



IRAN: U.S. pushes toward ground invasion

By Gary Wilson

The war on Iran is escalating.

Reports now indicate that the Trump administration is weighing major escalation, including seizure of Kharg Island, raids on nuclear facilities and even a large-scale U.S. ground invasion. Troops and specialized units are being moved into place. These reports should be taken seriously. They point to a new stage of the war.

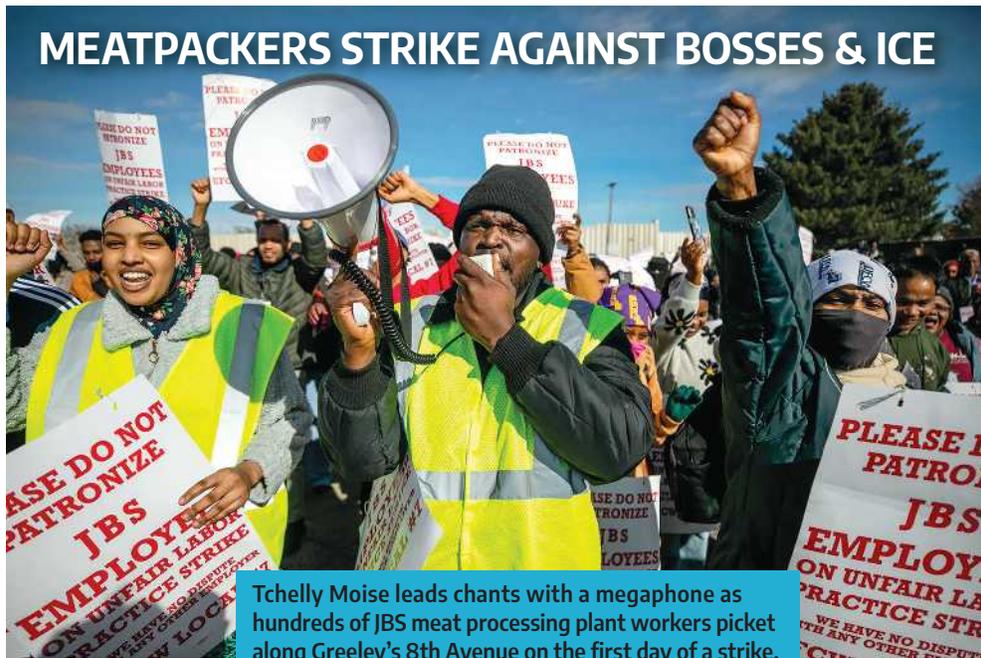
This escalation is not being prepared from a position of strength. U.S. bases in the Gulf have reportedly been rendered largely uninhabitable by repeated Iranian strikes, forcing personnel into scattered temporary sites. Weapons stocks are tightening. At the same time, the disruption of traffic through the Strait of Hormuz is pushing beyond an oil shock toward shortages in fertilizer, chemicals, industrial gases, jet fuel and other basic materials.

Washington is moving toward possible ground escalation at the very moment the military and economic conditions needed to sustain it are breaking down.

That does not make the threat less real. It makes it more dangerous.

The war has not produced submission. It has not restored secure bases, stable shipping or political control. Under those conditions, the pressure inside the U.S. ruling class is not necessarily to pull back.

Continued on page 2



MEATPACKERS STRIKE AGAINST BOSSES & ICE

Tchelly Moise leads chants with a megaphone as hundreds of JBS meat processing plant workers picket along Greeley's 8th Avenue on the first day of a strike.

ICE detention deaths rising - abolish ICE

- Al-Quds Day commemorated around the world
- Bigots don't belong anywhere
- Trump 2.0 & Supreme Court: anti-democratic, anti-worker
- Solidarity with Venezuelan and Cuban women!
- Brooklyn march for Cilia Flores
- NYC Rally Maduro / Flores
- U.S. war on Cuban women
- Activists mobilize against U.S. siege of Cuba

83 YEARS OF OIL, COUPS & WAR

- Trillion\$ war machine can't win
- When imperialism disappears from view
- \$113 oil exposes cracks in Trump's war coalition
- U.S. warship breaks under strain



U.S. pushes toward ground invasion of Iran

Continued from page 1

It is to strike harder, seize something directly and impose by force what air war and threats have not achieved.

That is the logic behind the reported planning for a “final blow.”

A wider war

The Pentagon is weighing four main escalation paths. One is the seizure or blockade of Kharg Island, Iran’s main oil export terminal. Another is a ground operation to seize enriched uranium and secure nuclear sites inside Iran. A third is a much wider bombing campaign. The fourth is the most extreme: a large-scale U.S. ground invasion.

None of these paths points toward stability. All point toward a wider war.

Kharg Island is the clearest example. It may look like a strategic prize on paper. In reality, taking it would not end the war. It would mean trying to hold a small, exposed target just off the Iranian mainland under constant missile, drone and artillery threat. Seizing it would not reopen the Strait or restore secure oil flows. It would create a position that would have to be supplied and defended under fire.

The nuclear-site scenario is no less dangerous. Bombing those facilities is one thing. Sending troops into Iran to seize and remove material from fortified inland sites is another. That is not a limited strike. That is a ground war.

Force assembly under pressure

The troop movements now being reported show the scale of the danger. The 82nd Airborne has reportedly sent about 2,000 troops to the region. The White House is said to be considering at least 10,000 more. Special operations forces, including SEAL Team Six, Delta Force and the 75th Rangers, have reportedly received deployment orders. Two Marine Expeditionary Units, built around the USS Tripoli and USS Boxer, are reportedly being moved into the region.

These troop movements are preparations for a ground war.



Oil storage tanks at Kharg Island, Iran’s main export terminal, through which most of the country’s oil passes before loading into tankers. The Trump administration is reportedly weighing seizure of the island as part of a wider escalation of the U.S. war on Iran.

At the same time, the military position underneath that escalation is fraying. Iranian strikes have driven U.S. troops out of many Gulf bases and into hotels and office space, with the surreal phrase that troops are now “working remotely.” Weapons depletion is approaching critical levels.

That matters because modern U.S. warfighting depends on secure bases, reliable logistics and a steady supply of munitions. Once those conditions begin to erode, escalation does not become impossible. It becomes more desperate.

A production crisis

The economic pressure is building just as fast.

The Strait of Hormuz remains the key pressure point in the war. As long as Iran can choke or sharply limit traffic through it, the conflict cannot be contained to the battlefield. Oil and LNG flows are disrupted, but so are shipments of urea, sulfur, helium, sulfuric acid, plastics and fuel. These are not secondary goods. They are basic inputs for agriculture, transport, manufacturing, energy systems and health care.

This is why the crisis cannot be reduced to higher prices at the pump.

What is taking shape is a production crisis. Farms depend on fertilizer. Industry depends on chemicals and gases. Airlines depend on jet fuel. Supply chains depend on plastics. When these materials stop moving, the result is not just inflation. It is shutdowns, shortages and

business failures.

As inventories already in transit are exhausted, shortages are expected to sharpen by early April, with closures, layoffs and broader disruptions spreading outward from there.

So the war is tightening pressure on two fronts at once.

It is straining the U.S. war machine, which is already operating under damaged base infrastructure, tightening weapons supply and rising vulnerability.

And it is straining the world economy, which depends on uninterrupted flows through the Gulf for energy and raw materials.

Washington’s answer, so far, is not to reverse course. It is to extend deadlines, keep threatening escalation and prepare bigger operations. The administration is lurching deeper into the war.

That is what makes this stage of the war so dangerous.

When bombing fails, pressure builds for a bigger gamble – ground troops, seizure of infrastructure, a commando raid. But every such move would deepen the same crisis already visible across the region: more bases hit, more weapons burned up and more disruption to oil and material flows.

The real danger is that U.S. imperialism appears ready to deepen the war precisely because it has failed to break Iran, reopen the Strait or secure its own bases. #

Struggle-La Lucha

Subscribe
and/or
donate



www.struggle-la-lucha.org
facebook.com/strugglelalucha
twitter.com/StruggleLaLucha
info@struggle-la-lucha.com

CONTACT STRUGGLE-LA LUCHA

ATLANTA
Atlanta@struggle-la-lucha.org

BALTIMORE
Baltimore@struggle-la-lucha.org

BOONVILLE, INDIANA
Boonville@struggle-la-lucha.org

BOSTON
Boston@struggle-la-lucha.org

DENVER
Denver@struggle-la-lucha.org

DETROIT
Detroit@struggle-la-lucha.org

LOS ANGELES
LA@struggle-la-lucha.org

NEW ORLEANS
NOLA@struggle-la-lucha.org

NEW YORK CITY
NYC@struggle-la-lucha.org

ORLANDO, FLORIDA
Orlando@struggle-la-lucha.org

SAN DIEGO
SanDiego@struggle-la-lucha.org

WASHINGTON, D.C.
DC@struggle-la-lucha.org

Immigrant meatpackers strike bosses and ICE in Greeley

By Lallan Schoenstein

On Feb. 4, workers gathered in a Greeley, Colorado hotel to vote for strike authorization, empowering the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) meatpackers union members Local 7 to go on strike if negotiations broke down.

Familiar unmarked vans circled the hotel building. Workers recognized them as ICE. They approved the authorization anyway. More than 2,000 ballots were cast. Roughly 25 opposed the strike.

On March 16, about 3,800 UFCW workers walked off the job at the JBS Swift Beef plant in Greeley. Workers the bosses expected to intimidate refused to back down.

The strike began as a two-week unfair labor practices walkout, with the option to extend. As of March 27, no settlement has been announced.

JBS employs roughly 25,000 workers across nine facilities. It is one of four corporations that control 85% of U.S. beef production.

JBS has shifted production from Greeley to a plant in Cactus, Texas. The anti-labor “National Right to Work” foundation has distributed materials urging workers to leave the union to avoid fines.

The business model

The meatpacking industry has deliberately hired a workforce drawn from Haiti, Somalia, Eritrea, Burma and Latin America.

Beginning in the 1980s, major industry leaders attempted to break UFCW’s union power by moving plants to rural areas – away from urban density and scrutiny – and by recruiting immigrant labor.

The meatpacking bosses began hiring workers who were far from home. Many had precarious legal status. Community ties were weak. Job loss carried the threat of deportation.

The bosses thought they wouldn’t need to break unions at these plants – if they collaborated with ICE. At JBS Greeley, the company’s reliance on ICE was on full display.

Roughly 90% of the 3,800 union workers are immigrants. The night shift is largely Haitian.

Some Haitian workers report being recruited through TikTok ads promising stable jobs and housing. They say they arrived to find overcrowded housing – 40 to 60 people in a house – sometimes without running water or electricity. A December lawsuit alleges human trafficking tied to a company’s HR supervisor. JBS denies the claims.

This is the workforce the company expected to stay passive.



UFCW Local 7 President Kim Cordova, front, spoke about the company’s miscalculation: “There’s 50 languages spoken at this plant. They’re hoping for division.... they underestimated their workers.”

The calculation breaks

On Feb. 3, many Haitian workers at the plant were scheduled to lose Temporary Protected Status.

Late that night, a federal judge blocked the move, ruling it was driven not by improved conditions in Haiti but by “hostility to non-white immigrants.”

Workers went to sleep unsure if they would be deportable by morning. The next day, they showed up and voted to strike.

The 99% authorization vote is not just about wages and the rotten work environment. It is a collective decision that immigration status will not be used as a weapon against them.

Kim Cordova, president of UFCW Local 7, spoke about the company’s miscalculation:

“There’s 50 languages spoken at this plant. And where JBS thinks that they can hire a vulnerable workforce, they do that by design, hoping that workers can’t talk to each other about wages and benefits or working conditions. They’re hoping that we have a division in the plant. But they underestimated their workers. The workers are smart. They’re strong. They’re hard workers. And they deserve dignity, and they deserve respect.”

