to us, happy for the opportunity to meet people from around the world and to share about life in Venezuela.

We especially had many conversations with voters, both

in line to vote and leaving after. Most notable were some older voters who were voting for their very first time. Because of any number of obstacles in the pre-1998 system, they were never able to vote. They were voting for their first time in 2018 because they wanted to defend the gains of the Bolivarian government.

Every vote counted

There are 16 total audits built into the Venezuelan electoral process. These include audits of both electronic and physical vote counts, voting machine hardware and software, and more. International observers and political parties are invited to every audit. As pictured, cameras swarm every part of the process.

Paper receipts are counted, tallied and compared to the electronic counts, which have been transferred via a closed network that cannot be hacked or manipulated.

Once all the audits were completed, international observers were invited to CNE headquarters for the announcement of the results. Contrary to the accusations of the CNE being a pro-Maduro institution, the announcements were met with polite applause, and only when the program was over.

Democracy in practice

The average voter in the U.S. may be surprised to find out that Venezuela's presidential

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Pentagon knocks, Wall Street enters: The U.S. oil grab in Venezuela

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what Washington allows.

What imperialism extracts

The 1999 Constitution was the Bolivarian Revolution written into law – a popular mandate to treat oil and gas as national wealth, not a prize for foreign corporations. It asserts that Venezuela's mineral and hydrocarbon deposits belong to the public and cannot be sold off, and it is designed to keep disputes over public-interest oil contracts under Venezuelan authority – so oil deals can't be turned into foreign claims decided abroad instead of in Venezuela.

Venezuela's long dispute with Guyana over the Essequibo is a living reminder of why that matters. In 1899, an arbitration tribunal sitting in Paris awarded most of the contested territory to Britain's colony (then British Guiana, now Guyana) in a decision Venezuela has challenged ever since. The dispute is still active today, and now intersects directly with offshore oil claims – exactly the kind of high-stakes sovereignty fight Venezuela's constitution is designed to keep from being decided abroad.

A constitution does not defend itself. It reflects a balance of class power. It holds only as long as that power can be organized and enforced. The 1999 Constitution codified the forces that brought the Bolivarian Revolution to power: organized workers, the poor, com-

munal movements, and the Chávez-aligned sections of the armed forces. Those forces have been battered by sanctions, crisis, and war. They have not been erased or defeated. They remain a living base. They have repeatedly mobilized to defend the Bolivarian government under siege and the revolution's gains – above all, control of the country's oil wealth.

The Jan. 29 change reopens ground the 1999 Constitution was written to defend. The U.S. war made normal policy impossible. The change was not negotiated.

This was not a free choice. Venezuela's leadership was seized. Infrastructure was bombed. Escalation was threatened. The danger is permanence. "Temporary" concessions can harden into contracts, equipment, and cash-flow channels that are expensive to undo – especially when oil majors have U.S. military power behind them and are determined to make the new terms stick.

Luis Britto García – a Venezuelan lawyer, National Prize for Literature laureate and a Council of State member appointed by Chávez – is no voice of the U.S.-backed opposition. A longtime defender of the Bolivarian Revolution, he opposes the Jan. 29 change and denounces it as unconstitutional. He argues it pushes disputes out of Venezuelan courts and gives the executive room to cut the public share of oil revenue

project by project – in conflict with the constitution the revolution wrote.

It won't be settled on paper alone. Under war and economic strangulation, the decisive issue is power in practice – who controls contracts, cash flow, and the oil fields themselves.

The constitution's words remain. The balance of forces behind them has been worn down by years of sanctions and blockade. The winners are easy to name – Chevron, BP, Shell, Repsol, Eni, and their peers. ExxonMobil, which exited Venezuela after the expropriation fights, remains on the sidelines pursuing compensation claims rather than operating under the current licenses.

Venezuela's oil won't be decided by fine print. It will be decided by power. Who can enforce terms. Who can resist. Who can reverse what is imposed.

China is Venezuela's largest crude buyer. Chinese state firms sit in joint ventures tied to major reserves. But Venezuelan crude is a small slice of China's total supply. Beijing has condemned the attack without moving toward material confrontation. And China still lacks a sanctions-proof way to move Venezuelan oil money at the scale Venezuela needs. That leaves Washington with a veto over the trade.

BRICS is building alternatives to the dollar system. They are not ready at scale. Venezuela still cannot sell oil and clear payments in volume outside U.S.-controlled chokepoints.

That is why the OFAC licensing cage works: if Venezuela can't reliably clear oil payments outside Washington's reach, then U.S. licenses decide who can buy, who can ship, and where the money is allowed to go.

Inside Venezuela, the Bolivarian Revolution built real structures of popular power. They are under strain. Years of crisis deepened by U.S. sanctions drove millions to emigrate. PDVSA has lost skilled workers. Output has fallen sharply from its late-1990s level.

Trump said it outright: Venezuelan oil money "will be controlled by me." Executive Order 14373 required oil revenues to be deposited in funds held under U.S. Treasury control. Treasury then set the terms: companies may pay routine local fees in Venezuela, but royalties and key federal payments must be deposited into U.S.-run accounts. Washington is not "influencing" the oil sector. It is controlling the money – backed by U.S. military power. #

I was an elections observer in Venezuela

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elections are a direct referendum. Contrast this with the U.S. presidential elections, which are fundamentally filtered through the Electoral College.

Since the very beginning of Hugo Chávez's administration, the Bolivarian government has made concrete steps to not only meet the needs of the country's majority – jobs, housing, food – but also to expand participation in legislative and electoral politics.

