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We will fight for our voting rights

Statement by candidate John Parker, May 7

What we are witnessing in Louisiana right now is not just a legal dispute. It's a coordinated attack on the fundamental right to vote, and it's being led from the highest court in the land. The Supreme Court didn't just issue a ruling on April 29; on May 4, it took the extraordinary step of rushing its judgment to give racist Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry the cover he needed to cancel an ongoing election.

Its action on May 4: allowing racists to throw out congressional votes for Black candidates. A new map was rushed through before voters could organize a response.

Each step comes dressed as law. Together, they are a ruling-class attack on Black voting rights.

Let's be clear about the sequence of these events. The Court struck down a map that finally gave Black voters a fairer shot at representation.

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JOHN PARKER
SOCIALIST FOR CONGRESS
UNITE AND FIGHT!

NO ICE
NO GENOCIDE
NO WAR

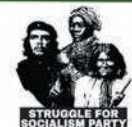
If you want a representative who will:

- Oppose U.S. wars/sanctions; Fund people's needs
- Demand abolishment of ICE and police terror
- Defend Palestine — End genocide from LA to Gaza
- Defend our Trans family from political attacks and violence
- Defend oppressed communities' right to organize for self-defense

Then join us.



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- Supreme Court vs. Black self-determination, Native sovereignty
- Murdered for exercising right to vote
- Louisiana practices a coup by law
- Tennessee moves to erase Black Memphis



May Day: No ICE, no war

New Orleans nurses

NYC Home care workers

China's law: a job is a right

AI is a tool. Depends who holds it

Claude: AI protection racket

Leslie Feinberg's legacy for the trans liberation struggle

Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement



FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Dollar makes the world pay for U.S. wars

China: Don't obey U.S. Iran sanctions

U.S. piracy from Hormuz to Panama

Yemen forces a U.S. Navy detour

Brooklyn rally: Free Maduro and Flores

Palestinian supporters attacked by cops at stolen land sale

On his 72nd birthday, Philadelphia marches to free Mumia

By Stephen Millies

April 25 – Cold rain didn't stop people today from marching in Philadelphia to free Mumia Abu-Jamal. The day before was the revolutionary writer's 72nd birthday, which, like his previous 44 birthdays, was spent in a prison cell.

The political prisoner was framed for allegedly killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner in 1981 and sentenced to death by Judge Albert Sabo. This bigot in robes declared in the presence of a court reporter, "I'm going to help them fry the [n-word]."

Mumia's real crime was as a 15-year-old helping to form the Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panther Party. He later challenged the city's fascist mayor, Frank Rizzo, who urged his supporters to "vote white," and threatened Mumia at a news conference.

It was only the power of the people, through demonstrations and rallies around the world, that kept Mumia Abu-Jamal from being executed. Although Mumia is no longer on death row, prison authorities are still trying to kill him by refusing adequate medical care.

From the Molly Maguires to Mumia

People gathered in Malcolm X Park and marched north on 52nd Street through the heart of West Philly's Black community. Saturday's march concluded Mumia Week, which included a series of events around Philadelphia. Mumia Week was endorsed by many groups, including the MOVE organization and Mobilization 4 Mumia Abu-Jamal.

The day before – on April 24, Mumia's birthday – people rallied at District Attorney Larry Krasner's office to demand Mumia's freedom. This so-called liberal DA refuses to support a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal despite boxes of hidden evidence having been found.

Colorful banners and signs were carried by marchers who seized the thoroughfare and repeated chants carried by bullhorns. Some of

these activists had marched 103 miles over 12 days in bitterly cold weather the previous November and December 2025 to the Mahanoy State Correctional Institution, where Mumia is locked up.

This prison, along with others, was deliberately built in the old anthracite coal-mining region. Twenty union members and supporters there, largely Irish immigrants, were hanged by the mine owners on frame-up charges in the 1870s.

They were called the Molly Maguires by anti-labor newspapers, the era's version of Fox News. A century later, Pennsylvania's wealthy and powerful sought to execute Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Now with almost all the mines in the region closed, the capitalist state hires guards from this overwhelmingly white region to brutalize Black and Brown prisoners.

Community support

Despite the rain, many people came out on their porches to greet the marchers. At one point, an entire line of cars began to honk rhythmically in support.

People marched to the One Art Community Center, where a rally was held. It was chaired by Gabe Bryant, a co-founder of the Human Rights Coalition, and Mike Africa, Jr., who was born in prison.

He was taken away from his mother Debbie Africa. She and his father, Mike Africa Sr., were members of the MOVE 9. These MOVE members were framed for killing a police officer, James Ramp.

In 1978, Philadelphia Mayor Rizzo ordered his cops to attack a house belonging to MOVE members. They fired so many bullets that they killed Ramp in the crossfire. Afterward, they mercilessly beat the MOVE members.

Nine MOVE members were falsely convicted of Ramp's death. Two of these MOVE members – Merle Africa and Phil Africa – died in prison.



SLL: photo: Stephen Millies

The remaining members spent four decades in prison before being released.

On May 13, 1985, Philadelphia police, with assistance from the Pentagon and the FBI, bombed a MOVE house. Six adults and five children were burned to death, while dozens of other homes were destroyed as well.