Cordova is one of the few Latinas elected to union leadership in the U.S. She is paving the way for a new generation of women of color. Local 7 represents more than 23,000 grocery, meatpacking, food processing, health care workers in Colorado and Wyoming.

“For months now, JBS has been insisting on poverty-level wages for workers at the plant, offering less than 2% in average annual wage increases, far below the level of inflation in Colorado, while at the same time putting all the risk of rising healthcare costs on workers,” said Cordova in a statement.

“Make no mistake, JBS chose this strike to lower workers’ wages nationwide.”

What workers face

The meatpacking workers on the picket line have been direct about the dangerous working conditions and the impossible line speed-ups. One showed a reporter his hand – swollen, discolored from years on the line. Another described a coworker forced to keep working with a ripped protective apron that left vital areas exposed. Workers report being denied bathroom breaks and forced to soil themselves on the line.

“They don’t care about the workers,” one said. “They only care about production.”

JBS presents the strike as a routine labor dispute. The union is accused of walking away. The record shows something else:

- JBS paid \$83.5 million to settle price-fixing charges. It was part of broader cases involving hundreds of millions tied to wage suppression.
- It paid \$5.5 million for discrimination against Muslim workers in Greeley.
- Federal investigators found children as young as 13 working dangerous overnight cleaning shifts for its contractors.

Continued on page 4

Bigots don't belong anywhere

By Stephen Millies

Muslims have been here for over 400 years

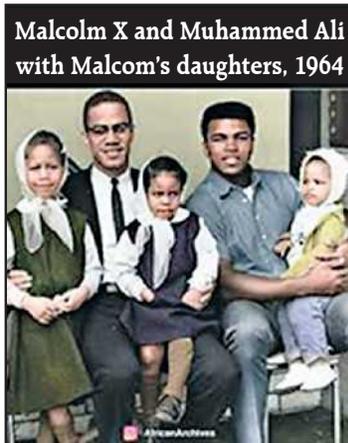
Tennessee statesman Andrew Ogles-the-fourth posted on his X account March 9, that “Muslims don't belong in American society. Pluralism is a lie.”

The representative from Tennessee's fifth congressional district followed up the next day by posting, “Muslims are unable to assimilate; they all have to go back.”

Listen up Andy: Islam has been here for centuries. Muhammad Ali, who was the world's greatest athlete, grew up in neighboring Kentucky.

Tens of thousands of Muslims were kidnapped from Africa and sold like cattle in what became the United States. If you and your boy Trump think “America is great,” enslaved Muslims helped make it so.

Muslim soldiers in the Union Army helped overthrow slavery.



Slavery wasn't just a Southern thing. The slave trade to the United States ended only when the Yankee shipowner Nathaniel Gordon – who was born in Maine – was hanged in New York harbor in 1862.

While today New York City has 45 greenmarkets that sell veggies, the Big Apple once operated a municipal slave market on Wall Street that sold human beings.

Much of the profits made from enslaved Africans on plantations ended up in the pockets of New York banksters. The big man on Wall Street during the 1860s was August Belmont, Sr., who opposed the Emancipation Proclamation.

His son, August Belmont, Jr., headed up New York City's first subway, the Interborough Rapid Transit. Next time you come to New York City, Mr. Ogles, you can take the original IRT line to visit the African Burial Ground National Monument in lower Manhattan.

Show some respect to the many Muslims who are buried there on Duane Street. Establishing this hallowed ground took a struggle.

The U.S. government sought to excavate the site. The late Sonny Abubadika Carson, the late Elombe Brath, and the Rev. Herbert Daughtry, National Presiding Minister of The House of the Lord Churches, put their bodies on the line to stop the bulldozers.

Another hatemonger is Florida congressman Randy Fine, who posted on X in February that he preferred dogs to Muslims. This bigot also wants New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, who is a Muslim, deported.

Last year, Fine posted that “Gaza must be destroyed.” These statements are not only racist and genocidal. They're also personally stupid since this bigot happens to be Jewish.

For centuries in Europe, there were bloody attacks against both Muslims and Jews. On their way to kill Muslims in Palestine and Leb-

anon, the Crusaders killed any Jewish people along the route.

Tattoos honoring serial killers

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth – a killer of Iranian school children – is a big fan of those medieval murderers and has Crusader tattoos covering his body. These symbols should be considered not only offensive to Muslims but also a threat to any Jews.

U.S. military commanders are telling their troops that the current conflict against Iran is a “holy war.” Christian holy wars have never ended very well for Jewish people.

Jews and Muslims were expelled from Spain in 1492. Both peoples were given refuge in Muslim lands.

The current Ku Klux Klan began with the lynching of the Atlanta Jewish businessman Leo Frank in 1915. Henry Ford wasn't the only U.S. corporate leader who welcomed Hitler. Black voters led the mobilization in 1991 that stopped neo-Nazi David Duke from becoming Louisiana Governor.

The publicity being given to neo-Nazi Nick Fuentes, who wants all Black people imprisoned, is a dangerous sign. The hundreds of thousands of people, including many Jews, who protested against the genocide in Gaza are leading the fight against this fascist menace.

A history of struggle

Andy Ogles and his bigotry don't represent the poor and working people of Tennessee. His congressional district has the highest median income of any in the state.

Its lines were deliberately drawn to avoid most of Nashville, home to the HBCUs Meharry Medical College and Fisk University.

The future can be seen in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where workers at a Volkswagen plant ratified their first UAW union contract.

The history of Tennessee's working class includes striking coal miners in 1891, liberating prisoners forced to perform slave labor for the Knoxville Iron Company in Coal Creek. That's inspiration for everybody to fight bigotry and Trump's war for Big Oil. #

Meatpackers strike

Continued from page 3

- During COVID, at least six workers died at the Greeley plant. JBS rejected hundreds of workers' compensation claims even as the federal government ordered the plant to remain open.
- The company made \$2 billion in profit last year.
- Its subsidiary, Pilgrim's Pride, gave \$5 million to the Trump-Vance inaugural committee. JBS paid for access to ICE enforcement.

That is the administration that is now sending ICE into the communities where JBS recruits its workforce. That is the company telling 3,800 workers it has bargained in good faith.

Divide and rule failing

ICE raids, detention and deportation are part of their management plans. The meatpacking industry depends on a workforce whose legal status can be used against it. The state enforces that system.

What is happening in Greeley is a break in that system. The courageous workers are refusing to submit to fear as a condition of their own exploitation. In Greeley, Colorado, workers have held the line for ten days.

The strike is unfolding alongside national organizing for May Day actions.

When the boss uses fear, the answer is to stop being afraid – together.

The brave strike action of UFCW Local 7 commands our solidarity. #

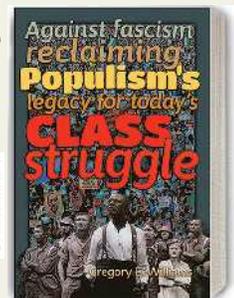
AGAINST FASCISM Gregory E. Williams Reclaiming populism's legacy for today's class struggle

- + 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'



tinyurl.com/Populism-book



Trump 2.0 shows why Supreme Court is anti-democratic, anti-worker

By Lev Koufax

In an escalation toward more traditional fascism, Donald Trump's administration – acting on behalf of the capitalist class – has consistently attacked labor rights over the past year. In particular, the Trump regime has targeted federal worker unions for complete destruction.

During his first term, Trump targeted labor unions through attacking their specific rights. Executive Orders 13836, 13837, and 13839 were issued as a package in 2018 and stripped labor unions of their offices, severely limited duty time allotted to represent workers, and empowered federal agencies to fire workers without due process. However, federal workers' basic right to a union remained.

The current version of Trump fascism wants to tighten the noose. As contemplated in Project 2025, the Trump regime has instead set out to completely nullify all labor rights for the majority of the federal workforce. In a March 19, 2025 order, President Trump excluded dozens of agencies from coverage under the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute. This statute, adopted in 1978, gives most federal workers the right to form a union, be represented by a union, and be free from retaliation or harassment due to union activity.

By exempting dozens of federal agencies from federal labor protections, Trump nullified hundreds of collective bargaining agreements and memoranda of understanding between federal unions and the federal government. With these contracts go the right to representation in disciplinary meetings, duty time for union officials, dues deductions, progressive discipline, safety and health requirements, and much more.

Facing a threat to their very existence, unions like AFGE and NTEU have challenged this executive order in the courts. While the rank and file of these unions have been prepared to take to the streets if not stop work, leadership has insisted on keeping the fight within the judiciary system. This decision comes due to massive pressure from the Democratic Party and the government itself not to create too big a wave.

Nonetheless, the unions have fought hard in federal court across the country to reinstate the various contracts. One such contract, the Master Collective Bargaining Agreement between AFGE and the VA, was recently ordered



fully reinstated by a federal judge in Rhode Island. Judge DuBose placed an injunction on the implementation of Trump's March executive order on the basis that it undermined congressional intent and violated fundamental rights to free association.

Judge DuBose's ruling should have been a huge victory for federal labor, as AFGE represents 180,000 workers at the VA alone. However, outside a cursory memo stating the contract was in effect, the VA has refused to materially restore the MCBA's provisions. Essentially, the VA is refusing to follow the court order in the hopes that they can tread water until the Supreme Court officially upholds Trump's order.

Local unions from Las Vegas, Nevada, to Altoona, Pennsylvania, have demanded that their local management abide by the MCBA per the federal court order. Local leadership has flatly refused, stating they are "awaiting guidance" from the VA central office.

The question must be posed: How can a federal agency so blithely refuse to obey a federal court order? Simply answered, because the entire system is on VA's side and the VA knows it.

It does not take an attorney to see the path of litigation around Trump's anti-labor executive orders. VA lawyers will appeal Judge DuBose's decision, and regardless of that appeal's result, the case will eventually end up before the Supreme Court of the United States. Currently, the Court is composed of mostly right-wing judges that have rubber-stamped the vast majority of Trump's fascist reforms. Government agencies like the VA are confident that upon reaching the Supreme Court, Trump's smashing of labor will prevail.

However, to reduce the role of the Supreme Court to its composition at any given time is to

miss the point of the Supreme Court, and really of the entire judiciary. Marxist scholar and thinker Sam Marcy analyzed the role of the Supreme Court in capitalism in 1989 in the wake of an anti-reproductive rights decision. Marcy analyzed that the Supreme Court has long played the role of ensuring the people's will is not executed through the law, but instead the will of the few ultra-wealthy.

Marcy wrote:

"So much talk goes on about democracy, about the rights of the people to vote and to elect,

but when it gets down to the really critical issues, political power is concentrated in undemocratic bodies that are removed from the control of the masses."

This quote holds no truer than when applied to the current Supreme Court and the entire judiciary. Even with a minor victory at the district court level, the judiciary ultimately will not allow labor unions and the workers they represent to prevail over the capitalist system. After all, the entire capitalist system, not just Trump, would see all working class organizations – no matter how weak – completely destroyed. Since its inception, the Supreme Court was intended to rule as an organ against the will of the masses of workers.

History bears this out. 2022 saw *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health*, which ended a woman's fundamental right to an abortion. In 1944's *Korematsu v. United States*, the Court upheld Franklin Roosevelt's Japanese internment policy. During the 1930s, the Supreme Court intervened to strike down New Deal legislation, including the sweeping National Industrial Recovery Act. Before that, the Supreme Court enforced segregation in *Plessy v. Ferguson* and, in the 1857 *Dred Scott* decision, ruled that Black people held no rights as citizens and that Congress had no power to restrict slavery's expansion.

The judicial branch of the United States government, from the highest court on down, has never served at the pleasure of the people or in the interests of justice. It has only ever served on behalf of the few and the wealthy. In looking for an antidote to this poison, worker organizations should look to the streets, because the capitalist courts will only ever fulfill their founding purpose. #

Brooklyn march to free Cilia Flores: Solidarity with Venezuelan women!