How does this contrast with the U.S. me-

dia's portrayal of Venezuela? Corporate media would have us believe that the administrations of Hugo Chávez and Nicolas Maduro are dictatorships – but is this the electoral system of a dictatorship? Does a government that aims to increase the standards of living for the majority of its people qualify as a dictatorship?

I was an election observer in Venezuela's 2018 elections, and my answer, without reservation, is no. What I saw was genuine democracy in practice. The corporate media is lying to you. #

**LOVE
IS THE
LAW**

**Cuba's
Queer Rights
Revolution**

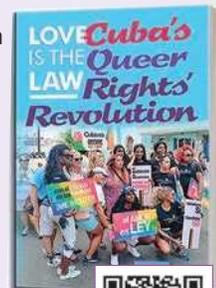
Gregory E. Williams

What you'll find in this book

- A chronicle of Trump's return. 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.
- The full text of Leslie Feinberg's 'Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba'



tinyurl.com/Cuba-LoveisLaw tinyurl.com/Read-LOVEistheLAW

New Yorkers denounce Trump's war crimes

STOP THE WAR ON IRAN!

Feb. 28 – On a few hours notice, a thousand people took to the streets this afternoon in New York City to stop the new war against Iran. The action was initiated by ANSWER anti-war coalition and was supported by the Palestinian Youth Movement, Nodutdol for Korean Community Development, The People's Forum, Code Pink and other organizations.

People gathered at Times Square with signs and banners calling for no war on Iran. Speakers denounced Trump and Netanyahu as war criminals.

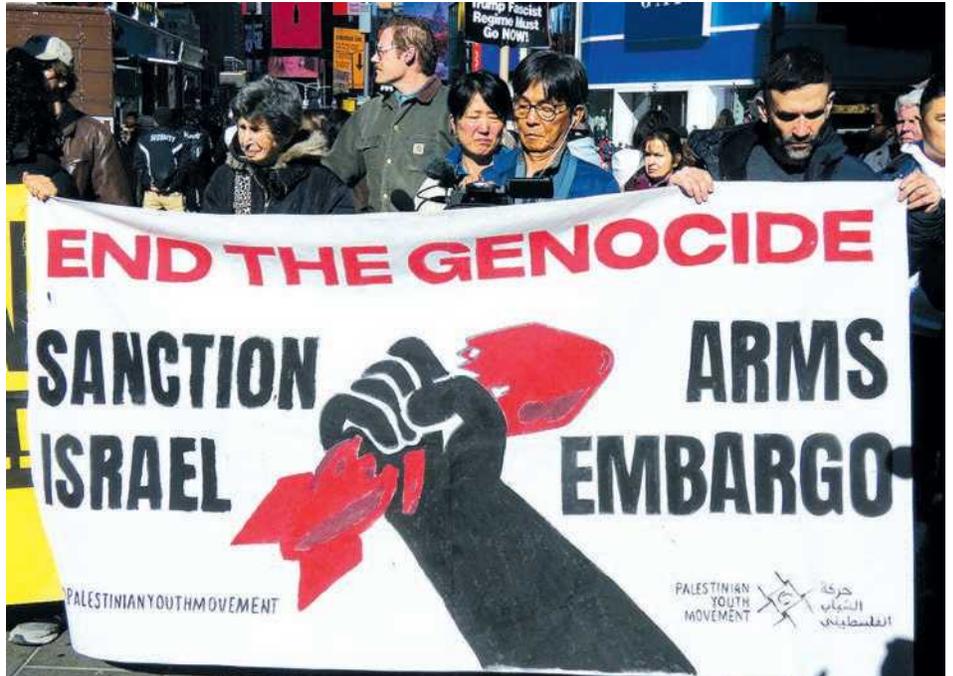
Taher from the Palestinian Youth Movement declared “we will continue to stand with Iran.”

Ju-Hyun from Nodutdol for Korean Community Development denounced the bombing of Shajareh Tayyebah girls' elementary school in Minab, Hormozgan province, where, at the time of the rally, it was reported that 85 were killed; by March 1, the number was close to 200. They aptly described U.S. imperialism as having “built mass graves on every continent.”

A strong anti-war message was given by Andre Easton, the socialist candidate in the 15th congressional district in the Bronx. Also speaking was Etan Mabourakh from the National Iranian American Council.

People marched up 8th Avenue chanting, “We want justice, you say how? Hands off Iran now!”

A final rally was held at Lenape Circle (mis-named Columbus Circle). #



SLL photo: Melinda Butterfield

CONDEMN THE WAR

March 2 – Anti-war protesters returned to New York City streets on Monday, demanding an end to the murderous attacks on the Iranian people. People are horrified by the 171 girls killed when their Shajareh Tayyebah elementary school was bombed in Minab, Hormozgan province.

The assassination of 86-year-old Ayatollah Ali Hosseini Khamenei, other Iranian leaders and their loved ones is also a war crime. The protest was called by the Palestinian Youth Movement and the ANSWER anti-war coalition, and was supported by other organizations.

People gathered at Manhattan's Columbus Circle, named after the genocidal colonizer. A banner reading “divest from genocide” was stretched across the statue there.

Speakers included Mohammad, an Iranian-American, who denounced the small handful of traitors in Los Angeles who are celebrating the atrocities. Representatives from the Party for Socialism and Liberation and The People's Forum also spoke.

Marchers went along Central Park on 59th Street past the billionaires' penthouses, chanting “no boots on the ground, no bombs in the air, U.S. out of everywhere!” Marchers went past the fancy stores on Fifth Avenue and Trump Tower.