The same terrorist regime – the real "deep state" – wants Mumia Abu-Jamal to die in prison.

Ismael Jimenez, the director of social studies for the Philadelphia School District, spoke at the rally. He described how he's been trying to bring in more Black history in the schools.

Jimenez has been viciously attacked by Zionist organizations for defending Palestinians. These outfits include the notorious Canary Mission that wanted Mahmoud Khalil deported.

Mumia Abu-Jamal, through his writings and broadcasts, has always defended the Palestinian liberation struggle.

Maryam Muhammad from the African People's Socialist Party demanded freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Fred Hampton, Jr., was the final speaker. His father – Chicago Black Panther Party leader Fred Hampton, Sr., was assassinated on Dec. 4, 1969, by police after being put on the FBI's kill list.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has now spent 17 more years in jail than Nelson Mandela did. Freedom for Mumia and all political prisoners has to be raised at upcoming May Day rallies and every anti-Trump, anti-war, and anti-ICE action. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! #

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Tennessee moves to erase Black Memphis from Congress

By Gary Wilson

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee signed a new congressional map into law on May 7 that breaks up Memphis, eliminates the state's only majority-Black congressional district and threatens to erase Black voters' only real voice in Tennessee's congressional delegation.

On April 30, Trump posted on Truth Social that he had spoken with Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee and that Lee would "work hard" to "correct" Tennessee's congressional map. Trump said the change "should give us one extra seat" and signed off: "Thank you Governor Lee – PUSH HARD!" On May 1, Lee called the special session.

On May 7, the House passed the map 64-25. One lawmaker walked into the chamber wearing a Trump 2024 flag as a cape. The message was not hidden: this was Trump's map, pushed through by Tennessee's legislative majority.

This is not tanks in the streets. It is a Trump coup carried out by law. The Supreme Court guts voting rights. Governors declare "election emergencies." State legislatures redraw maps so those in power can choose their voters, cancel elections they do not like and wipe out Black representation before November.

Memphis is the largest Black-majority city in the United States. Its Black population is more than 60%. The proposed map does not simply redraw the district – it carves the city into three pieces and connects them to rural conservative areas stretching hundreds of miles away, in some cases reaching into middle Tennessee. Candidate qualifying deadlines have already passed. August primaries are months away. The speed is deliberate.

To make the attack possible, lawmakers first repealed Tennessee's ban on mid-decade redistricting, a protection that had stood for more than 50 years. Then they reopened candidate qualifying until May 15, after the old deadlines had already passed.

"This whole process has been a sham," said state Rep. Justin Pearson, speaking on May 6 as the legislative majority advanced the plan. "It's been done in secrecy, behind closed doors, with backroom deals. This is just wrong. And everyone knows why this is happening. This is an attack on our Black majority district, this is an attack on our democracy."

Pearson is one of the Tennessee Three: Justin Pearson of Memphis, Justin Jones of Nashville and Gloria Johnson of Knoxville. In 2023, Pearson and Jones, both Black lawmakers, were expelled from the Tennessee House after they joined students and parents de-

manding action on gun violence following the Covenant School shooting. Johnson, who is white and joined the same protest, survived expulsion by one vote. The official excuse was "disorderly behavior." The real offense was that two young Black representatives brought the anger of the streets into the chamber and would not be silent.

Now Johnson has named what the same legislature is doing to Memphis. "This is not a special session – this is a white power rally, and a white power grab," she said ahead of the May 7 vote.

Black legislators at the Tennessee State Capitol put the attack on Memphis in plain terms. "There's no way to sugarcoat eliminating a district that is 61% Black and breaking it up into three different districts," said state Sen. Raumesh Akbari on May 6. "You are deliberately trying to silence the voices of a community. You cannot call it anything but racism."

Tennessee is part of a coordinated offensive. Alabama began its own special session on May 4 to eliminate districts currently represented by Black members of Congress. A federal court had previously ordered Alabama to keep its current map through 2030. Gov. Kay Ivey is now using the Louisiana ruling to seek Supreme Court permission to override that order.

Florida moved the same day as the Supreme Court ruling. Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a new congressional map on May 4 that targets Black representation in Orlando, Tampa-St. Petersburg and South Florida. In Louisiana, Gov. Jeff Landry had already declared an "election emergency" and suspended congressional primaries after more than 42,000 absentee ballots had already been cast.

The AFL-CIO called the Supreme Court ruling "an outright attack on the fundamental freedoms of all working people" – a recognition that stripping Black voters of representation silences the working class as a whole. That is the point. When Black voters are scattered and silenced, the bosses gain a freer hand against every worker.

That connection is not rhetorical. Memphis has a long history of labor and civil rights struggle – it was where sanitation workers struck in 1968, where Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in the midst of that fight. Breaking up Black representation in Memphis is an attack on a working-class city's right to have a voice in Congress.

Protesters made that history present on May 6, interrupting committee hearings with chants of "Memphis is Black, there's no deny-



A demonstrator holds her ground as state troopers move to remove her during protests against the Tennessee legislature's vote to eliminate the state's only majority-Black congressional district.

ing that!" and "Hands off our vote!" Demonstrators rallied outside the Tennessee State Capitol in Nashville. Students confronted senators inside the building.