By Melinda Butterfield

On International Women's Day, March 8, a crowd marched to MDC Brooklyn, a federal detention center in the Sunset Park neighborhood, to demand freedom for Venezuelan First Combatant Cilia Flores and President Nicolás Maduro, as well as more than 200 ICE detainees held captive there. Flores and Maduro were illegally kidnapped by the Trump regime in early January.

The action was organized by Brooklyn Against War and supported by New York Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression, Black Alliance for Peace, Struggle for Socialism Party, Students for a Democratic Society, Freedom Road Socialist Organization, December 12 Movement, Code Pink, Workers World Party and others. Members of a Baltimore solidarity caravan for Maduro and Flores also joined the march.

Following are remarks given by Melinda Butterfield of the Struggle for Socialism Party and Women in Struggle-Mujeres en Lucha:

The Bolivarian Revolution opened up new opportunities for Venezuelan women and queer people to struggle for bodily autonomy, equality, and their rightful place as members and leaders of the people's movement. These struggles have seen great advances as well as



Melinda Butterfield speaking.

Photo: Bárbara Larissa

setbacks during this decades-long process of transformation.

We all know that the Trump regime and U.S. imperialism want to control Venezuela's oil and its oil profits, which Comandante Hugo Chávez put at the service of the Venezuelan people. But it's not the only thing they want.

They want to foreclose the opportunities for struggle by Afro-Venezuelan women, Indigenous women, trans women, lesbian women, and all Venezuelan women, just as they are trying to crush our bodily autonomy here. They want to snuff out the Bolivarian Revolution

as an example for women, queers, and all working people in Latin America.

The prisoners of war held here at MDC Brooklyn, First Combatant Cilia Flores and President Nicolás Maduro, represent the Bolivarian revolutionary process that the Republican fascists and their Democratic collaborators want to destroy. That makes their kidnapping and imprisonment a matter of highest importance for women all over the world, including women here in Brooklyn.

The Bolivarian Revolution is a true expression of democracy for the people, not the capitalists. The "democracy" U.S. imperialism wants to bring to Venezuela is the sort that murders school girls in Iran, kidnaps immigrant students off the streets of Minneapolis, starves Palestinian kids in Gaza, and strips trans youth in Brooklyn of their right to life-saving health care. That "democracy" is not worth a damn to women in Venezuela or here!

As Trump's regime attempts to consolidate fascism, its frontal attacks on all of our rights show how our futures are bound together. From Iran to Minneapolis, and from Gaza to Brooklyn, we are all facing the same enemy.

And we all have the same weapon to fight back and win: unity. We must unite our struggles, first to survive – and then to win power and ensure U.S. imperialism, the greatest enemy of the world's people, can never raise its ugly head again.

Long live the revolutionary women of Venezuela and Cuba!

Free Cilia Flores and Nicolás Maduro!

Free them all!

Tear down the walls! #



SLL photo: Melinda Butterfield

Protest at federal detention center in Brooklyn, to demand freedom for Venezuelan First Combatant Cilia Flores and President Nicolás Maduro, as well as more than 200 ICE detainees.

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;

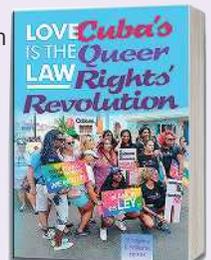
- Reports from the U.S. Friends Against Homophobia and Transphobia delegation to Cuba;
- Reports from Cenesex – the National Center for Sex

tinyurl.com/Cuba-LoveisLaw

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/Read-LOVEistheLAW



Free President Maduro and First Combatant Flores!

Hundreds come out to support kidnapped Venezuelan leaders

By Stephen Millies

March 26 – Hundreds of people came to lower Manhattan this morning to demand that Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro Moros and First Combatant Cilia Adela Flores de Maduro be set free. Both were kidnapped by the Trump regime on Jan. 3, in a high-tech military ambush in which over 100 people were killed.

The U.S. Government is refusing to allow Maduro and Flores to use Venezuelan funds to pay for their attorneys. As one of their lawyers, Barry J. Pollack, pointed out in court today, this violates the Sixth Amendment's right to counsel.

A much older legal maxim is that defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty. Nothing says less of that than the orange jumpsuits that both Maduro and Flores were forced to wear at their court appearance today.

These jumpsuits are like those worn by the inmates in the U.S. concentration camp in Guantánamo, on land stolen from Cuba. Meanwhile, Cilia Flores suffers from a serious heart condition.

The White House is trying to frame the elected president of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its First Combatant on phony charges of operating a vast drug network. This big lie is just as false as its claim that Renée Good and Alex Pretti – both killed by ICE Gestapo agents in Minneapolis – were “terrorists.”

What should be looked into is why the U.S. Justice Department dropped investigations of Citibank, Bank of America and other bankers for laundering drug money.

Before and after the Pentagon's capture of Maduro and Flores, the U.S. Navy killed at least 163 human beings on boats because they were alleged to be drug smugglers. These killings without a trial amount to lynchings on the high seas.

Loud and powerful rally

A powerful four-hour rally was held outside the Daniel Patrick Moynihan courthouse. Venezuelan flags, banners and signs were carried. “No troops on the ground, no bombs in the air, U.S. out of everywhere,” was chanted between speakers, who linked the attacks on Venezuela with the war on Iran.

Roger Wareham of the December 12th Movement reminded people that they had rallied on International Women's Day at the Brooklyn Detention Center, where Maduro



New York City, March 26 – Hundreds rallied in support of Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores outside the Daniel Patrick Moynihan courthouse.

SLL photos



John Parker, Struggle for Socialism Party



and Flores were locked up. He said that it was a very dangerous time that demanded unity.

Wareham was a member of the New York 8+ whom the Reagan administration and then U.S. Attorney Rudy Giuliani tried to frame.

John Parker from the Struggle for Socialism Party pointed out Trump's hypocrisy. “This is not about democracy. It's about imperialism,” he said.

Parker pointed out that President Bush staged an unsuccessful coup in 2002 against President Hugo Chavez. Years later, Trump tried to put in Juan Guaidó as Venezuela's leader, who hadn't even run for president.

“What's the real crime of Venezuela?” asked John Parker. “Is it nationalizing oil? It's creating a great example of building socialism with communes?”

“It's an existential threat to capitalism and imperialism. ... We know our role here is to build a movement in the belly of the beast so that we can give them the greatest stomach ache they have ever seen, inspired by the fight-back that we see today from Iran,” Parker concluded.

A speaker from the New Afrikan Black Panther Party compared the seizure of Flores and Maduro to the kidnapping of the Haitian leader Toussaint Louverture. Two hundred years later, Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was kidnapped by the United States.

Other speakers included those from Brooklyn Against War, the Freedom Road Socialist Organization, the Black Alliance for Peace, the Palaver Collective, the All-African People's Revolutionary Party, the African People's Socialist Party, and Workers World Party. #

On International Working Women's Day: The U.S. war on Cuban women

By Maybel González Marín

The following is a talk given by Maybel González Marín, an organizer from Cuba, on International Working Women's Day (IWWD), March 8, 2026. The event was hosted by Women United Against Genocide, and the talk was translated by a member of that organization.

Maybel is the Coordinator of the Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean of the Women's International Democratic Federation (Federación Democrática Internacional de Mujeres, or FDIM, in Spanish) and a member of the National Committee of the Federation of Cuban Women.



March 8 – Cuban organizer Maybel González Marín (fourth from left) spoke at an International Working Women's Day event in New York City.

Good afternoon to everyone present.

Today, I come to speak to you about a story of resistance, but also a story of unnecessary suffering. I am speaking about the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States government against the Cuban people.

This is not a new issue. We have endured this genocidal policy for more than six decades. According to reports submitted by Cuba to the United Nations, the quantifiable damage accumulated during more than 60 years of the blockade amounts to the staggering figure of more than \$164 billion, taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against gold. In terms of current prices, the damage exceeds \$1 trillion. It is an invisible wall, but more cruel than any physical border.

Let me focus on the humanitarian impact, on the invisible victims of this policy: our women, girls, and boys. In the health sector, the blockade is a silent killer. During these six decades, the inability to acquire medicines, medical equipment, raw materials, and technology in the U.S. market, or through subsidiary companies, has caused incalculable suffering. Studies by the Cuban Ministry of Public Health estimate that the blockade has caused losses of more than \$3 billion in the health sector in recent years.

But behind every figure is a face. Thousands of complex surgeries have been postponed due to a lack of instruments. During the pandemic, the blockade prevented the purchase of ventilators and protective equipment, driving up costs and delaying the response.

For women, the impact is twofold. The lack of basic supplies for childbirth, the shortage of cancer medications for breast and cervical cancer, and the difficulties in obtaining contraceptives and fertility treatments are constant. According to data from the Federation of

Cuban Women, the blockade has increased the cost of breast implants and medications for autoimmune diseases, which disproportionately affect women, by between 30% and 50%.

For children, the blockade is especially cruel. Cuba has had to search in distant and expensive markets for soy milk and nutritional supplements for children with kidney and metabolic diseases. It is estimated that the additional cost of specialized infant nutrition exceeds 40% annually. There are children who have waited months for cardiovascular surgery due to delays in the importation of catheters and heart valves, which are subject to licenses from the U.S. Treasury Department. That is the true face of the blockade: a war against the most vulnerable.

But let's not be fooled, the blockade is not static. Each U.S. administration has competed to tighten it. And today, that cruelty has a name and a date: President Trump's executive order, issued on Jan. 29, 2026, which imposes a total energy blockade against the island. This executive order has intensified the siege in an unprecedented way. Initial estimates from the Ministry of Economy and Planning indicate that in the first quarter of 2026 alone, the direct impact of this measure amounts to more than \$500 million in losses.

But the greatest damage is indirect. With this order, the United States government has specifically prohibited the arrival of oil and petroleum product shipments from any country, under threat of sanctions against shipping companies. This has led to a drop of more than 60% in fuel availability on the island compared to the same period last year.

What does this mean in practice? It means that thermoelectric power generation has been drastically reduced. In February 2026, the electricity generation deficit reached peaks of more

than 1,200 megawatts per day, causing blackouts of up to 12 to 14 hours across much of the country. For the health sector, this is devastating.

Interruptions in the operation of more than 200 hospitals and polyclinics that depend on generators, whose fuel is now being rationed, have been reported. Forty percent of the country's ambulances have had their operational capacity reduced. For pregnant women and children, this means health centers without electricity for deliveries, with-

out refrigeration for vaccines and medications, and without oxygen for critically ill patients. It is collective punishment, a flagrant violation of International Humanitarian Law.

Faced with this situation, many might ask: How is Cuba resisting? I tell you: We are resisting with creativity, with the heroic efforts of our people, with the development of our own science, as we saw with our vaccines, and with international solidarity. But creativity doesn't put food on the table. Solidarity provides relief, but it doesn't compensate for the damage. This energy blockade is not just another thorn in our side; it's a club trying to break our legs. The objective is clear: to create a scenario of ungovernability through popular discontent, artificially generated by the lack of the most basic resources. Every blackout in a maternity hospital, every operating room in darkness, every child who doesn't receive timely treatment, has a target and a culprit: the United States government.

Comrades, the executive order of Jan. 29 is not an isolated measure against a government; it is an act of war in peacetime against an entire people. Cuba is not a threat. Cuba is an example of dignity.

Today, I raise my voice to denounce this crime and to issue a call to action. To the international community: demand an end to this policy. The overwhelming annual vote at the UN against the blockade is the voice of the world's conscience, which Washington insists on ignoring. To social movements: intensify the campaign of denunciation. The blockade is a silent war. The energy blockade is a final attempt at strangulation. But as long as there is one Cuban with dignity, we will win this war.