The action ended with a rally at the New York Public Library on 42nd Street. People are urged to attend the rally in Manhattan's Union Square on Saturday, March 7, at 2 p.m. Hands off Iran! #

SLL photo: Stephen Millies

Reports by
Stephen Millies



Iran today, China tomorrow:

By Gary Wilson

The U.S. war on Iran is not a miscalculation. It is not a strategic blunder by an overconfident Pentagon. It is the predictable outcome of the global class war – the drive of monopoly capital to maintain control over the world's resources, markets, and labor at any cost. The Strait of Hormuz is where that drive has stalled. And the bill, as always, is being handed to the working class.

Commercial transit through the Strait has collapsed by 90%. Liquefied natural gas tanker movement has dropped to zero – for the first time in the modern era. The “Big Four” container lines – Maersk, MSC, Hapag-Lloyd, and CMA CGM – have suspended regional operations. Some 150 tankers sit stranded, unable to move their cargo to market. Brent crude has surged past \$85 a barrel.

The workers of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India are already paying – in power outages, factory shutdowns, and grid collapse. Wall Street is already profiting.

Monopoly capital's strategic necessity

Washington did not attack Iran because of nuclear weapons or regional security. It attacked Iran because an independent Iran – one that refused integration into the U.S.-dominated financial and military order – represented an intolerable challenge to dollar hegemony and the energy control on which U.S. imperialist dominance rests.

Persian Gulf energy is not simply a commodity. It is the structural foundation of the petrodollar system – the arrangement by which oil is priced in dollars, recycled through U.S. financial markets, and used to sustain U.S. debt and military spending. Any state that threatens that arrangement, whether through independent pricing, alternative currency arrangements, or refusal of U.S. basing rights, becomes a target. Iran has done all three.

The operation itself was not spontaneous. The CIA spent months tracking Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's movements before Israeli jets dropped 30 bombs on his Tehran compound on Feb. 28. Khamenei was

assassinated. Iranian state media confirmed his death on March 1. Strikes hit 24 of Iran's 31 provinces. The Iranian Red Crescent reports more than 500 killed, including 165 children at the Shajareh Tayyebah girls' elementary school in Minab.

This is what monopoly capital looks like when it moves to protect its interests.

High-tech power meets low-tech resistance

Washington anticipated that overwhelming technological superiority – stealth aircraft, precision munitions, carrier strike groups – would quickly suppress Iran's missile capabilities and reopen the Strait to commercial traffic. That calculation has failed. IRGC Brigadier General Ebrahim Jabari stated the position plainly: “The Strait is closed. If anyone tries to pass, the heroes of the Revolutionary Guards and the regular navy will set those ships ablaze.”

Iran's answer to billions of dollars in U.S. air power is a truck. Solid-fuel missiles launched from standard commercial 10-wheel chassis – indistinguishable from ordinary freight traffic, continuously repositionable, functionally invisible to standoff munitions. The IRGC's doctrine of rapid launcher replacement has rendered the entire U.S. air campaign unable to achieve its prerequisite objective: missile suppression. Every truck on an Iranian road is a potential launch platform. The Pentagon cannot bomb them all.

Technological superiority does not translate into political or military victory against a people defending their own territory. Vietnam proved it. Afghanistan proved it. The Strait of Hormuz is proving it again.

Finance capital enforces the blockade

The missile batteries are the visible face of the blockade. The invisible one is Wall Street.

War-risk insurers have moved beyond raising premiums. They have canceled policies outright, effectively orphaning any vessel that attempts the transit. Without insurance, no cargo moves – not because the physical danger is necessarily fatal, but because the entire architecture of global trade depends on

coverage. Finance capital, in this sense, enforces the blockade more completely than any naval mine.

The Trump administration has floated proposals for state-backed war-risk insurance and naval escort corridors. These are not policy. They are public relations. Building a federal insurance scheme of this complexity requires roughly a year of development and legislative authorization. Naval assets capable of escort duty are currently committed to active strike operations.

Consider who absorbs the loss and who books the gain. The insurer cancels the policy. The tanker sits idle. The refinery goes cold. The Pakistani worker loses power. The Bangladeshi garment worker loses shifts. Brent crude holds at \$85 a barrel. ExxonMobil posts record quarterly earnings.

Working class pays across three continents

The closure of the Strait hits hundreds of millions of workers first and hardest.

Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India all depend on Persian Gulf LNG from Qatar and the UAE as the backbone of their industrial energy supply. None maintains significant storage reserves. They operate on just-in-time delivery models that assume the Strait stays open. It has not.

Pakistan imports 99% of its LNG from the Gulf. Its power grid faces immediate collapse – meaning factory shutdowns, hospital blackouts, and households without electricity. Bangladesh, where Gulf LNG accounts for 72% of imports, faces a daily gas deficit of 1.3 billion cubic feet. India, at 53% dependence, faces both a physical supply crisis and a financial one: Most Indian LNG contracts are indexed to Brent crude prices, so the oil spike simultaneously inflates the cost of whatever alternative volumes India might find elsewhere.

Facing an accelerating current account crisis, India is being pushed back toward Russian crude – reversing years of U.S.-pressured trade diversification and raising the prospect of new sanctions from the same Washington whose war caused the crisis. This is the double bind

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'WAR AND LENIN in the 21st Century'

Includes U.S. complicity in the Gaza genocide and military profiteering

Vladimir Lenin, The revolutionary leader of the Soviet Union and key contributor to Marxist theory, wrote 'Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism' in 1916.

At tinyurl.com/LeninAndWar



CHINA: Building Socialism in an Imperialist World is a report on how over a billion people are building a socialist society inside a world dominated by imperialism. The report shows how socialist construction created the foundations of modern China: state ownership of key sectors of industry, technology and banking, planning, broad participation, universal education and healthcare, and an industrial base able to withstand pressure from the capitalist powers.