Martin Luther King III called it a return to Jim Crow. He is right about the lineage. The fight for democratic rights in Memphis runs from the Reconstruction-era Memphis Massacre through Ida B. Wells's anti-lynching campaign through the 1968 sanitation strike through every generation since. The Voting Rights Act that state lawmakers are now gutting in practice was written in blood.

The Supreme Court did not hand down that act. It was won in the streets of Selma and Birmingham and across the South, by people who faced murder, beatings and jail. The same court now being used to dismantle those gains has a long record: Dred Scott, Plessy v. Ferguson, and now Louisiana v. Callais.

Tennessee's vote on May 7 is not an isolated event. With more than half of the country's Black population concentrated in the South, the redistricting war underway is a coordinated ruling-class attack on Black communities' right to be heard and represented – and on the working class as a whole. A ruling class waging war abroad and cutting programs at home needs Black voters scattered and Black representation gone before resistance can organize. #

Louisiana is test run for coup by law against Black voting rights

By Gary Wilson

The U.S. Supreme Court did not stop with gutting the Voting Rights Act. On May 4, it moved from ruling to enforcement.

Five days after its April 29 ruling in *Louisiana v. Callais*, the court took the unusual step of ordering its judgment sent down immediately, bypassing the normal 32-day waiting period. The result was political and immediate: Louisiana's Republican state government got the cover it needed to halt U.S. House primaries already underway, redraw the map and move to lock Black voters out of representation before the November midterm elections.

What is happening in Louisiana is the first test run of a Trump-era coup by law: using his Supreme Court majority to gut voting rights, then using racist governors like Jeff Landry to cancel elections and redraw maps to eliminate Black representation.

This is not only a legal maneuver. It is a direct move to repress Black voting rights.

The April 29 ruling struck down Louisiana's congressional map, which included a second majority-Black district after years of Voting Rights Act litigation. The court did not formally repeal Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. It did something more useful to the ruling class: It made Section 2 harder to enforce when Black voters seek districts that allow them to elect representatives of their choice.

Then Landry moved. On April 30, he issued an executive order suspending Louisiana's U.S. House primary elections. The governor's own office said the order applied only to U.S. Representative races, while other May 16 offices and ballot measures would continue as planned.

That means the state did not shut down the election. It targeted the congressional races affected by the fight over Black representation.

The court joins the operation

The May 4 order shows the Supreme Court was not finished after the ruling. It stepped in again to help move the attack from decision to enforcement.

Under the court's normal rules, the losing side has time to seek rehearing before the judgment is formally sent to the lower court. Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, dissenting from the May 4 order, pointed out that the court almost never rushes judgment this way over a party's objection. She wrote that the court was no longer content to decide the law, but was now taking steps to shape how its ruling would be carried out.

Justice Samuel Alito, joined by Clarence



A Louisiana voting-rights protest during the Robinson v. Callais fight. The Supreme Court's ruling opened the way for Louisiana officials to eliminate Black representation.

Thomas and Neil Gorsuch, answered with anger. He accused Jackson of using rhetoric that "lacks restraint."

But Alito's anger was meant to obscure the central point: The court used a discretionary procedural power to turn its attack on voting rights into an election weapon.

The sequence matters. On April 29, the Supreme Court struck down Louisiana's congressional map. On April 30, Landry used that ruling to declare an "electoral emergency" and suspend the U.S. House primaries scheduled for May 16. Early voting was set to begin May 2. Absentee ballots had already been mailed, and some voters had already returned them. The Federal Election Commission reported that Landry's order pushed the congressional primaries back until July 15, unless the Louisiana Legislature sets another date.

That is the point. First the Supreme Court struck down the map on April 29. Then Landry used the ruling on April 30 to suspend congressional primaries with absentee voting already underway. Then, on May 4, the Supreme Court rushed its own paperwork to help make the power grab look legal.

Cancelling votes already cast

The attack is not abstract. Absentee ballots had already been mailed, and more than 42,000 had already been returned before Landry suspended the U.S. House primaries, according to the Louisiana Illuminator.

The ACLU of Louisiana said a court had allowed Landry "to suspend part of an election already in progress and disenfranchise voters who have already cast their ballots."

That is what repression looks like in legal form. Not troops at the polls. Not a formal declaration ending elections. A court ruling. An emergency order. A suspended primary. Congressional votes that officials can throw out. A new map rushed through before voters can organize a response. Each step comes dressed as law. Together, they are a ruling-class attack on Black voting rights.

The old Jim Crow system used literacy tests,

poll taxes, terror and one-party rule to crush Black political rights. The modern version uses court doctrine, emergency orders, redistricting and election calendars. The target is the same: eliminating the democratic rights of Black voters.

Louisiana is the test case because the stakes are clear. Black people make up about one-third of the state's population. The state

had only one majority-Black congressional district after the 2020 census. Federal courts had found that map likely violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act because it denied Black voters a fair chance to elect candidates of their choice. Louisiana then adopted a second majority-Black district. The Supreme Court struck that down.

Now the ruling class wants to use Louisiana as the model: gut the Voting Rights Act, cancel or delay elections, redraw the maps and drive Black voters out of representation across the South.