Let us raise our voices for the end of the blockade. For the sovereignty of Cuba. Long live a free Cuba! Thank you very much. #

Activists mobilize against U.S. siege of Cuba

By Gary Wilson

NEW YORK – Activists from across the United States gathered March 14–15, calling for urgent solidarity action in response to Cuba’s deepening energy crisis intensified by Washington’s escalating blockade.

The Jan. 29 presidential executive order zeroed in on Cuba, declaring a “national emergency,” falsely alleging its government presented “an unusual and extraordinary threat. ... to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.” Although the threatened punitive tariffs for any country supplying fuel to Cuba were declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court, oil tankers have turned back.

Venezuela had supplied much of Cuba’s fuel under a long-standing cooperation agreement. After Washington’s Jan. 3 operation that kidnapped Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores, those shipments were cut off. According to the Cuban government, the island has received no oil since December, now relying on its own production and reserves.

The fuel blockade has intensified rolling blackouts across the island. In many areas, electricity outages now stretch for more than 20 hours a day, disrupting transportation, food distribution, water systems and hospital services. Fuel shortage for trucking and transportation has paused airline refueling until the beginning of April.

Against that backdrop, the 2026 International U.S.-Cuba Normalization Conference adopted a 16-point action plan aimed at strengthening the movement against the U.S. blockade and defending Cuba’s sovereignty. In response to the rapidly sharpening crisis, the National Network on Cuba had already called for a week of actions to defend Cuba from March 8 - 15, mobilizing nearly 50 actions from Oregon to Maine, Minnesota to Florida.

From normalization to emergency solidarity

The gathering brought together solidarity organizations, labor activists and community organizers from across the United States.

For many participants, the central conclusion was that the political moment has shifted. What had previously been framed as a campaign for normalization between Washington and Havana now requires an emergency defense of Cuba against an escalating economic siege and military threat.

The action plan outlines four areas of work: protest mobilization, legislative advocacy, humanitarian aid and coalition building.



Organizers called for nationally coordinated demonstrations linking the defense of Cuba with broader protests against the Trump administration.

Organizers called for nationally coordinated demonstrations linking the defense of Cuba with broader protests against the Trump administration, including mobilizations against immigration raids.

Activists also pledged to press Congress to support legislation aimed at dismantling the legal structure of the blockade while opposing new sanctions legislation.

Humanitarian aid and solidarity travel

A major section of the plan focuses on expanding humanitarian aid.

Organizations already delivering medical supplies and other assistance to Cuba reported new initiatives aimed at addressing the health consequences of the energy crisis.

Participants also endorsed plans for an international humanitarian convoy scheduled to depart from Mexico in April. Activists say the flotilla will deliver aid to the island while drawing international attention to the impact of the blockade.

Solidarity travel was another priority. The plan encourages delegations to Cuba – including May Day brigades – as a way to provide economic support and bring back firsthand reports about conditions on the island.

Expanding the movement

Conference participants stressed the need to broaden the social base of the Cuba solidarity movement inside the United States.

Organizers pointed to growing opposition to the blockade among Cuban Americans who want to maintain ties with family members on the island. South Florida, Texas and New Jersey were identified as key areas for outreach.

Labor organizing was also highlighted. Activists cited more than 120 resolutions adopted by U.S. cities and labor bodies opposing the blockade and called for similar resolutions in additional unions and community organizations.

The action plan also links defense of Cuba to broader struggles against U.S. sanctions and immigration policies, including opposition to plans to expand migrant detention at the Guantánamo naval base.

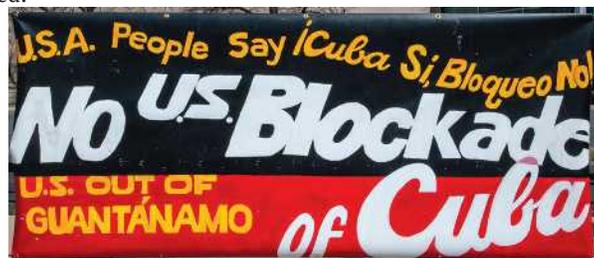
A wider confrontation

The conference took place as the United States is escalating military and economic pressure across the region, including the recent assault on Iran and the intervention in Venezuela.

Participants said the tightening blockade of Cuba is part of Washington’s broader effort to reassert control across Latin America.

With Cuba confronting severe energy shortages, activists said the task now is clear: expand the movement to end the U.S. blockade.

From protests and humanitarian aid to labor and community organizing, the campaign to defend Cuba is entering a new phase. #



Anti-imperialism in Ireland and across the world

By Penny Pinotti

The following talk was given at the “Teach-In: Stop the War on Iran” event held at the Harriet Tubman Solidarity Center in Baltimore, Maryland, on March 18, 2026, to commemorate St. Patrick’s Day.

I’m Penny with the Struggle for Socialism Party and Women in Struggle. Because yesterday was St. Patrick’s Day, I’m going to begin our event tonight by speaking about Irish resistance against imperialism and colonialism. I’m going to try to keep it brief, because I could talk for hours about the over 800 years of Irish resistance. That is a fight that continues to this day because the six counties in the north of Ireland are still occupied by Britain. After a brief background, I’m going to connect the fight in Ireland to the fight against imperialism across the world, because all of our struggles are connected.

In the 12th century, the Anglo-Norman invasion began the oppression of the Irish at the hands of the English. Violent displacement and ethnic cleansing against the primarily Catholic Irish by the predominantly Protestant English continued for centuries through conquests and English rule. Throughout this time, the Irish rebelled and fought for self-rule, for the return of their lands, and to end sectarian discrimination.

One of these rebellions – the Rebellion of 1798 – sticks in my heart, because it occurred in County Wexford, where my family lived, when my family was still there before they left Ireland as part of the Irish diaspora that occurred because of the Great Hunger.

Speaking of the Great Hunger, it was a man-made famine by the British that occurred from the late 1840s to 1850s. We’re taught here in the United States that it was a potato blight that caused the famine. What really caused the famine was absentee landlordism and a forced single-crop dependence. The food produced in Ireland was not kept in Ireland to feed the Irish people; it was exported to England by the English ruling class. The Irish people starved, lived in poverty, and were evicted.

This disproportionately affected areas in Ireland where Irish was the predominant language, decimating the language. Over one million people died from the famine, and over two million Irish people left Ireland and spread out across the world.

Now that we have a little bit of background, I’m going to talk about some modern Irish republicanism, the fight for Irish independence,

and connecting the Irish struggle to struggles across the globe.

[Editor’s note: Irish republicanism is the movement to establish an independent Irish state and has nothing to do with the U.S. Republican Party or right-wing politics.]

To start off, I want to talk about James Connolly. James Connolly was an Irish republican, a socialist, and a trade union leader. He founded the Irish Citizen Army, was a signatory of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic, and a leader of the Easter Rising, which fought to proclaim Ireland’s independence from Britain. He was wounded during the Easter Rising and still commanded his troops from a stretcher. I say “troops” and not “men,” because there were women’s units that fought in the Easter Rising. At the end of the Easter Rising, James Connolly was executed by the English.

I want to connect James Connolly and his work to two modern-day items. One is the fight against discrimination, not just the discrimination against Irish people, but the discrimination against all oppressed peoples. He was a founding leader and organizer of the first interracial labor union in the United States. It was called the Industrial Workers of the World, and it was the only union that welcomed Black, Asian, and immigrant workers. The union stated that all workers, regardless of color or creed, were able to join.

The other item that I want to connect James Connolly to is the struggle for socialism. He was a socialist. He fought for socialism and knew it was the only way forward. I’m going to read for you all my favorite quote from James Connolly:

“If you remove the English Army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organization of the Socialist Republic your efforts will be in vain. England will still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through her financiers, through the whole array of commercial and individualist institutions she has planted in this country and watered with the tears of our mothers and the blood of our martyrs.”

To keep this brief, I’m going to jump ahead to connecting Ireland to Palestine. During the Irish War of Independence, the Black and Tans – a nickname for the British soldiers who were recruited to the Royal Irish Constabulary – were deployed in Ireland to occupy and oppress the people. These units were notorious for beating, abusing, murdering civilians, as well as burning down homes and villages. After the Irish War of Independence, around 800



Belfast, Northern Ireland – A 2024 mural depicts Irish solidarity with the Palestinian, African and other anti-imperialist struggles. The mural is located on Divis Street/Falls Road.

of the Black and Tans were deployed by Winston Churchill to Mandatory Palestine. They were sent to terrorize, abuse, and crush Palestinian resistance against imperialism.

I want to make it clear that it’s not just the same units in name that were sent from Ireland to Palestine. It was the same men – the very same people who tortured the Irish – that were sent to Palestine. They were sent there because of their notorious brutality. They were sent there because the British government knew what they were going to do to Palestinians.

Now I’m going to talk about Bobby Sands. Bobby Sands was a member of the Provisional IRA, a political prisoner, and a poet. He was a political prisoner at the brutal Maze Prison in the north of Ireland. He suffered abuse from the screws, which is a nickname for the prison guards. Bobby Sands was an IRA Officer Commanding while imprisoned. He engaged in the blanket protests, the dirty protests, and the 1981 hunger strike to demand that he and his comrades be treated as political prisoners.

His words ring true to me as I think about political prisoners Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores. I could talk all day about Bobby Sands, but I’m going to just read for you a line from his writings that were smuggled out of prison:

“They have nothing in their entire imperial arsenal to break the spirit of one single Republican political prisoner-of-war who refuses to be broken, I thought, and that was very true. They can not or never will break our spirit.”

This is true for all political prisoners and revolutionaries. They have nothing that can break our spirit. They will not break the spirit of Palestine. They will not break the spirit of Cuba. They will not break the spirit of Iran. They will not break the spirit of Venezuela. And they will never break the spirit of Ireland.

Through Bobby Sands, we can directly connect the struggle in Ireland to anti-imperialist struggles in countries like Iran. After Sands’ death in 1981, Iranian authorities renamed

Continued page 11

ICE detention deaths are rising – abolish ICE

By Gary Wilson

ICE detention is killing people – and the death toll is rising.

Royer Perez-Jimenez was 19. He died March 17 in a Florida jail used to hold ICE detainees. ICE called it a “presumed suicide.” He is the youngest person to die in ICE custody since Donald Trump returned to the White House. He is also the 46th.

His death barely registered. It was pushed aside by war coverage and disappeared from the news cycle. That silence is part of how this system operates.

At least 23 people died in ICE custody between October 2025 and early March 2026 – more than the previous full year. 2025 had already been the deadliest year in two decades, with December the deadliest month on record.

The Associated Press count, which includes Perez-Jimenez, stands at 46 since January 2025.

The numbers reported never match because ICE controls how deaths are counted and reported. Some deaths are excluded. Reports are delayed. Oversight has been cut back.

These deaths are not accidents. They come from how the system is built.

The detained population has surged from about 40,000 in early 2025 to more than 70,000 today. Congress funded the expansion



California City detention facility. A former prison reopened for ICE detention as the system expands and deaths rise.

with tens of billions for enforcement, beds and deportations. It did not fund the medical care needed to keep people alive.

ICE is not just enforcement. It is how the state controls a section of the working class – workers used in the labor market and treated as disposable in detention.

The system that pays for medical care was shut off. ICE cut off medical payments on Oct. 3, 2025. It terminated the contract that processed payments to hospitals, pharmacies and specialists.

That left ICE without a way to pay for outside care. Internal documents warned of “loss of life.” The consequences were immediate.

A 56-year-old Haitian asylum seeker, Emmanuel Damas, died in an Arizona hospital while in U.S. immigration custody for four months after a tooth infection that was easily treatable progressed into pneumonia and septic shock following delays and failures in his medical and dental care.

This is what it means when care stops. A toothache becomes fatal.

Dialysis stopped. Cancer treatment stopped. Prenatal care stopped.

Hospitals and pharmacies began refusing treatment because they were not being paid.