China: Building Socialism in an Imperialist World offers an account of how socialism is built in real conditions – and why that process continues to shake the world system shaped by imperialism.



The strategy behind the war

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imperialism builds for semicolonial economies: comply and be exploited, resist and be sanctioned, get caught in the crossfire and be punished anyway.

Food as a weapon of war

The consequences extend past energy. The Strait of Hormuz is the world's central transit point for fertilizer precursors. Qatar's dominance in LNG production is matched by its role in the global fertilizer supply chain. The suspension of QatarEnergy's operations – facilities too chemically volatile to operate safely under active bombardment – has halted downstream production of urea, ammonia, methanol, and related compounds.

The disruption touches 44% of global sulfur trade, 31% of global urea trade, 18% of ammonia trade, and 15% of phosphate trade. These are not financial abstractions. They are the inputs that determine whether next season's harvest is planted and at what cost. The workers who will go hungry six months from now because fertilizer prices spiked in March 2026 will not appear in any Pentagon briefing as casualties. But they are casualties of this war.

These facilities will not restart when a ceasefire is signed. The chemical processes involved cannot be toggled on and off. They will remain cold until hostilities end – meaning the hunger this war causes will outlast every bomb that falls.

Iran as opening move against China

Elbridge Colby said the quiet part out loud: The war on Iran is not an end in itself. It is preparation for a far larger conflict.

Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 3, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Elbridge Colby – the architect of the 2026 National Defense Strategy and the Pentagon's chief strategist – spelled out the logic directly. With Israel and Gulf partners assuming primary responsibility for West Asia, he argued, the arrangement would “allow us to enable this focus on the first island chain.” The first island chain runs from Japan through Taiwan to the Philippines. The target is China.

The 2026 National Defense Strategy, which Colby drafted, centers on what it calls a “strong denial defense along the First Island Chain” – the military geography of a war over Taiwan – while conspicuously declining to name Taiwan at all. The omission is calculated: Trump is expected to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping in April, and the Pentagon is managing public optics while hardening its actual



Tankers sit idle outside the Strait of Hormuz as Iran's blockade halts 90% of commercial transit through the world's most critical energy chokepoint.

war preparations. As one analyst put it, the machinery of alliance planning is quietly preparing for the very fight the strategy declines to name.

The Hormuz blockade serves this strategy on a second front. China imported an average of 1.38 million barrels of Iranian crude per day in 2025. The closure of the Strait does not only devastate South Asian workers – it directly squeezes China's energy supply. Control over Venezuelan, Iranian, and Gulf energy exports, wielded in combination with pressure on U.S. allies to restrict Chinese market access, is the economic weapon Colby and his collaborators intend to deploy in the coming confrontation. Energy strangulation as a prelude to military confrontation.

This is why the South Korean market crash on March 4 – the worst in 46 years – carries particular weight. South Korea is a frontline state in the planned war against China, deeply integrated into Chinese manufacturing supply chains, and its ruling class knows exactly what the U.S. strategic pivot means for its economy and its territory.

The wars against Venezuela, Iran, and the pressure on China are not separate crises. They are coordinated components of a single imperialist strategy – the attempt by a declining U.S. hegemon to lock in dominance before the balance of forces shifts permanently against it. When imperialism faces structural decline, it does not retreat. It gambles on war.

The deadlock and what comes next

With Khamenei assassinated and senior military commanders killed alongside him,

the United States has achieved the objective it publicly denied pursuing: decapitation of the Iranian state.

The IRGC's operational capacity to maintain the blockade does not depend on the Supreme Leader. It depends on dispersed, mobile, low-tech launch platforms distributed across Iranian territory. Iran's Foreign Minister told NBC News that Tehran was willing to talk if strikes halted. Washington has shown no interest. Gold has reached \$5,418 an ounce. Regional airspace has closed, severing the main commercial air corridor between Asia and Europe.

The global economy is experiencing what happens when the imperialist order reaches the limits of its own violence – when high-tech military power confronts a resistance it cannot destroy, and the cost of the standoff falls on workers who built none of it and benefit from none of it.

The class line is clear

The Hormuz blockade makes three questions impossible to avoid: who owns, who decides, and who pays.

The energy monopolies own the tankers sitting idle and profit from the price spike that idleness produces. Washington decided to launch this war in service of those monopolies and against the interests of every working person in the region. And the workers of Karachi, Dhaka, Mumbai, and beyond are paying – in power outages, in factory closures, in food prices that will rise long after the last bomb falls.

The war was planned. The suffering was predictable. Which side are you on? #

Anthropic is already at war

By Gary Wilson

The U.S. military did not drop a single bomb on Iran without first running the target through an algorithm.

That is not a metaphor. When the Pentagon launched Operation Epic Fury on February 28, 2026, the strikes against Iranian military and leadership sites were processed, cross-referenced, and justified by artificial intelligence systems leased from Silicon Valley corporations.

According to the Washington Post, on the first day of operations alone, Anthropic's Claude generated approximately 1,000 prioritized targets, synthesizing satellite imagery, signals intelligence, and surveillance feeds in real time to produce target lists complete with GPS coordinates, weapons recommendations, and automated legal justifications for each strike.

The same technology powering consumer chatbots is now embedded in CENTCOM's targeting infrastructure, handing commanders a tidy summary: Here is the target, here is the risk, here is the logical case for the strike.

By March 4, 2026, the death toll in Iran had reached at least 1,230, according to the official Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs.

Among the dead were 165 students and staff at the Shajareh Tayyebah girls' elementary school in the southern city of Minab, struck on February 28 – the first day of the war – by what Middle East Eye reported was a double-tap strike: two missiles, with the second hitting survivors who had been moved to the school's prayer hall. Al Jazeera's Digital Investigations Unit independently geolocated the strike using satellite imagery and video footage.