The message is plain: If Black voters win representation under the Voting Rights Act, the courts can call that representation unconstitutional. If an election is already underway, a governor can stop it. If ballots have already been cast, officials can refuse to count part of them. If the normal court timetable gets in the way, the Supreme Court can speed itself up.

This is not neutrality. It is intervention.

The ruling class is moving fast

Louisiana shows how the attack will work elsewhere. The court creates the opening. Racist state governments move fast to carry out the ruling-class attack. Black districts are broken apart. Elections are delayed, rewritten or rerouted. By the time the courts finish hearing challenges, the political damage may already be done.

That is why the May 4 order matters. The Supreme Court was not watching from a distance. It was helping manage the result.

The attack comes during a wider crisis of U.S. imperialism. War on Iran and Venezuela and blockade threats against Cuba are feeding rising prices and sharper attacks on workers at home. A ruling class waging war abroad and austerity at home needs the old weapon of divide and conquer to weaken working-class resistance. That means deepening the historic national oppression of Black people. Black voting rights are a special target because Black struggle has been at the center of every major victory won by workers and oppressed people in this country. Breaking up Black represen-

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Black people and their allies were murdered for the right to vote

By Stephen Millies

People died for the right to vote. Immediately after the U.S. Civil War there was a series of massacres of Black people, which were conducted, in part, to stop Black people from voting.

For decades after the Civil War, Black people were the majority of the population in Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina. Both Alabama and Florida were over 40% Black.

Among these atrocities were:

- **Memphis Massacre (May 1866):** White mobs, including police, killed 46 African Americans and burned schools and churches.
- **New Orleans Massacre (July 1866):** Police and white mobs attacked Black citizens marching for voting rights, killing over 30 and wounding over 100.
- **Camilla Massacre (1868):** A march in Georgia led by Black legislator Philip Joiner was attacked, resulting in roughly a dozen deaths.
- **Opelousas Massacre (1868):** In Louisiana, white supremacists killed dozens, with estimates of over 200, to suppress Republican voting.
- **Colfax Massacre (1873):** One of the deadliest Reconstruction massacres, in which white militias killed around 150 Black men in Louisiana on Easter Sunday.
- **Vicksburg Massacre (1874):** White mobs killed dozens of Black people trying to protect a local official.
- **Hamburg Massacre (1876):** South Carolina white mobs targeted a Black militia, killing several men.

It wasn't just in the South where Black activists were killed. Octavius Catto was murdered on election day in Philadelphia, Oct. 10, 1871, by a racist gang determined to stop Black peo-

ple from voting. At least one other Black person was killed on the same election day.

The struggle over that history continues. It took years of organizing to place a statue of Catto on the south side of Philadelphia's City Hall and to remove the statue of fascist Mayor Frank Rizzo – the same Rizzo whose police force framed the revolutionary Mumia Abu-Jamal, whom the capitalist establishment has tried to kill for decades, and now wants him to die in prison.

The elected government of Wilmington, North Carolina, was overthrown by a racist mob in 1898. Seventy-five years later, the Wilmington 10, who were anti-racist activists, were framed.

Between 30 and 80 Black people were killed in Ocoee, Florida, on election day in November 1920. Almost all Black people were driven out of the City in Orange County, where Orlando and Disney World are located.

NAACP member Elbert Williams was murdered in Brownsville, Tennessee on June 20, 1940, for encouraging Black people to vote.

The 37-year-old veteran Maceo Snipes was shot to death in front of his home on July 18, 1946, for having been the only Black person to have voted the day before in Taylor County, Georgia.

Harriette Moore and Harry T. Moore were murdered when their home was dynamited by the Ku Klux Klan on Christmas Day, 1951. The nearest hospital would not treat them because they were Black.

As a former president of the Florida state chapter of the NAACP, Harry T. Moore led campaigns to register Black voters. Because of the Moores' efforts, Florida had more registered Black voters than any other Southern state at the time.

Its record is soaked in racist law. In *Dred Scott*, the court backed slavery and declared that Black people had no rights the white ruling class was bound to respect. In *Plessy v. Ferguson*, it made Jim Crow segregation the law of the land. Today, in *Louisiana v. Callais*, the same court is using the language of "equal protection" to attack the very voting rights Black people fought, bled and died to win.

The answer cannot be courtroom appeals alone, though every legal challenge matters. The answer must also be organized resistance in the streets, in unions, in churches, on campuses and in the Black communities being targeted.

Louisiana is the first test run. If they succeed there, they will try it everywhere. #



Philadelphia – Octavius V. Catto was murdered on Election Day in 1871 while Black people fought for the right to vote. His statue now stands outside City Hall.

No one was ever prosecuted for their murders. Many people believe that the Lake County Sheriff had the Moores killed because of their efforts to defend the Groveland Four, who were four Black teenagers in Lake County, framed on phony rape charges.

Rev. George Lee was killed in Belzoni, Mississippi, on May 7, 1955, after being the first Black person to vote in Humphreys County since Reconstruction.

The 63-year-old veteran Lamar Smith was shot and killed on the Brookhaven, Mississippi, courthouse lawn on Aug. 13, 1955, after helping Black residents with absentee ballots.

The NAACP's Mississippi State Field Secretary, Medgar Evers was assassinated in front of his home on June 12, 1963. His assassin wouldn't be convicted until 1994.