In a system organized around payment and cost, care stops when payment stops.

More than five months later, the system is still shut down, with no timeline to restore payments. Under those conditions, people die.

A 2024 report by the ACLU, Physicians for Human Rights and American Oversight found that 95% of ICE deaths were preventable with basic medical care – medication, timely treatment, proper referrals. Conditions are now worse: more people detained, less care, less oversight.

On Jan. 3, 2026, Geraldo Lunas Campos, 55, died at a large ICE facility at Fort Bliss, Texas. ICE first said he died during a suicide attempt. An autopsy found he had been killed. The cause of death was homicide by asphyxia.

Witnesses said guards pinned him down and choked him as he said he could not breathe.

This is what happens when the state uses force to confine people who have no enforceable rights inside the system holding them.

Oversight has been stripped away as the system expands.

The offices that investigate deaths have been cut or shut down. Congressional access has been blocked or delayed. Public reporting has fallen behind. Fewer constraints allow the system to detain, process and remove people faster.

The Department of Homeland Security denies there is a problem. It claims detainees receive high-quality care.

That claim is contradicted by ICE’s own documents, by Senate investigations and by independent medical reviews.

Health care workers are beginning to push back against ICE in hospitals. In Minnesota and New York, they are organizing to block cooperation and raising demands in union contracts to limit or bar ICE access.

Organized refusal is how the system gets stopped.

These deaths follow directly from a system that locks up large numbers of people while denying them basic rights and care.

This is the domestic side of the same system that wages war abroad – a system that treats entire populations as expendable.

Expanding detention while cutting care and oversight produces death.

Reform will not stop this.

ICE detention must be abolished. #

Anti-imperialism in Ireland

Continued from page 10

the street by the British Embassy in Tehran as ‘Bobby Sands Street’ and later dedicated another street to his memory, forcing the embassy to shift its main entrance. Iran’s future Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, publicly hailed Sands as an Irish hero and martyr, and Iranian media have continued to present the hunger strikers as part of a global front against colonialism and imperialism. (Ayatollah Khamenei, as you know, was murdered by U.S.-Israeli missile strikes on Feb. 28th, 2026.)

To close out this talk, I want to talk to you guys about the rap group Kneecap. Kneecap is made up of three working-class men from Belfast and Derry. They are proudly republicans and they are proudly Fenians. They rap in the Irish language, which has helped build a resurgence of the Irish language. Kneecap is openly political. They speak and they rap in support of Palestine and a united Ireland. This week, actually, Kneecap is part of a convoy headed to Cuba to bring aid to Cuba during the double blockade.

Last week, on March 11, one of the members

of Kneecap, Liam, who goes by his stage name, Mo Chara, was cleared of his terrorism charges brought against him in a British court for having displayed a flag in support of Hezbollah in 2024. I would like to finish this by reading the end of his press conference that he gave after this case was dismissed.

“Your attempts to label me a terrorist have failed because I was right, and yet again, Britain was wrong. I will not be silent, Kneecap will not be silent, and the people of West Belfast will not be silent. ... You falsely tried to label me a terrorist when it is the British government ministers that are arming and assisting a genocide in Gaza, the destruction of Lebanon, and the senseless slaughter of school kids in Iran. Free Palestine, free the six counties, *tiocfaidh à là*.”

For those of you who don’t know, “*tiocfaidh à là*” is a phrase of hope and resistance in the Irish language. It roughly translates to “our day will come.” It was the last sentence that Bobby Sands wrote in his prison diary smuggled out of prison titled ‘One Day in My Life.’ Thank you. #



London, March 13 – Police barred a march on Al-Quds Day, forcing thousands to rally on the south bank of the River Thames.



New York City, March 13 – Protesters fill Times Square during an Al-Quds Day demonstration. SLL photo: Stephen Millies

Millions commemorate Al-Quds Day around the world

By Stephen Millies

Millions of people around the world rallied in solidarity with Palestine on March 13 to mark the International Day of Al-Quds. (Al-Quds is the Arabic name for Jerusalem.)

The annual commemoration, held on the last Friday of the Holy Month of Ramadan, was initiated in Iran after the U.S.-backed tyrant called the Shah was overthrown in 1979. This year, millions of Iranians took to the streets despite their country being attacked by U.S. bombs and missiles.

The 180 school children who were murdered by the bombing of the elementary school in Minab impelled people everywhere to protest. Capitalist regimes sought to prevent people from marching in solidarity with both Palestine and Iran.

Thousands gathered in London, where police forced them to rally on the south bank of the River Thames and barred them from marching. Undeterred, many chanted in support of Iran's fightback against the Zionist apartheid state.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford tried to ban the Quds Day rally in Toronto but failed. A thousand people came out anyway.

Hundreds of thousands marched in Yemen, a heroic country that's been viciously bombed by the Pentagon. Large marches took place in Iraq, Malaysia, Nigeria and Pakistan.

Thousands marched throughout Indonesia; protests were also held in Stockholm.

There were marches held around the United States, including New York City, where people gathered in Times Square for a protest organized by the Al-Quds Committee. Protesters waved Palestinian and Iranian flags and carried signs and chanted slogans condemning Zionist genocide in Palestine and Lebanon and the U.S.-Israeli war against Iran.

Speakers included Sheikh Fahim Abdulghani from Texas, Rabbi Joseph Kohn from American Jews Against Zionism, Roger Wareham from December 12 Movement, Hadil from Palestinian Youth Movement, Tahreem from Shah E Najaf Center, Amani from Muslim Girl and Bill Dee from PAL-Awda NY/NJ. There was also a beautiful Quran recitation by Taqi.

Dee described the U.S. attack on Iran as "Wall Street's war, a bankers' war" to restore U.S. corporate ownership of the region's oil reserves and to bail out the U.S. fracking industry. He described the racist settler state of "Israel" as an enforcer in a protection racket run from Washington. He also described the war and U.S. support of "Israel" as a pretext to plunder oppressed and working-class communities here, as Dr. Martin Luther King said of the U.S. war against Vietnam.

Close to a thousand people marched down Broadway to Herald Square.

"Nat Turner was hanged in Jerusalem, Virginia, on Nov. 11, 1831, after leading a revolt of enslaved Africans. In both that Jerusalem and in Al-Quds, oppressors have tried to crush rebellion by terror – and have failed to stop it – just as the struggle of the Palestinian people and the fightback by the people of Iran continue, no less righteous. #



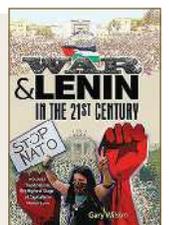
New York City, March 13 – A protester in Times Square holds a sign reading "Free Gaza! Hands off Iran!" during an Al-Quds Day demonstration. SLL photo: Stephen Millies

'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



OIL, COUPS & WAR: 83 years of U.S. intervention in Iran

By Gary Wilson

The war launched on Feb. 28 did not come out of nowhere.

It is the latest stage in more than 80 years of U.S. intervention in Iran – a continuous effort to control a country with some of the largest oil and gas reserves in the world.

That history begins during World War II.

In 1943, U.S., British and Soviet leaders met in Tehran to coordinate the defeat of Nazi Germany. Iran was officially independent, but it was under Allied military occupation and British imperial control over its oil. The three powers issued a declaration pledging to respect Iran's sovereignty – even as London and Washington moved to secure Anglo-Iranian Oil Company assets and Persian Corridor infrastructure under long-term Western control.

After the war, Washington sealed that position in place.

In 1946, the United States drove Soviet forces out of northern Iran, consolidating Western control over the country. Iran became an early test case for U.S. global power.

The 1953 coup

The decisive step came in 1953.

Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh nationalized Iran's oil industry, which had been controlled by British interests. The response was immediate. The CIA and British intelligence organized a coup to remove him and restore Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to the throne.

That coup reshaped Iran.

U.S. oil companies gained a major share of production. The Shah ruled as an autocrat. A secret police force enforced the system. Iran had become a neocolony – formally independent, but with its resources extracted, its politics controlled and its repressive state apparatus serving foreign capital. It was a reliable source of oil profits and a key U.S. outpost in West Asia.

For the next 25 years, that system held.

Iran as U.S. enforcer

Under the Nixon Doctrine, the United States turned Iran into its main regional enforcer. Washington dramatically escalated arms sales, supplying the Shah with tens of billions in advanced weapons. Oil revenues were funneled back through U.S. banks and into U.S. industry. Iran functioned as a proxy power, enforcing U.S. control in the Gulf.

Inside the country, the Shah's secret police – SAVAK, built with CIA and Israeli intelligence assistance – ran a system of mass



Explosion near Azadi Tower and Mehrabad International Airport in Tehran, March 7, 2026, during the ongoing U.S.-Israeli war – the latest stage in decades of U.S. intervention in Iran.

surveillance, arbitrary detention and torture. Amnesty International reported in 1976 that Iran held more political prisoners than almost any country in the world. The regime's repressive apparatus was trained, equipped and backed by the United States.

By 1977, Iran ranked 17th among the world's economies, with a GDP of roughly \$80 billion and oil revenues of \$20 billion a year. None of it reached the majority of Iranians. Some 68% of the population remained illiterate. Infant mortality ran at roughly 100 deaths per 1,000 live births – higher than in neighboring Iraq, whose economy was less than a quarter the size of Iran's but whose state-led development delivered broader basic services to its people. The oil wealth flowed to the Pahlavi court and to the foreign capital it served. For workers and peasants, that ranked economy could not keep children alive or teach parents to read.

Revolution breaks the system

That system broke in 1979. Years of repression had built pressure across every class the Shah's order excluded – workers, peasants pushed off the land, urban poor crowded into shantytowns, students and professionals with no political voice. The wealth was real. The deprivation was equally real. The contradiction had become intolerable.

Millions took to the streets. The uprisings were not spontaneous eruptions – they were the product of deep organization through mosques, neighborhood committees and underground political networks that SAVAK had

failed to destroy. Wave after wave of demonstrations swept Tehran and cities across the country through 1978, each massacre met with larger crowds. On Black Friday – September 8, 1978 – government forces gunned down demonstrators in Tehran's Jaleh Square. It did not stop the uprising. It accelerated it.

The Shah's rule did not fall from street pressure alone. Oil workers walked off the job and shut down production – cutting off the revenues that financed the military, the secret police and the entire apparatus of U.S.-backed control. It was the working class, at the point of production, that brought the system to its knees. Millions had driven the Shah from power. Direct U.S. control over Iran was finished.

Washington responded immediately.

Sanctions and military threats

Carter froze Iranian assets and imposed sanctions in 1979.

When Iraq invaded Iran in 1980, Washington backed Saddam Hussein – providing intelligence, financing and diplomatic cover. The objective was to exploit and prolong the conflict, weakening both countries while U.S. and Western oil companies moved to reassert control over the region's energy and politics.

That war lasted eight years and killed hundreds of thousands of Iranians and Iraqis.

In July 1988, as the war was ending, a U.S. warship shot down Iran Air Flight 655, killing all 290 people aboard. Washington called it a mistake. No one was held accountable.

Continued on page 14

When imperialism disappears

By Gary Wilson

Wars destroy cities and take lives. They also shake the world economy.

Oil prices jump, shipping routes close, inflation rises and recession risks grow. For that reason, many analyses of the U.S. war on Iran focus heavily on energy markets and the economic impact of war in the Persian Gulf.

That economic analysis is useful. A prolonged interruption of oil exports through the Strait of Hormuz could push prices sharply higher and ripple through the global economy. Higher fuel costs raise transport prices, increase food costs, and intensify inflation pressures that fall hardest on workers – employed and unemployed alike.

But when war is examined mainly through its economic consequences, something essential can disappear from view.

The problem is not the analysis of oil markets. The problem is that imperialism itself fades into the background.

Two recent crises illustrate the problem clearly – the U.S. attack on Iran that assassinated Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and other senior Iranian officials, and the U.S. attack on Venezuela that kidnapped President Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores.