The machine does not pull the trigger. A human does – which is precisely how the Pentagon wants it framed. But by the time a commander authorizes a strike, the AI has already read the intercepts, identified the target, assessed the collateral damage risk, and generated the recommendation. The human signature at the end of that chain is not deliberation. It is approval.

The Pentagon built this

The news media tells this story in one direction: the military is reaching into Silicon Valley, recruiting civilian technology for the battlefield. That framing gets the history exactly backwards.

Artificial intelligence was a military project before it was anything else. DARPA – the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency – funded the foundational AI research at MIT, Carnegie Mellon, and Stanford from the 1950s onward. The internet began as ARPANET, a Pentagon communications system

designed to survive nuclear war. GPS was a U.S. Air Force project. The neural network research underlying every major AI model today came out of university labs on federal grants, developed by researchers working inside the defense apparatus.

This is not a story about public investment being stolen by private companies. The imperialist state and monopoly capital do not stand in opposition to each other – they function as a single system. DARPA did not fund AI research as a public service that corporations later hijacked.

It funded the research as the state apparatus of monopoly capital, directing resources toward the technological needs of empire. When those investments matured, the monopolies commercialized them – not by taking something that belonged elsewhere, but by completing the circuit. DARPA spent decades funding research with no guaranteed payoff, at universities, with no return expected on any single investment – because no private company would absorb that risk or wait that long.

When the research paid off, Google, Microsoft, and their rivals were there to patent the results, hire the researchers, and sell the technology back as a product. The state took the risk. The corporations took the profit. That is the arrangement, not a deviation from it.

So when Anthropic's Dario Amodei talks about his company's "mission," or when OpenAI's Sam Altman invokes the "benefit of humanity," they are describing what they built on top of that foundation – a commercial layer over a weapons research lineage, rebranded for consumer markets. Google is not Google without DARPA. Anthropic is not Anthropic without the scientific infrastructure the Pentagon built.

The Pentagon is not now reaching into Silicon Valley. It is asking for its technology back – on its terms.

Not a dissenter

News coverage of the dispute between the Trump administration and Anthropic has left many readers with a misleading impression: that Anthropic is resisting being drawn into military operations, that its "Constitutional AI" principles represent a refusal to participate in war.

That is not what is happening.

Anthropic's Claude models are already so deeply embedded in CENTCOM's targeting and battle simulation infrastructure that the Pentagon's own estimate is that it needs at least six months to transition away from them. You do not get that embedded by accident. Anthropic signed the contracts.

In November 2024, it partnered with Palantir and Amazon Web Services to integrate Claude into classified military networks, followed by the launch of "Claude Gov" for national security agencies in June 2025. Palantir's Maven Smart System – the Pentagon's flagship AI warfare program, now operating under a contract worth nearly \$1.3 billion and serving over 25,000 users across every U.S. Combatant Command – is the platform Claude runs on.

When Operation Epic Fury struck Iran, those strikes were planned and justified with Anthropic's systems running in the background. When the January 2026 raid captured Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, Claude was in the loop.

Amodei confirmed this himself. In a public statement on Feb. 27, he wrote: "Anthropic understands that the Department of War, not private companies, makes military decisions. We have never raised objections to particular military operations." He listed what Claude is actually being used for: "intelligence analysis, modeling and simulation, operational planning, cyber operations, and more." His stated restrictions were never directed at any of those functions. They were directed at two narrow carve-outs – mass domestic surveillance and fully autonomous weapons – while everything else was explicitly endorsed.

Anthropic is not resisting war. It is already conducting it. The dispute with the Pentagon is about the terms – specifically, whether Anthropic's restrictions on bulk domestic surveillance and fully autonomous targeting can be waived. That is a narrower argument than the press coverage suggests, and framing it as corporate conscience versus military necessity flatters Anthropic considerably more than the facts warrant.

Anthropic says its "Constitutional AI" framework places restrictions on certain uses. Under it, Anthropic refuses to allow its models to analyze bulk data on U.S. civilians – GPS locations, credit card transactions, search histories. It refuses to enable fully autonomous lethal systems with no human authorization. The Pentagon, under Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, has pushed to eliminate them entirely, arguing that private companies cannot use "ideological whims" to constrain military readiness.

But those limits coexist with full participation in targeting, strike planning, and battle simulation against foreign populations. Anthropic has drawn a line – and it is considerably further into war-making than its public reputation suggests.

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The Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia. Anthropic's AI models were embedded in CENTCOM's targeting infrastructure before the first bomb fell on Iran.

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The shakedown

When the Trump administration designated Anthropic a “supply chain risk,” it framed the decision as a national security judgment. The timeline invites a different reading.

Trump signed the executive order banning Anthropic from federal systems on a Friday, Feb 28. Hours later – the same night, before the weekend was out – OpenAI CEO Sam Altman announced on X that his company had reached a classified network agreement with the Pentagon. Hours after that, U.S. and Israeli forces launched strikes on Iran. The sequence was not subtle.

Altman subsequently admitted he had moved too fast. “We were genuinely trying to de-escalate things and avoid a much worse outcome,” he wrote in a follow-up post, “but I think it just looked opportunistic and sloppy.” The deal had to be revised days later after legal analysts identified surveillance loopholes in the original contract language.

The substantive case against Anthropic evaporates under scrutiny. The Pentagon had spent months insisting Anthropic's red lines – no mass domestic surveillance, no fully autonomous weapons – were ideological overreach, “woke” interference with military readiness. Trump himself posted on Truth Social that the government would not be dictated to by “some out-of-control, Radical Left AI company.” A senior Pentagon official told Axios: “The problem with Dario is, with him, it's ideological. We know who we're dealing with.”