Vernon Dahmer died on Jan. 10, 1966, after his Hattiesburg, Mississippi, house was fire-bombed by the Ku Klux Klan. The president of the Forrest County NAACP chapter urged Black people to vote on the radio.

Also...

James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were murdered by the Ku Klux Klan near Philadelphia, Mississippi, during Freedom Summer in 1964. Sixteen years later, Ronald Reagan deliberately chose to start his 1980 presidential campaign in Philadelphia, Mississippi, virtually over the bodies of these Black and Jewish martyrs.

Viola Liuzzo, the mother of an Italian-American family, was murdered by Klan member Gary T. Rowe on March 25, 1965. Liuzzo was killed following the historic march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, for voting rights.

Rowe was on J. Edgar Hoover's payroll and was later given immunity from prosecution. The FBI targeted Viola Liuzzo's husband, Anthony Liuzzo, and jailed the business agent of Teamsters Local 247 in Detroit. #

Louisiana

Continued from page 4

tation is meant to weaken the whole working class before resistance can spread.

The Voting Rights Act was not a gift from the courts. It was won in struggle – in Selma, Birmingham, Montgomery and across the South – by Black people and their allies who faced jail, beatings, bombings and murder.

Now the Supreme Court is moving once again to take back what Black struggle won. This is the one branch of the federal government that the people never elect. Its justices sit for life. They are shielded from the voters and answer only to the ruling-class forces that put them there.

Supreme Court attacks Black self-determination, Native sovereignty

By Gary Wilson

On April 29, the U.S. Supreme Court gave state legislatures a green light to break up Black and Native voting districts – an attack on Black self-determination, Native sovereignty and basic democratic rights.

The 6-3 ruling in *Louisiana v. Callais* gutted what remained of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It struck down Louisiana's second majority-Black congressional district and opened the door for similar attacks across the country.

Lawmakers can now break up Black and Native voting districts, then say it was not racism – it was just a plan to give Republicans more seats.

The decision landed while public attention was fixed on the U.S. war on Iran, soaring gas prices and preparations for May Day. That timing mattered. War and crisis pushed one of the most sweeping attacks on basic democratic rights since the end of Reconstruction out of the center of public attention. Coming on the eve of May Day, the ruling showed the class character of the attack: It struck at Black political representation, Native sovereignty and the right of oppressed peoples to determine their own political future, while the workers' movement was preparing to march against war, austerity, racism and repression.

Writing for the conservative majority, Justice Samuel Alito held that Louisiana's effort to ensure fair representation for Black residents – who make up one-third of the state's population – was unconstitutional "race-based discrimination."



Selma, March 7, 1965. The Supreme Court just finished burying what they marched for.

Justice Elena Kagan, dissenting, called the ruling the "latest chapter in the majority's now-completed demolition of the Voting Rights Act." She is correct. But the attack did not begin in 2026, and it cannot be understood as a legal matter alone.

1877 again

This is not the first time Black democratic rights have been traded away in a ruling-class crisis. In the Compromise of 1877, Northern capital and the Southern ruling class struck a counter-revolutionary deal that ended Reconstruction. Control of the South was returned to the old slaveholding order and its successors – the planters, merchants, politicians and railroad magnates who ruled the "redeemed" South. In practice, "home rule" meant white-supremacist rule over the Black masses of the South, enforced by a reign of terror.

Black people in the South paid the price. Federal protection was withdrawn. Reconstruction governments were destroyed. The Southern ruling class imposed Jim Crow: a system of white-supremacist rule over Black people, enforced through disfranchisement, terror, poverty wages and segregation, and used to keep the whole working class divided.

The 1965 Voting Rights Act was won through mass struggle. Black-led movements across the South, joined by supporters across the country, marched, organized and built local movements under the threat of jail, beatings and murder. Black people forced the ruling class to concede basic democratic rights: the right to vote, to be represented and to assert their right to self-determination. Today, the Supreme Court is turning the ruling-class attack on those rights into law. The Louisiana

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Candidate John Parker: We will fight for our voting rights

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The very next day, the governor suspended the congressional primary. Absentee ballots were already in the mail. Over 42,000 votes were denied. And now, those legally cast ballots are being thrown out by not allowing the usual 32 days before the Court's orders were to be implemented.

As the ACLU of Louisiana said, a court has allowed Landry "to suspend part of an election already in progress and disenfranchise voters who have already cast their ballots."

This is what a modern coup by law looks like. No troops at the polls, just a court ruling and an emergency order. They are using procedure to achieve what Jim Crow once did with terror and literacy tests: diluting Black voting power. They are telling us that even if you vote, even if your ballot is already in, the ruling class can

simply refuse to count it if they don't like the potential outcome.

Louisiana is the test run. They want to see if they can get away with this so they can export this model across the South. That is already happening in Tennessee, where lawmakers are moving to break Memphis – the largest Black-majority city in the United States – into three congressional districts and erase the state's only majority-Black district. Black struggle was at the heart of winning the Voting Rights Act in Selma and Montgomery, and Black representation is the special target now because it's a central part of every struggle of our working class. The Supreme Court's robe may give it an air of neutrality, but its record from *Dred Scott* in 1857 to *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896 to today's actions screams the truth: it is intervening to win a political fight for the ruling class and put a rubber stamp on white

supremacy and slavery by other means.