In both cases, commentary often treats the conflict primarily as an economic shock or geopolitical dilemma. The central political reality is simpler: These are confrontations between an imperialist power and states that refuse to submit.

Without that starting point, the political character of the conflict becomes blurred.

War seen through markets

Much discussion of the Iran war focuses on the disruption of oil flows and the consequences for the global economy.

The Strait of Hormuz carries a large share of the world's seaborne oil trade. If tanker traffic stops, prices rise. Insurance premiums soar. Energy markets tighten. Inflation spreads.

These are real mechanisms. Energy shocks have triggered global recessions before.

But when the story begins with oil prices rather than with the political character of the war, the analytical center shifts. The conflict appears first as a disturbance to the world economy and only secondarily as a war launched by the most powerful military state on earth. The war becomes a problem for markets.

It is no longer recognized as an act of imperialist power.

The familiar language of regime change

In discussions of these conflicts, the focus often shifts away from the imperialist aggression itself and toward the internal character of the governments being targeted. The narrative becomes familiar: The government under attack is allegedly authoritarian, unpopular or illegitimate, and therefore its confrontation with Washington appears less like imperialist aggression and more like a

Continued on page 15

83 years of U.S. intervention in Iran

Continued from page 13

Sanctions deepened through the 1990s. A 1996 law extended U.S. economic pressure beyond its own borders, targeting foreign companies doing business with Iran. Clinton administration officials drew up contingency plans for cruise-missile strikes and a potential full-scale invasion. Washington repeatedly warned that “all options are on the table.” Carrier groups, long-range bombers and missile-defense assets were deployed to the Persian Gulf to underline the threat. By the 21st century, the economic siege and the permanent military menace had become defining features of U.S. policy toward Iran.

The 21st century brought new tactics but the same objective.

Iran's nuclear program is for civilian energy and economic development, which is its right under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In 2015, under intense Western pressure, Iran reached an agreement with the United States and five other powers – the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – limiting its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. It was an unequal concession. Iran surrendered significant nuclear capacity. Washington partially lifted an economic siege it had no legal or moral right to impose.

It did not last. In 2018, the Trump administration withdrew from the agreement and re-

imposed sanctions under a campaign it called “maximum pressure.” Iran holds roughly 17% of the world's natural gas reserves and 12% of its oil reserves – among the largest concentrations on earth. Those resources had been under Western control before 1979. The revolution took them back. Washington has never accepted that.

In January 2020, a U.S. drone strike assassinated General Qasem Soleimani at Baghdad International Airport. Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi later told parliament that Soleimani had come to Baghdad on a diplomatic mission – carrying Iran's response to a Saudi message as part of Iraq-mediated de-escalation talks between Tehran and Riyadh. Washington killed him anyway. The assassination was a direct act of war – carried out on Iraqi soil without congressional authorization or declaration of war, and in deliberate sabotage of a regional peace process.

Iran absorbed the blow and did not capitulate.

War returns openly

Washington escalated. In June 2025, Israel launched the Twelve-Day War – surprise airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities at Natanz, Fordow and Isfahan, plus military bases and government infrastructure across the country. Israel functions as a forward military outpost for U.S. imperialism in West Asia. Its strikes were coordinated with Washington, not independent. When Israeli attacks could not fully



Oil tankers wait offshore near the Strait of Hormuz, a vital route for world energy shipments. As the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran deepens, Tehran is moving to formalize the leverage it has asserted over passage through the Strait.

destroy Iran's most deeply buried sites, the United States stepped in directly. On June 22, Trump launched Operation Midnight Hammer – B-2 bombers and submarine-launched cruise missiles targeting the same facilities. A U.S.-brokered ceasefire ended the fighting June 24.

The nuclear pretext was three decades old by then. The United States – the only country ever to use nuclear weapons – and Israel, which maintains a large, undeclared nuclear arsenal, had recycled their belligerent demands to justify what was always a war for control – over Iran's energy, its financial independence, its refusal to accept subordination to the U.S.-dominated order.

The sanctions, the assassinations, the proxy wars and the bombing campaigns all failed to restore the control Washington lost in 1979. The Feb. 28 assault is Washington's answer to that failure – a war of imperialist plunder attempting to take back what the revolution took away. #

from view

Continued from page 14

clash between two flawed regimes.

This framework has long been central to regime-change politics.

Marxist analysis cuts through that framing. The question is not whether a targeted government meets some standard of legitimacy. The question is who is attacking whom, and why.

Venezuela and imperialist aggression

For years Washington attempted to overthrow the Bolivarian government through sanctions, economic blockade, diplomatic isolation and open support for opposition figures making bogus claims to the presidency.

Unable to force the Venezuelan people to surrender through sanctions and economic strangulation, that campaign escalated on Jan. 3 into direct military action. U.S. forces struck targets around Caracas and carried out a raid that kidnapped President Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores and imprisoned them in the United States. No comparable act of aggression would be directed at the leader of an imperialist power.

Imperialism as structure

Imperialism explains why these confrontations occur.

The United States maintains the largest military apparatus in history, hundreds of overseas bases and the ability to enforce sanctions through its control of global finance. This network of power allows Washington to pressure, isolate and attack governments that resist its strategic interests.

States such as Iran and Venezuela occupy a completely different position within the global system. Their military capabilities are regional. Their economies face constant pressure from sanctions and financial exclusion. Their ability to project power internationally is extremely limited.

Treating conflicts between these states and the United States as essentially symmetrical obscures the enormous imbalance built into the global order.

Imperialism is not simply a foreign-policy choice made by particular leaders. It is a structural feature of advanced capitalism: dominant states using military and financial power to control the world's resources, mar-



Anti-war demonstrators gather near the White House in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 28 after U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran.

kets and labor – and to suppress any challenge to that control.

The illusion of domestic solutions

Polls show overwhelming working-class opposition to the war on Iran. Yet Congress has done nothing to stop it.

The constitutional framework is clear. Under Article I, Congress holds the power to declare war. Under the 1973 War Powers Act, the president must seek congressional authorization within 60 days of deploying forces into hostilities. Neither requirement was met when U.S. and Israeli forces launched coordinated strikes on Iran on Feb. 28.

Congress had the opportunity to reassert that authority. It declined. The Senate rejected a war powers resolution 47–53 on March 4 – the eighth such vote since June. All eight have failed. The same day, the House passed a nonbinding resolution reaffirming Iran as the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, 372 to 53. The bipartisan consensus is not ambiguous. It is for the war, against accountability for the war.

Congress controls the purse strings yet has approved no funding for this one. The administration pulls money from existing Pentagon accounts or adds to the deficit. Congress lets the war continue.

Imperialist wars are rarely the product of a single administration. They arise from strategic interests embedded in the structure of cap-

italism itself. The record of the past half-century – from Vietnam to Iraq to Libya to the economic war against Venezuela – shows that both major U.S. parties have repeatedly backed intervention when ruling-class interests demanded it.

The principle that disappears

For Marxists analyzing conflicts between imperialist powers and oppressed nations, a central principle has long been clear.

The decisive political fact is the relationship between the imperialist aggressor and the nation under attack.

Without that principle, critiques of war easily become purely economic. The conflict is condemned because it destabilizes markets, raises energy prices and threatens global growth – while the imperialist aggression that launched the war disappears from view.

The central issue is that imperialist war grows out of the capitalist system itself and the drive of the imperialist powers to maintain their domination of the world.

Remembering imperialism

Economic analysis remains essential for understanding capitalism. Profit rates, financial crises, inflation and growth cycles shape the world in which wars occur.

But capitalism does not operate only through markets.

It also operates through military force, sanctions regimes and geopolitical domination.

When analysis focuses only on the economic turbulence produced by war while neglecting the imperialist structure that produces those wars, a central feature of the system disappears from view.

And in moments like the present – from Venezuela to Iran – the thing that disappears is imperialism itself. #

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.



Iran, the yuan & the dollar sanctions system

Continued from page 20

gling blockade on energy supplies. Venezuela has faced escalating financial siege since 2015, when sanctions cut the country off from credit markets and oil revenues that fund social programs. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Syria and Zimbabwe are also sanctioned. U.S. sanctions affect roughly one-third of the world's population.

In March 2026, as oil prices topped \$100, the U.S. quietly lifted sanctions on 128 million barrels of Russian oil to offset supply losses from its own war on Iran. The same sanctions architecture used to strangle Iran's civilian economy for four decades, turned off when it suited Washington. No principle. No consistency. A weapon used when useful, set aside when not.

What dollar hegemony actually does

Since the collapse of the Bretton Woods gold system in 1971, the dollar has remained at the center of world finance through a dense web of financial markets, banking infrastructure and political power anchored in the United States.

Dollar dominance is not primarily about oil pricing. That framing overstates some things and misses others.

The real power lies in financial markets.

The dollar is the world's reserve currency – the unit in which most international debt is issued and in which central banks hold much of their reserves – leaving those reserves vulnerable to seizure – and through which a large share of global financial transactions are settled, supported by the deepest and most liquid financial markets in the world.

Once the global financial system is built around a currency, the system reinforces itself. Banks use it, companies borrow in it, and governments hold their reserves in it. That makes it very difficult for another currency to replace it.

Switching away from it is difficult, and no single country or bloc has yet built financial markets deep enough to replace it. Even the euro, after more than 20 years, has made only limited progress.

This gives the U.S. government a weapon no other state can wield on the same scale. Because most international payments pass through banks connected to the U.S. dollar banking system, Washington can threaten to cut any country – or any bank that does business with it – off from global finance. That threat is credible. Banks in Europe, Asia and Latin America comply with U.S. sanctions not because their own laws require it, but because refusing could get them cut off from the U.S. banking system that moves much of the world's money.

The result is that U.S. foreign policy can strangle economies from a desk in Washington. Workers in sanctioned countries pay through

The attempt to use military power to reinforce financial dominance may ultimately accelerate the pressures eroding both.

inflation, shortages and unemployment. Workers elsewhere pay through austerity imposed to satisfy dollar-denominated debts and IMF conditions.

The system functions as the financial infrastructure of modern imperialism.

What the yuan story actually means

By itself, the yuan payment story does not challenge dollar dominance. Oil may be invoiced in yuan, but the world price of oil is still set in dollar markets.

What the yuan payment story does represent is something narrower and more immediately significant: the construction of payment infrastructure that routes around the dollar system.

If Iran can require yuan payment for Strait passage, and if that becomes regular practice rather than a one-time workaround, it creates a way for Iran and its trading partners to settle payments without sending the money through U.S. banks. That plumbing can then be used more broadly – to settle other transactions, to extend credit, to build the kind of financial relationships that make sanctions progressively harder to enforce.

The mechanism already exists. China's Cross-Border Interbank Payment System – CIPS – provides a payment channel that allows banks to settle transactions without routing the money through the U.S. banking system. A transaction settled through CIPS between a Chinese and Iranian bank never touches a U.S. correspondent bank, which is precisely where sanctions enforcement enters the picture. The dollar doesn't move. A U.S. institution is never involved. The transaction happens entirely within China's financial system. Iranian banks can then use the yuan they receive to pay for Chinese goods, machinery, or medicine – outside the reach of U.S. Treasury enforcement.

This is why Washington is alarmed. Not because the dollar is about to collapse, but because every expansion of dollar-independent payment infrastructure can reduce the reach of U.S. economic warfare. It means sanctioned countries can trade, import medicine, sell oil, and receive payment without touching a system the U.S. controls.

For Iran, after four decades of sanctions, that matters enormously. For Venezuela, Cuba, and every other country living under U.S. financial siege, the precedent matters too.

The war gave Iran the leverage

Iran's geographic leverage over the Strait of Hormuz – a narrow waterway carrying roughly one-fifth of the world's oil shipments – has

always been a strategic fact. What changed is that the U.S. decision to launch a war of aggression against Iran gave Tehran an active reason to use that leverage, and a negotiating position strong enough to make conditions.