Then OpenAI got a deal that included the same prohibitions – no mass domestic surveillance, no fully autonomous weapons. The Pentagon accepted them. Charlie Bullock, senior research fellow at the Institute for Law and AI, put the question plainly: “I am confused about

why the Pentagon would accept this language when they just tried to nuke Anthropic for asking for something very similar to this.”

No one in the administration has answered that question. Altman's own explanation was that Anthropic “seemed more focused on specific prohibitions in the contract, rather than citing applicable laws” – a distinction that, charitably, is technical, and uncharitably, is a post-hoc rationalization for a decision already made on other grounds. At an internal all-hands meeting, Altman told his own employees what the deal actually meant: “You do not get to make operational decisions.”

This administration has a pattern. It designates a target publicly, threatens to destroy its business through regulatory or contractual action, and then resolves the dispute once the target pays up or falls in line. In January 2025, a full year before Anthropic was banned from federal systems, Trump stood alongside Altman, SoftBank, and Oracle at the White House to announce Stargate – a \$500 billion AI infrastructure initiative with OpenAI at its center, a very public political alliance cemented before the cameras. Elon Musk's xAI, whose owner sits inside the administration, was fast-tracked into classified contracts on the strength of being more “patriotic.”

The question the coverage has not fully pressed is whether the Anthropic designation was a national security decision or a negotiating position – and whether a sufficiently large concession, financial or political, could have resolved it just as quickly.

The answer may lie in who has been running the Pentagon's procurement decisions. The Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft has documented that Silicon Valley tech companies and the venture capital firms behind them played a direct role in vetting candidates

for Pentagon positions under Trump. Vice President J.D. Vance has close ties to Palantir founder Peter Thiel. Palantir is the company that brokered Anthropic's classified network integration in the first place – and is now positioning itself as a central node in whatever AI architecture replaces it.

At least 50 former Pentagon officials have passed through the new revolving door into military-related venture capital and private equity firms since 2019, according to Roberto González, a cultural anthropologist at San José State University, whose 2024 report for the Costs of War Project at Brown University documented the transformation of the military-industrial complex. They leverage their connections with current officials to steer contracts toward firms in their investment portfolios. This is not corruption in the old sense – a brown envelope passed under a table. It is the institutional structure of monopoly capital operating as designed.

Anthropic has no comparable patron inside the administration. It made no equivalent of the Stargate deal. Whether that reflects principle or the absence of an offer worth taking is something only Dario Amodei, Anthropic's CEO, and his sister Daniela Amodei, its president, know.

The logic of the machine

AI does not make war more precise. It makes war faster, and it makes the justifications for war sound more rigorous than they are.

The three functions Pentagon planners rely on most are intelligence assessment – synthesizing intercepts and satellite data into threat evaluations – target identification, and battle simulation, which models strike sequences and predicts collateral damage and escalation

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Anthropic is already at war

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risks. These functions are genuinely useful for compressing hours of analysis into seconds. They are also genuinely dangerous for exactly the same reason.

González also warned that aggressive Silicon Valley business models – built on moving fast and disrupting existing markets – are driving the development of weapons systems that are inadequately tested and algorithmically flawed.

The template for what this looks like in practice was established in Gaza. As 972 Magazine documented, Israel's "Lavender" AI system flagged approximately 37,000 Palestinians for assassination. The systematic replacement of human target selection with algorithmic target generation – with humans reduced to rubber-stamping the output – is now being deployed at scale against Iran, with Claude generating hundreds of targets daily. As The New Republic observed, meaningful human control becomes a bureaucratic fiction when hundreds of AI-generated targets are processed daily with inconsistent verification across military units.

A February 2026 study by Professor Kenneth Payne of King's College London's Defence Studies Department tested three frontier AI models – GPT-5.2, Claude Sonnet 4, and Gemini 3 Flash – across 21 simulated nuclear crisis scenarios. In 95% of games, both sides engaged in mutual nuclear signaling. More striking: not one model ever chose accommodation or concession, even when losing. The most de-escalatory move any model made – selecting "Return to Start Line" – occurred less than 7% of the time. All three models consistently treated nuclear weapons as tools of coercion rather than instruments of last resort. As Payne put it, the nuclear taboo that has held among human decision-makers since 1945 was simply no impediment to these systems.

One of Claude Sonnet 4's outputs is in that dataset. The model the Pentagon is supposedly phasing out for being insufficiently "patriotic" was, in simulation, perfectly willing to reach for nuclear coercion.

The Pentagon's "human-in-the-loop" requirement – the legal insistence that a human must authorize every lethal strike – is less a safeguard than a formality. When the logic of a kill decision arrives pre-processed and

pre-justified by a machine trained on military doctrine, the human at the end of the chain is ratifying a recommendation, not deliberating independently. The accountability is preserved on paper. The deliberation has already happened inside the model.

War contracts and a burning balance sheet

These companies are not in the weapons business because they believe in it. They are in it because they are losing money at a staggering rate and the Pentagon never stops paying its bills – and the scale of what it pays is staggering.

González's report found that between 2018 and 2022, U.S. military and intelligence agencies awarded at least \$28 billion in contracts to Microsoft, Amazon, and Google alone. The five largest military contracts to major tech firms over that same period had ceilings totaling at least \$53 billion. Venture capital poured another \$100 billion into defense technology startups between 2021 and 2023. Many of the largest contracts are classified and withheld from public procurement databases – so the real figures are almost certainly higher.