The *Dred Scott* decision, enabling slavery by the Court, was based primarily on the denial of "citizenship" toward people of African descent in the U.S. – our immigrant, migrant and Indigenous families' struggle against the weaponization of citizenship has roots in the Black struggle. Also, these rulings expose a Court that is not elected but chosen by a ruling class that relies on the division of our working class.

Courtroom appeals are necessary, but they are not enough. Real change will only come from organized resistance. We will not let Louisiana be the test case for furthering disfranchisement of Black people. I stand with the voters whose ballots are being silenced, and I call on every union, church, progressive organization and community member to say clearly: our votes will not be erased, and we will fight by any means necessary. #



San Diego



Baltimore

SLL photo: Gloria Verdieu

SLL: Baltimore

No ICE, no war: May Day takes aim at Trump

By Gary Wilson

May 1, 2026, was International Workers' Day. Workers, students, immigrants and community organizations rallied across the United States: no school, no work, no shopping – with signs and placards demanding “No ICE, no war.”

That same day, the 60-day deadline under the War Powers Resolution for the U.S. war on Iran expired. The Trump administration did not seek congressional authorization. It claimed the law did not apply.

That same day, Trump signed a new executive order expanding sanctions on Cuba, threatening foreign financial institutions that help targeted Cuban government-linked entities move money.

That same day, ICE confirmed that Denny Adan Gonzalez, a Cuban man held at Stewart Detention Center in Lumpkin, Georgia, had died earlier that week. ICE's account cannot be trusted. The agency categorized the death as a suspected suicide, while the official cause remained under investigation and advocates questioned the conditions that led to his death.

Together, they showed one offensive: war abroad, blockade against Cuba, ICE terror at home and workers in the streets against all of it.

No school, no work, no shopping

“Workers over billionaires” summed up the May Day message. “No ICE, no war” connected the fight over wages, schools and public services to raids, detention, sanctions and war. The May Day Strong coalition framed the action carefully. Organizers did not call it a formal strike. Under U.S. labor law, a strike can carry legal requirements and risks, especially for union members. So the coalition called for “economic non-cooperation”: workers, students and consumers refusing business as usual for one day.

The distinction matters. May 1 was not a general strike in the classical sense. It was a test of the forces that could make one possible: workers staying home, school districts forced to close, unions and community organizations acting together with thousands of actions. More than 500 labor unions, student groups, immigrant rights organizations, community groups and advocacy organizations participated. The National Education Association – the country's largest union, with 3 million mem-

bers – helped organize the action. In North Carolina, at least 22 public school districts closed or changed schedules after mass teacher and student absences made normal operations impossible. The formal decision came from district officials; the pressure came from workers staying home.

The Chicago Teachers Union, Teamsters 492, Starbucks Workers United, the United Electrical Workers, SEIU locals and the New York City Central Labor Council AFL-CIO all took part.

May Day actions were held in cities across the country. In Los Angeles, Pedro Trujillo of the LA May Day Coalition said the city had not seen a coalition of more than 120 organizations in a very long time. In Chicago, CTU President Stacy Davis Gates pointed to the billionaire class behind Trump, Congress and the courts. In St. Louis, Shayne Clegg, 23, of the Missouri Workers Center, told NPR that workers were “fed up” as billionaires take more control and families struggle to afford food and basic needs. In New York, marchers moved down Broadway toward Foley Square with the AFL-CIO and the New York Immigration Coalition.

Other actions tied May Day directly to anti-war and international solidarity demands. In Tucson, Arizona, marchers linked May Day to Cuba and the antiwar struggle: “We stand with the Cuban people and against all U.S. sanction and war policies! Money for people's needs, not billionaire greed!”

Some actions went beyond rallies. ILWU Locals 10, 34 and 91 in the Bay Area and Locals 19 and 52 in Seattle shut down day shifts for May Day. In the Bay Area, San Francisco International Airport workers and supporters blocked the departure level at the international terminal during an SEIU United Service Workers West action for higher wages and a fair contract. Twenty-five people were arrested.

The coalition's demands were direct: tax the rich; no ICE; no war.

ICE is war at home: raids, detention camps, surveillance, deportations, family separation and terror against migrant workers. Abroad, the same government uses blockades, sanctions, bombings, military occupations and threats against countries that refuse Washington's command.

Internationally, the connection was just as clear. In Manila, protesters marched toward

the U.S. Embassy with banners against troops, bases and war games. In Paris, unions marched under the slogan “bread, peace and freedom.” Across Europe, labor organizations protested the effort to make workers pay for Trump's war in West Asia through higher prices, oil shocks and military budgets.

The law the White House ignored

On May 1, the 60-day deadline under the War Powers Resolution expired.

The Trump administration had launched Operation Epic Fury against Iran on Feb. 28. It did not ask Congress to declare war. It did not seek a specific Authorization for Use of Military Force. It did not request a vote before the 60-day deadline expired.

Instead, Pete Hegseth, who heads the Pentagon, told the Senate Armed Services Committee that the ceasefire had “paused” the War Powers clock. The statute says no such thing.