The U.S. ruling class calculated that military force could achieve what four decades of sanctions had not: the destruction of the Iranian government and the installation of a compliant replacement. Instead, they handed Iran a weapon.

The attempt to use military power to reinforce financial dominance may ultimately accelerate the pressures eroding both.

The stakes for workers

But the direction of travel matters. Every payment route that bypasses the dollar system is a reduction in U.S. capacity to impose economic warfare. Every country that develops the ability to trade without routing payments through the U.S. dollar banking system is a country that can survive sanctions rather than be strangled by them.

Workers worldwide have a direct stake in that. The dollar system as a coercive instrument has produced decades of structural poverty and austerity across the Global South. Its erosion is not an abstraction. It is a concrete reduction in the tools available to the U.S. ruling class to discipline governments that step out of line – to punish countries that nationalize their oil, support their workers, or refuse to subordinate their economies to imperialist finance.

The consequences are visible in places like Cuba today, where tightening U.S. pressure on oil shipments has produced fuel shortages, long power outages, and disruptions to transportation, food distribution and medical services across the island.

The war on Iran is a war to preserve that system. For decades Washington has used sanctions, financial blockades and the power of the dollar to discipline countries that refuse to subordinate their economies to imperialist finance. Military force is the same strategy, stripped of pretense.

Iran's yuan gambit does not overturn the system. But every payment channel that bypasses it weakens the reach of U.S. economic warfare and makes it harder to starve a country into submission.

For Iran, for Cuba, for Venezuela – and for every country living under the threat of sanctions – that matters.

At stake is U.S. capacity to use global finance as a weapon of war. #

Iran moves to make Strait of Hormuz control permanent – and Washington can't stop it

By Gary Wilson

Iran is moving to turn a wartime tactic into a permanent institution.

As the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran enters its fifth week, Iran's parliament is drafting legislation to formalize Tehran's control over the Strait of Hormuz – while Secretary of State Marco Rubio has effectively acknowledged that Washington cannot reverse it.

The bill, reported by Iran's Fars and Tasnim news agencies, would legally recognize Iran's sovereignty and supervisory authority over the Strait while establishing a system of transit fees for commercial shipping. Lawmaker Mohammad Kouchi told Fars the draft would be finalized next week. "The Strait of Hormuz is also a corridor," he said. "We ensure its security, and it is natural for ships and tankers to pay us duties."

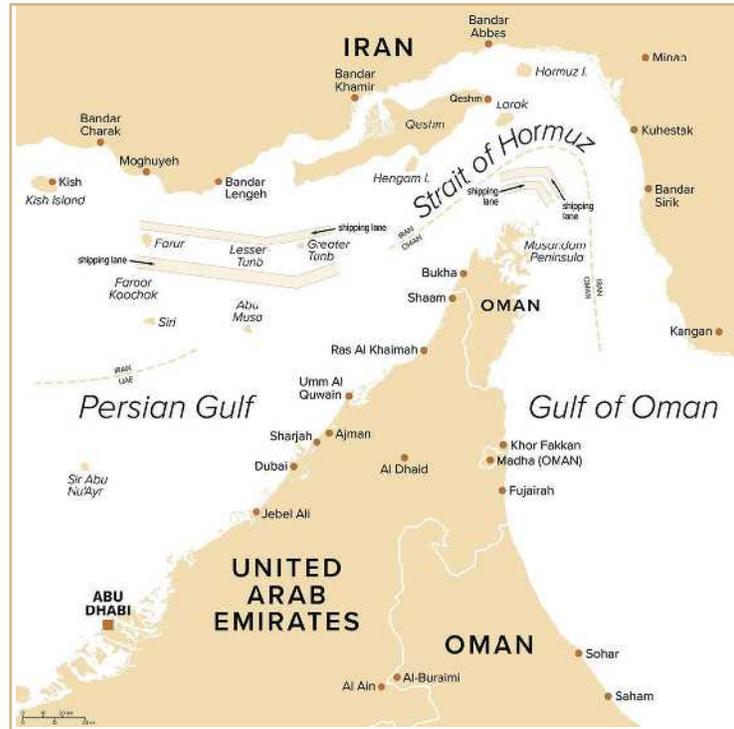
The legislation would codify a system Iran is already enforcing on the water.

Since mid-March, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps has reportedly enforced a de facto toll-and-inspection system through a controlled corridor near Iran's coast, between Qeshm and Larak islands. Ships seeking passage have reportedly been required to go through approved IRGC intermediaries and submit ownership, cargo and crew information. At least two vessels are reported to have paid transit fees, with payment settled in Chinese yuan.

Traffic through the Strait has sharply fallen. Only 16 crossings by ships broadcasting their location were reportedly recorded between March 15 and March 22, while nearly 2,000 vessels were said to be stranded in the Persian Gulf. Iran has also announced that ships traveling to or from U.S., Israeli and allied ports will not be allowed through.

Rubio admits Washington faces a new reality

At a G7 foreign ministers' meeting in Cernay-la-Ville, France, on March 27, Secretary of State Marco Rubio warned allies to prepare for a post-war Iran that controls the Strait. "Immediately after this thing ends and we're done with our objectives," he said, "one of the immediate challenges we're going to face is an Iran that may decide that they want to set up a tolling system in the Strait of Hormuz. Not only is this illegal; it's unacceptable. It's dangerous to the world, and it's important that the world have a plan to confront it."



The toll system Rubio described as a future threat is already taking shape. He was warning allies about something Washington is already watching happen – and has so far failed to stop.

Rubio added that the U.S. was 'prepared to be a part of' any coalition response to the tolling system, but framed the issue as one for other countries to take on. The G7 statement called for the "absolute necessity to permanently restore safe and toll-free freedom of navigation" in the Strait. No member country pledged resources or troops to enforce that demand.

The numbers

The revenue potential of permanent Strait control is substantial. Roughly 20 million barrels of crude oil and oil products pass through the Strait each day in peacetime, along with significant volumes of liquefied natural gas. At a reported fee of \$2 million per tanker, the potential revenue would be enormous. Even a limited tolling regime could generate hundreds of millions of dollars a month. That is comparable to what Egypt earns monthly from the Suez Canal.

For Iran, after four decades of U.S. sanctions designed to strangle its economy, that would give Tehran a new stream of hard-currency income. The same wartime leverage that pushed Brent crude above \$113 a barrel and helped trigger fuel rationing across Asia could, under the proposed legislation, become a continuing source of state revenue.

The yuan and the dollar system

The choice of Chinese yuan matters. Payments routed through China's Cross-Border Interbank Payment System, or CIPS, do not pass through U.S. correspondent banks. That limits Washington's ability to intercept or block them.

Ships linked to China, Russia, India, Iraq and Pakistan have been allowed to transit. Ships linked to the U.S., Israel and their allies are blocked. Access to the Strait is now being sorted along geopolitical lines. In practice, passage depends less on maritime law than on where a country stands in relation to the U.S.-led sanctions system.

This is not the end of dollar dominance. The dollar still rests on financial scale and

infrastructure no rival has matched. But every payment system built outside U.S. control weakens Washington's sanctions reach. Every Hormuz toll paid in yuan through CIPS is one more transaction the U.S. Treasury cannot touch.

In his first public address, Iran's new supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, said the leverage created by control over the Strait "must continue to be used." An adviser to the supreme leader has spoken of a "new regime for the Strait of Hormuz" after the war ends.

The war produced what it was meant to prevent

The U.S. ruling class launched this war to break what four decades of sanctions had failed to break: the Iranian state. Military force was meant to finish the job – to shatter Iran's military capacity, decapitate its leadership and reassert U.S. dominance over the energy routes of the Persian Gulf. Instead, it produced the opposite.

Instead, the war gave Iran reason to use the leverage it had long possessed but never exercised. The result is a country that entered the war under sanctions and economic siege and is now moving to collect tolls from one of the world's most important shipping lanes.

The Strait of Hormuz has always been a geographic fact. Washington's war turned it into a class weapon – and Iran is moving to make that permanent. #

Pentagon's trillion-dollar war machine

By Gary Wilson

Four weeks into Operation Epic Fury, the U.S. military has confirmed what critics of Pentagon doctrine have argued for decades. Advanced stealth aircraft and nuclear-powered carriers are not invincible. They are expensive, brittle and poorly matched to the kind of war Iran has spent 40 years preparing.

The war shut down any negotiated exit from the start. The U.S.-Israeli assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader removed the leadership that could authorize a ceasefire and hardened the response. Days later, a strike killed 170 schoolgirls, making any compromise politically impossible. Washington is now issuing ultimatums it cannot enforce without widening the war further. Iran is not choosing escalation.

What began as a campaign to weaken Iran's military and force political collapse is now focused on reopening the Strait of Hormuz – a far more limited goal.

The losses are no longer deniable. Central Command acknowledged that an F-35 – the flagship of a weapons program that has cost U.S. taxpayers more than \$1.7 trillion – was brought down after Iranian air defense systems locked on to and struck the aircraft. The pilot ejected. It is the first confirmed combat loss of a fifth-generation stealth fighter, and it is only the most visible symbol of a campaign that has not gone according to plan.

Iranian missiles have now penetrated Israeli air defenses near Dimona, striking near Israel's main nuclear research facility – one of the most heavily defended sites in the region.

The USS Gerald Ford, the most expensive warship ever built at roughly \$13 billion, has withdrawn from the theater. (See: U.S. carrier breaks under strain in Iran war.) One of the two carrier strike groups deployed to project power is no longer in position to do so.

The USS Abraham Lincoln is operating in the

southern Arabian Sea, outside the Persian Gulf and away from the Strait of Hormuz, kept at a distance by Iranian drones and missiles based along the coast and inside the Gulf – far enough that every combat sortie requires aerial refueling before it reaches the operational zone.

Held at that range, the carrier group is no longer a power projection platform. It is a very expensive liability. Every sortie requires tanker support. Mission cycles extend. Each day burns through munitions, aviation fuel, and aircrew readiness at a rate the U.S. military has not sustained since the Gulf War – under far more contested conditions.

Iranian radar and tracking systems have followed B-52 sorties across the theater, forcing U.S. bombers to rely on standoff strikes launched from outside heavily defended airspace. The U.S. military is built to deliver overwhelming firepower against fixed targets. It is not built to operate for long under constant missile and drone threat or absorb dispersed, decentralized resistance across Iran's territory.

That contradiction shows up most clearly in the plans now under discussion.

The Kharg Island calculation

Military planners are reportedly considering a seizure of Kharg Island, the terminal that handles roughly 90% of Iran's oil exports. The idea is straightforward: take Kharg, choke off exports, and force Tehran to the table while reopening the Strait of Hormuz.

The plan collapses once the geography is taken into account. The fighting is centered in and around the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, while U.S. carriers are being pushed farther out into the Arabian Sea.

Kharg Island sits in the northern Persian Gulf, near the Strait of Hormuz, about 15 miles off Iran's coast. It is within range of artillery, missiles and drones from the mainland, with Iranian naval forces operating around it in the Gulf. The report-

ed assault force is 2,500 Marines.

Even the strategic value of Kharg is now in question. Damage across the region and wider disruptions mean shutting down Iranian exports would not restore oil flows or end the crisis.

Taking the island would not reopen the Strait. It would pin U.S. troops on a small, exposed target under constant fire. Resupply would be under attack. There are no protected positions and no room to move. The position cannot be held.

U.S. troops are already reporting this from inside the war zone. Military personnel describe inadequate force protection and repeated missile and drone strikes on U.S. bases. Some units report they cannot fully defend even a single installation under sustained attack. A ground operation is being described as “an absolute disaster” with no workable plan.

The Pentagon admits that at least thirteen U.S. troops have been killed and more than 200 wounded under sustained missile and drone attacks, figures that are likely incomplete.