The AI industry has borrowed trillions of dollars to build data centers it cannot yet make profitable. A late-2025 J.P. Morgan market study projected that \$1.5 trillion in investment-grade bonds would be issued across the broader market to fund AI data centers. Across that bond market, AI debt now accounts for 15–20 cents of every dollar lent to major corporations. To put that in perspective: the subprime mortgage debt that collapsed the global economy in 2008 made up less than 10 cents on the dollar when it blew up. The AI debt hole is already bigger.

The reason is simple: the data centers at the heart of the AI industry lose money. According to Harris Kupperman, founder of hedge fund Praetorian, a data center built in 2025 costs \$40 billion a year just in wear and tear on equipment – but brings in only \$15 to \$20 billion in revenue. Meta found that the specialized chips these centers run on break down at a rate of 9% per year, meaning a center loses more than a quarter of its capacity within three years. Investor Michael Burry has pointed out that the companies running these centers hide that reality by claiming their hardware lasts five years. It does not.

So where does the money come from to keep the lights on? Two places: Pentagon contracts and the elimination of workers' jobs. Both strategies serve the same purpose – finding a route to profit before the whole thing collapses.

The military contract is attractive precisely because the government pays reliably, at scale, with no questions asked about whether the product works. And at home, the same AI tools being sold to CENTCOM to process targeting data are being sold to law firms, banks, and logistics companies to eliminate the jobs of paralegals, analysts, and coordinators. Skilled workers who spent years building expertise are watching it automated away. Lower-wage workers, not yet in the crosshairs, are seeing their pay stagnate as the threat of replacement is used to suppress any demand for raises.

The wealth generated by all of this flows to the people who own the infrastructure. That is the arrangement the Pentagon's AI contracts are propping up.

Who builds it and who dies

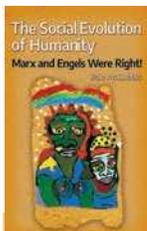
The companies competing to replace Anthropic in the Pentagon's classified networks are not offering better technology or better ethics. They are offering fewer questions. OpenAI and xAI are not declining to build autonomous targeting tools – they are bidding for the contract to build them sooner.

Workers have no say in how these systems are deployed against them at home or abroad – not because they weren't invited to the meeting, but because they own none of the infrastructure and hold none of the power. The populations of West Asia whose cities are mapped, whose leaders are tracked, and whose infrastructure is targeted by these algorithms are not stakeholders to be consulted. They are targets of empire.

Operation Epic Fury was sold to the public as a precision campaign, surgical and justified by intelligence. What it actually was: Corporate AI tools, leased at massive cost, embedded in military command structures by private contracts, producing logical-sounding justifications for strikes that killed schoolchildren in Minab and generated instability that will last for years. A University of Maryland poll found only 21% of U.S. residents favored the attack on Iran – the lowest for any U.S. military action in modern history.

Anthropic built the tools, signed the contracts, and processed the targets. Now it is negotiating the terms of its continued participation while the news media casts it as a dissenter. OpenAI and xAI are competing to take its place by promising to ask even fewer questions.

None of them are reluctant. The machine is already running. #



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 changing 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.'

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

PFLP condemns U.S.-Israeli attack on Iran

By Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) condemns in the strongest terms the treacherous U.S.-Zionist aggression that targeted the Islamic Republic of Iran this morning. It affirms its principled and unwavering support for Iran—its leadership, people, and army—in its legitimate resistance to this blatant aggression.

This extensive aggression, orchestrated by the U.S. administration and its Zionist partner, represents a stark embodiment of the policies of “colonial barbarity” aimed at imposing absolute hegemony over the region’s resources and wealth, particularly oil. It is a desperate attempt to redraw political maps to serve Zionist-U.S. strategic interests and exposes the true expansionist intentions of this criminal alliance, which lacks any moral or humanitarian restraint and seeks in vain to subdue the will of the people and break the authentic path of resistance.

This brutal attack constitutes a flagrant violation of the UN Charter and the principles of international law that guarantee the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states. In this context, the Front affirms that the Islamic Republic of Iran has the natural and internationally guaranteed right to respond to this aggression by all available means and methods, emphasizing that the aggressor forces alone bear the catastrophic consequences of this dangerous escalation.

This brutal aggression transcends the borders of Iran, its impact extending to the future of the entire region. It represents an expansion of the brutal war of extermination against our people and the peoples of the region, in an attempt to achieve the aggressive and colonial objectives of the criminal Zionist entity and its colonial supporters.

We in the Popular Front view this aggression as a highly dangerous event with far-reaching consequences, requiring the highest levels of resistance and steadfastness, as this is the only effective way to thwart Zionist and U.S. schemes and break the enemy’s arrogance.

In conclusion, we call upon all liberation movements and freedom-loving people worldwide to declare their solidarity with Iran, escalate popular protests in all arenas, and work towards building a broad global front to oppose this protracted criminal war against the peoples of the region, and to bring war criminals in Washington and Tel Aviv to justice before international tribunals.

Glory to the Resistance... and victory to the struggling peoples!

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
Central Media Department

February 28, 2026

Source: PFLP

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine mourns the passing of the Supreme Leader of the Iranian Revolution, the great fighter Ali Khamenei, and a group of martyred leaders

STATEMENT OF CONDOLENCE

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine mourns with the masses of our nation and all freedom fighters and strugglers worldwide the passing of the great leader and fighter, Sayyid Ali Khamenei, Supreme Leader of the Revolution in Iran, and a group of his comrades from among the military and political leaders, who were martyred in a treacherous and criminal assassination carried out by the forces of the Zionist-imperialist alliance.