The War Powers Resolution was passed in 1973, during the crisis created by the U.S. war against Vietnam and the long post-World War II pattern of presidents launching wars without formal declarations from Congress. It was presented as a way to reassert congressional authority. In practice, it also gave presidents a legal road map for unilateral war: notify Congress within 48 hours, continue hostilities for 60 days without authorization, and then claim another 30 days for withdrawal. The Constitution gives only Congress the power to declare war. The War Powers Resolution turned that into a timetable that presidents could try to manage after the shooting had already begun.

Trump went further, claiming that his own interpretation of events could suspend the law.

House Speaker Mike Johnson joined in, claiming Congress did not need to act because the U.S. was “not at war.” This was said while U.S. forces were maintaining a blockade of Iranian ports, after U.S. forces had captured an Iranian-flagged vessel, and while commanders continued briefing the White House on military options.

The White House's own record makes the claim absurd. Trump has boasted of the “complete demolition” of Iran's industrial and economic capacity. Power plants, bridges, oil export hubs and desalination plants were hit.

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Home care workers demand an end to 24-hour days

By Lallan Schoenstein

On May Day, home care workers and their supporters protested at the gates of City Hall, fighting for New York State funding to end their 24-hour workday. They demanded that Mayor Mamdani fulfill his election promise to end the 24-hour workday and “recognize the immense labor of home care workers.” Protesters called on District Council 37, the large public-sector union, and Mamdani to press Governor Hochul to pay for 12-hour shifts performed by two different workers.

Earlier, on April 16, the home health workers said they had been pushed to take the desperate step of going on a hunger strike. About 15 workers ended the hunger strike while mobilizing for the May Day demonstration. A previous hunger strike by about two dozen home care workers in 2024 ended after six days.

The hunger strike began after the City Council failed to advance a bill banning 24-hour shifts. About 40 workers holding “Stop the 24 Hr Workday” signs sat on folding chairs beside the gates of City Hall. The home care aides, who are mostly immigrant women, care for those whose lives often depend on round-the-clock care.



Home care workers protesting the 24-hour workday began a hunger strike on April 16.

Photo: Dean Moses

The pay of live-in home care workers is subsidized by state Medicaid funds. They are only paid for 13 hours a day. Often, they are forced to maintain 24-hour shifts. During that time, job regulations allowed only three hours of mealtime and five hours of sleep.

Home care workers report that they are working up to 96 straight hours without rest – while getting paid for only a fraction of that time.

Home health aide Yunfang Zhang, 70, said through an interpreter that she joined the hunger strike because “home care workers cannot wait any longer, and our health has been destroyed. We cannot allow this to continue to the next generation,” she said.

It should be a surprise to no one that the catastrophic lack of health care in the U.S. leads to results such as having the low-paid workers forced to compete for funds with disabled workers who have to rely on home care.

A stalled bill, introduced by Councilmember Christopher Marte of Chinatown, seeks to replace the 24-hour shifts with 12-hour shifts performed by two different workers. This improvement in home care has to come from state funds.

Estimates from 1199 SEIU, a union representing home care workers statewide, say that split shifts under the present Medicaid system would cost an estimated \$450 million annually in the five boroughs. To understand how much this amounts to in government spending, consider that the U.S. fired more than 850 Tomahawk missiles at Iran in the first month of Operation Epic Fury alone; the annual cost of split shifts equals just 125 such missiles. What they fired off in one week against Iran would have paid for home care worker costs for a full year in New York. #

No ICE, no war: May Day takes aim at Trump

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Schools and hospitals were bombed. Trump described Iran as “essentially decimated.” This is what modern imperialist war looks like: not only soldiers crossing borders, but power grids, ports, water systems, hospitals and schools made into targets.

If that is not war, the word has no meaning. The six war powers votes in Congress in March and April were not an antiwar break by Senate Democrats. They were a protest over Trump’s handling of a war the Democratic Party helped prepare. The sanctions, deployments and war plans against Iran passed from administration to administration. Democrats and Republicans funded the Pentagon budgets that made the war possible.

The votes let Democrats complain that Trump bypassed them while leaving the war machine untouched. Congress was not moving to stop the war. It was fighting over who gets to bless it.

Coalition for domestic workers on May Day in New York City

SLL: photo: Stephen Millies

Workers chanting “No war” on May 1 stood outside that whole Washington argument. They were not demanding a better-managed war. They were demanding an end to it.

No war against Palestine and Lebanon

“No war” meant ending the genocide in Gaza, the military and settler attacks in the West Bank, and the U.S.-backed war on Lebanon.

The attack on Iran came inside a regional war already being carried out with U.S. weapons and public backing from Washington:



Israel’s war on Gaza, intensified military and settler attacks in the West Bank, and the invasion and bombardment of southern Lebanon.

By late April, Gaza’s Health Ministry figures reported through U.N. agencies put the Palestinian death toll above 72,000. In Lebanon, Israeli attacks since March 2 have killed more than 2,500 people and displaced more than a million. The Iran ceasefire has not stopped

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New Orleans nurses strike for fair wages and safe staffing levels

By Gregory E. Williams

Nurses at New Orleans’ University Medical Center began a five-day strike on May 1, which is International Workers’ Day. This is their sixth time striking since they voted to unionize with National Nurses United in December 2023. They are striking again because they still haven’t gotten a contract guaranteeing fair wages, safe staffing levels, and other demands.