What asymmetric warfare actually costs

The cost of the war is already rising fast. Pentagon officials estimate daily operations at \$1 billion to \$2 billion. In the first 48 hours, the U.S. burned through munitions that will take years to replace. Production lines are already stretched supplying Ukraine and meeting NATO commitments.

This is the imbalance. The U.S. is fighting a high-cost war that burns through weapons and fuel. Iran is fighting a low-cost war that prolongs the conflict and forces the U.S. to keep spending.

This is the limit of U.S. military power in this war. The weapons are advanced. The supply is not. Production cannot keep pace with destruction. The U.S. can fire faster than it can rebuild.

Iran does not need to match U.S. technology. It needs to keep the U.S. spending and firing. On that terrain, the advantage shifts. #

U.S. warship breaks under strain in Iran war

A fire burned for more than 30 hours aboard the USS Gerald R. Ford on March 12, forcing more than 600 sailors from their berths. The Navy says the carrier remains “operational.” Large numbers of the crew are sleeping on floors and tables.

Investigators are examining whether the fire was deliberate.

The blaze began in a laundry exhaust system and spread through ventilation into living spaces. Dozens of sailors were treated for smoke inhalation. One was evacuated. The ship's main laundry facility was destroyed.

The Ford has been at sea since June 2025 – nearly nine months, with the deployment expected to stretch to 11 – first in the Caribbean for operations against Venezuela.

Sailors were told they were heading home in March. Within hours, the ship was redirected across the Atlantic to West Asia.

It is now operating in the Red Sea as part of U.S. strikes on Iran. Conditions on board have deteriorated during the deployment. The sewage system has repeatedly failed. Navy officials confirmed that pipes were clogged with clothing and rope. In one four-day period, the

system broke down more than 200 times.

Basic services have broken down. Key systems have failed under continuous use.

The Pentagon has ordered the carrier to Naval Support Activity Souda Bay in Crete for repairs and assessment. Officials describe the stop as temporary. Reports indicate the work could take at least a week, with the possibility of longer maintenance once the ship returns to the United States.

The war continues. The crew has been pushed past its limits. The carrier has been forced out of the war zone. #

\$113 oil exposes cracks in Trump's war

By Gary Wilson

Cracks are opening inside the Trump coalition. They are not coming from the left. They are coming from a Heritage Foundation economist and from within Trump's own counterterrorism apparatus – driven by an Iran war that is pushing oil past \$113 a barrel.

E.J. Antoni, chief economist at the Heritage Foundation, a leading figure in its Project 2025 policy work and a former Trump nominee to lead the Bureau of Labor Statistics, is not a critic of U.S. imperialism. He is a reliable voice of the hard right. On March 19, he told the Financial Times that the U.S. economy cannot absorb \$100-a-barrel oil – and that the war is now pushing it well past that.

“The economy is weaker than we thought it was, and inflation is worse than we thought it was,” Antoni said. He warned that the energy price drop of 2025 had been doing real work suppressing inflation across the economy – and that the reversal is now doing the opposite.

The numbers bear him out. Brent crude has surged past \$113 a barrel. Gas prices at the pump have risen from \$2.92 to \$3.84 a gallon in a single month. Diesel has reached \$5.09 a gallon nationally, hitting trucking and logistics costs throughout the supply chain. Every dollar added to energy prices moves through food, freight and manufacturing. Some analysts are now projecting \$150 to \$200 a barrel if the supply disruption persists.

The day before Antoni's remarks, Joe Kent – a senior official at the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center and a Trump loyalist – resigned in protest over the Iran war. It was the first significant defection from inside the administration since Operation Epic Fury began Feb. 28.

The ruling class is fracturing – over strategy, over electoral survival, over whether this war is economically sustainable. Who pays for it is not in dispute.

That dispute has a class dimension the electoral framing obscures. The costs Antoni and

congressional Republicans are worried about are electoral and macroeconomic – the kind that threaten political stability at the top. The costs the working class is already absorbing are different. Gas at \$3.84 is not an abstraction for workers commuting on shrunken paychecks. Diesel at \$5 moves directly into the price of groceries.

The war's financial structure makes those costs permanent, not temporary. The first six days of Operation Epic Fury cost at least \$11.3 billion, most of it unbudgeted. The Washington Post reported March 19 that the Pentagon has asked the White House to approve a supplemental request of more than \$200 billion – quadruple the figure circulating just days earlier. The Iraq War cost roughly \$140 billion per year at its peak. The Pentagon is now asking for more than that in a single request – just three weeks into the war, and before a full-year cost is even calculated.

That spending does not fall on Lockheed Martin – whose stock has risen 43% in three months – or on Raytheon's parent RTX, up 40% year to date. It falls on the federal budget, and through the budget on health care and food programs already being stripped before the first missile was fired.

On July 4, 2025, Trump signed a budget law cutting Medicaid by more than \$1 trillion over 10 years and slashing food assistance by \$186 billion – the largest SNAP cut in history, affecting 40 million people. That money did not disappear. It cleared fiscal space for the war apparatus now burning through SM-3 interceptors and THAAD missiles faster than manufacturers can replace them.

Antoni's complaint is real, but its logic stops at the ruling class's door. He warns that federal worker layoffs – thousands cut under the DOGE cost-cutting campaign – are dragging on job growth. He is right that the policy is producing economic damage. What he does not say is that the damage was built in. An economy in which working-class consumption is suppressed through benefit cuts, wage

stagnation and public-sector layoffs is not positioned to absorb an oil shock. That is the condition Operation Epic Fury was launched into.

The Strait of Hormuz, through which one-fifth of the world's daily oil supply passes, has seen tanker traffic collapse since Feb. 28. Iran is now actively attacking ships attempting to transit it. The Strait was empty for 24 hours before the latest strike wave began.

The scale of the disruption is now quantifiable. Data from the firm Vortexa shows oil and fuel exports from the region averaged 26.1 million barrels per day in February. By mid-March that figure had fallen to 7.5 million barrels per day – a drop of more than 70%, though country-level production cuts account for more than 7 million barrels per day of that decline. Iraq has cut production by 2.9 million barrels daily. Saudi Arabia has reduced output by 2 to 2.5 million barrels daily. The UAE has cut 1.5 million barrels per day and Kuwait 1.3 million.

Iran's strikes on Qatar's Ras Laffan gas hub – the world's largest LNG facility – have done damage experts say could take years to repair. The complex, which took 14 years to build, is not expected to return to full operation quickly. Drone strikes have also hit two separate oil refineries in Kuwait. Saudi Arabia intercepted ballistic missiles fired toward Riyadh. The attack wave is ongoing.

The administration is now weighing steps that would deepen the crisis further. Reuters reported March 19 that it is considering deploying thousands of additional troops to the region. The options include securing tanker passage through the Strait of Hormuz through air and naval deployments, and potentially deploying ground forces along Iran's coastline. The administration has also discussed sending forces to Kharg Island, the hub for 90% of Iran's oil exports.

One U.S. official described such an operation as “very risky,” noting that Iran can reach the island with missiles and drones. A ground assault on Kharg Island would not reopen the oil flow. It would target the infrastructure that makes Iranian exports possible – a direct strike at the petrostate structure the petrodollar system was built to incorporate, not destroy.

The fractures inside the Trump coalition are real. They reflect growing strain inside the ruling class over how to manage a war that is driving up prices and expanding deficits. But they are not a break with the war itself. They are a dispute over how to contain its fallout – and over who will pay for it.

That question is not being debated in theory. It is being settled in rising prices, shrinking public programs and a war bill that is only beginning to come due. #



The USS Gerald R. Ford aircraft carrier docks at Souda Bay on Crete Island, Greece on February 24, 2026.

Ley de Cabotaje (Jones) y la profundización del colonialismo

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

El pasado miércoles, la administración Trump anunció que suspendería por 60 días la aplicación de la Ley de Cabotaje disque para aliviar el impacto del alto costo de los combustibles. ¿Y por qué el alto costo? Porque su misma administración ha actuado como lo que ha sido desde que comenzó su mandato: un verdadero terrorista a nivel mundial. Ha sido el resultado de los bombardeos y ataques estadounidenses-israelíes contra el país soberano de Irán.

Quino citar a la portavoz del presidente Trump que dijo que “esta medida permitirá que recursos vitales como el petróleo, el gas natural, los fertilizantes y el carbón fluyan libremente hacia los puertos estadounidenses durante 60 días, y la administración mantiene su compromiso de seguir fortaleciendo nuestras cadenas de suministro críticas.”

Y ¿qué es la Ley de Cabotaje, o Ley Jones y qué tiene que ver con Puerto Rico? Pues es una ley impuesta en el 1920 para proteger a la Marina Mercante gringa, que es la más cara del mundo y exige que toda mercancía que vaya por mar entre los puertos de los mismos Estados Unidos y entre éste y sus territorios, vaya en barcos construidos en EUA, y con bandera y tripulación estadounidense. Al Puerto Rico ser su colonia, sin sustentabilidad propia, depende el 85% de importaciones de todo tipo. Así que todo producto que llegue de allá es muchísimo más caro.



Washington, D.C.,
11 de octubre de 2017
– En una manifestación de “Unite for Puerto/ Unidos por Puerto Rico” un participante tiene un cartel que dice “Mata al Ley de Cabotaje (Jones).”

Pero el pueblo boricua sin embargo, le responde manifestándose contra la militarización y en defensa del pueblo palestino, contra la intervención en Irán y clamando por la liberación del Presidente Maduro y la Primera Combatiente Cilia Flores.

Aquí la gobernadora González, aliada de Trump, ha bienvenido la medida aunque es fiel defensora de la Ley de Cabotaje. En un comunicado manifestó que “Puerto Rico permanece alineado con los esfuerzos federales para fortalecer la seguridad y estabilidad de las cadenas de suministro, salvaguardar las prioridades de seguridad nacional y garantizar la protección de nuestro pueblo durante este periodo de desafíos a nivel global.”

Y sobre todo, exigiendo tanto el cese de la privatización de la energía que ha destruido nuestro sistema eléctrico, como la generación sustentable por medios que sí tenemos y no nos obliga a depender del imperialismo yanqui. Porque tenemos sol, tenemos agua y tenemos viento.

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



Iran, the yuan & the dollar sanctions system

By Gary Wilson

Reports emerging in early March suggest Iran may allow limited tanker passage through the Strait of Hormuz – on one condition: payment must be made in Chinese yuan.

The claim comes from an unnamed Iranian official speaking to CNN and has not been confirmed by Iranian state media. It may be a trial balloon. It may be a negotiating signal. But the discussion points to something deeper than tanker traffic or oil prices: the dollar sanctions system that Washington uses as a weapon of economic warfare.

Economic warfare is still warfare

The U.S. war on Iran did not begin on Feb. 28, 2026, when the bombs started falling.

It has been waged for more than four decades through sanctions, financial blockades, and the systematic use of dollar power as a weapon.

Sanctions are economic warfare directed against workers. They fall first on the general population through inflation, shortages and collapsing public services. Food, medicine and fuel become more expensive. Banking channels close. Governments divert resources from social programs just to keep the economy functioning. The aim is simple: make life unbearable enough that populations turn on their governments – or that governments capitulate.

The instrument that makes this global en-

forcement possible is the dollar system. Most international payments pass through U.S. banks or dollar accounts, which allows the U.S. Treasury to threaten foreign banks with being cut off from the U.S. financial system if they do business with sanctioned countries.

Iran has lived under that war for over 40 years. Cuba has lived under it for more than 60 years and now faces fuel shortages and blackouts as the Trump regime tightens the stran-

Continued on page 16

STRUGGLE ★ **LA LUCHA**
for Socialism | *por el Socialismo*

Vol. 9, No. 6 March 30, 2026 Vol. 9, Núm. 6 30 de marzo 2026