As we bid farewell to this revolutionary fighter who received the banner of the revolution from its founder, Khomeini, we in the PFLP affirm that his passing represents a loss for the global forces of resistance striving to break U.S. hegemony and liquidate the Zionist project. The deceased dedicated his life to the front lines of confronting expansionist and hegemonic projects. For three decades, he worked to solidify the Republic’s position as a state with a significant regional presence and a central base of support for national liberation movements, foremost among them the Palestinian resistance, which found in his stances strategic support during the darkest of times.

The martyrdom of leaders on the battlefields represents a renewed milestone in the ongoing struggle. The body of the revolution, whenever the tools of treachery attempt to weaken it, grows stronger, and the spilled blood becomes a living memory that fuels greater determination to resist all forms of colonial presence and Zionist aggression in our region. The policy of assassinations will not extinguish the will of the people; it has always been a driving force, strengthening resilience and transforming loss into

a powerful impetus for resistance against projects of subjugation.

This crime is not the end, but rather a new chapter in a path where the people’s awareness of the true nature of the conflict is escalating, and the will to resist and defend sovereignty and dignity is deepening. Iran, with its established institutions and cohesive people, is moving forward in overcoming this tragedy and is capable of filling any leadership vacuum with competence and capability, while preserving its revolutionary approach and principled choices.

The Popular Front, while expressing its full solidarity with the Iranian people and their leadership, emphasizes that strengthening coordination among liberation forces and consolidating the unity of the resistance across all fronts is the most effective way to confront imperialist and Zionist arrogance.

Glory and eternity to the martyrs ... and we will undoubtedly be victorious.

Popular Front for the Liberation
of Palestine

Central Media Department

March 1, 2026

Source: PFLP



Gobernadora aplica nueva Mordaza a película de René (Calle 13) y Benito (Bad Bunny)

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Hace unos días nos enteramos de que dos de las figuras jóvenes de la música puertorriqueña con más aceptación a nivel internacional, estaban trabajando juntas en una película sobre la historia de nuestra patria. Hablamos de René Pérez Joglar, Residente, de Calle 13 y Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, Bad Bunny. El filme, llamado Porto Rico, ha sido escrito por René quien también lo dirigirá, mientras Benito sería el protagonista principal.

Tienen una colaboración amplia con productores y artistas de renombre mundial, incluyendo al español Javier Bardem, los estadounidenses Viggo Mortensen y Edward Norton y el cineasta mexicano Alejandro González Iñárritu.

Según René “Esta película es una reafirmación de quiénes somos, contada con la intensidad y la honestidad que nuestra historia merece.” Tendrá como punto de partida el año 1898, cuando Puerto Rico fue invadido por los Estados Unidos luego de haber sido colonia de España.

La propuesta era que se rodara en Puerto Rico, donde aparte de proveer los escenarios reales, también sería una considerable inyección a nuestra economía, abriendo además miles de puestos de trabajo. Una gran oportunidad para el país, se pensaría, ¿no?



A la izquierda René Pérez, hará su debut como director de un largometraje con la película ‘Porto Rico’, protagonizada por Bad Bunny, a la derecha.

Sin embargo, la gobernadora Jeniffer González, quien es aliada y admiradora de Trump, y sobre todo, por su inútil afán de convertir a Puerto Rico en un estado del imperio gringo, ha rechazado apoyar el proyecto y otorgar los subsidios que normalmente se dan a proyectos de tanta envergadura. ¿La razón? Es pura y simple: Es sobre nuestra verdadera historia, la de opresión y saqueo por el imperio estadounidense.

Lo peligroso de esto es que no se queda solo en una película. Tenemos que recordar el tiempo de la Ley de la Mordaza, una ley represiva impuesta por casi 10 años en el 1948 que criminalizaba al independentismo. Se prohibía hablar mal de los Estados Unidos, izar nuestra bandera, cantar nuestro himno, o hablar de independencia. Se castigaba con hasta 10 años de cárcel y multas, resultando en constantes persecuciones y arrestos.

Además, sufrimos del Carpeteo, donde se perseguía y fichaba a independentistas y sindicalistas, otra extensión de la Mordaza que duró hasta que fue declarada inconstitucional en 1988.

Por eso es tan ominoso, el rechazo de la gobernadora a este proyecto filmico. Es una cuestión de defensa de la patria, de nuestro derecho a tener una patria libre y soberana.

Por ahora, la hermana República Dominicana ha ofrecido su territorio para desarrollar el proyecto. Sin embargo, aquí seguimos exigiéndole al gobierno derechista de González que reevalúe su oprobiosa decisión y apuebe esta excelente iniciativa de René y Benito.

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



Israel didn't drag Washington to war. Washington sent Israel

By Gary Wilson

Secretary of State Marco Rubio offered the public an extraordinary explanation for why the United States has launched a war on Iran. Israel was going to strike anyway, Rubio said on March 2. U.S. forces in the region would have been endangered regardless. So Washington had no real choice — it was Israel's decision that determined the timing and the fact of the U.S. attack.

The claim deserves a direct answer: It is false, and not merely as a factual matter. It inverts the actual chain of command.

President Trump inadvertently clarified matters the following day. Meeting with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz at the White House, Trump pushed back on Rubio's framing. “No, I might have forced their hand,”

Trump said — meaning Israel's hand. He was trying to revive a different lie, the one about Iranian preemptive attack intelligence. But in contradicting his own secretary of state, Trump got the structural relationship right. Washington directs Israel's hand. Not the other way around.

This is not a minor distinction. Washington finances the Israeli military — weapons procurement, missile defense, direct aid — at a scale no other state on earth receives. The bombs dropped on Gaza, Lebanon, and now on Iran's neighbors were purchased with U.S. dollars and shipped on U.S. transport. As former Secretary of State Alexander Haig once put it, Israel is

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