These UMC nurses are the first to unionize in the city. And, although they are in a protracted struggle with the LCMC hospital system owners, who may seem to have the upper hand, the balance of power can change rapidly in such labor struggles. Early this year, 15,000 New York City nurses went on strike in the New York-Presbyterian hospital system and won their contract. They had also been trying to get an acceptable contract since 2023.

The New Orleans strike that began today started with a rally and picket line outside UMC at the corner of Canal and Galvez streets. Opening remarks were given by RN Ory Mire, who is on the negotiating team. He said:

“This is our sixth strike. Nurses do not do this unless something is seriously wrong. We’re here because the hospital has chosen delays over solutions. They show up at the negotiation table, but they don’t really move: They just go through the motions. They stall, they deflect. They hope we will break our unity, but that’s not going to happen.

“This is why we filed an unfair labor practice strike for this surface bargaining. This is not a misunderstanding. This is their strategy: to drag this out instead of doing what’s right. But they misjudged us. They don’t know who



SLL photo: Gregory E. Williams

New Orleans, May 1 – Nurses started a five-day strike with a picket line outside University Medical Center at Canal and Galvez.

they’re dealing with. We are still here and we are united. And we are prepared to keep fighting for as long as it takes to win a fair contract.”

Union organizer Terry Mogilles, RN, put the struggle in the context of the broad attacks of the ruling class, saying:

“I want to talk about power. There are two

kinds of power. There’s financial power, which is based on greed right now – acquisitions, putting dollar signs on patients’ heads. And we know that’s not just LCMC, that’s what’s happening across this country. The billionaire class is doing everything they can to make sure they stay in power.

“Just this week they attacked our voting rights with a vengeance. We’re not going to let that happen, because guess what we got? That other kind of power: people power. And just like [CEO] Greg Feirn and LCMC with their over \$400 million profit last year, they’re making deposits in the bank, and we’re making deposits in our people bank.”

It’s people power that can enable a win for nurses and the communities they serve, just like nurses got this year in New York.

At 4:00 p.m., nurses and supporters left the picket line by bus to rally outside LCMC corporate headquarters at 1100 Poydras Street downtown. Then they marched to Tulane Medical Center headquarters on 1415 Tulane Avenue for another rally, and then marched again to City Hall, meeting up with the May Day march led by immigrant worker organization Unión Migrante. #



New York South Asian and Indo-Caribbean workers on May Day. SLL photo: Melinda Buitterfield

Leslie Feinberg's legacy for the trans liberation struggle

By Melinda Butterfield

Talk given in Madison, Wisconsin, on April 25, 2026.

Good evening. My name is Melinda, my pronouns are she/her, I'm a proud trans woman, and I am thrilled to be back in my home state to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement.

There are a lot of queers here, so I know you understand it's not always a good thing going back to where you grew up!

But I've watched the progress of this movement since its founding. It matters so much to have a group like this one, that fights for the rights of all poor and working people – not just on one issue, not just for one election season or one demonstration or one strike, and doesn't stop fighting when certain politicians get elected.

When I was a teenager in rural Wisconsin, I dreamed of finding a group like this. I'm so glad it exists now.

So when my old friend and comrade Bryan Pfeifer invited me to come and speak about Leslie Feinberg's legacy for the trans liberation struggle – well, that was a no-brainer.

During a talk at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2003, Leslie Feinberg said: "We live in a country where normal is defined by Rush Limbaugh, Trent Lott and Jesse Helms. If that's normal, let me state unequivocally just how queer I am."

The names have changed in the last 20 years, but I think we can all agree with that sentiment.

Leslie Feinberg (zie/hir) is widely known in the queer movement. Hir novel "Stone Butch Blues" is a classic found in feminist and radical bookstores and read in college courses worldwide. You may also know that Leslie said, "Remember me as a revolutionary communist" before zie passed away in 2014.

Leslie was not only a theorist and activist of trans identity and history. Zie was a working-class organizer who came up in the factories and queer bars of Buffalo, New York, and who fought, wrote, walked the picket line, and built solidarity on all fronts – just like WiBOPM does.

For Leslie, being trans and talking about it wasn't a distraction from that work – on the contrary, it was an essential part of it. Because trans people are part of the working class. We're factory workers, baristas, tech workers, teachers, sex workers. And all too often, we're unemployed and underemployed workers.

Bryan and I both had the honor of working with Leslie over many years. I met Leslie when I was just 18, a very confused egg who packed her



Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement 15th anniversary celebration. From left: Cici Voyer, Pony Boy, Melinda Butterfield, Karissa Red Bear, Cass Marie Domino, Andi Withani Domino, and Jacq Infiniti-Hall.

Photo: WiBOPM

still attended. But instead zie took hir stand with the dolls at the Camp Trans counter-protest.

belongings in an old suitcase and moved from Eau Claire to New York. This was a few years before "Stone Butch Blues" was published.

Leslie immediately took me under hir wing, showing me the ropes of being an activist in the big city, and even took me along on a visit back to Buffalo for my 19th birthday. It was there, on the beach at Evangola State Park, that I saw Leslie's top scars for the first time, spurring one of the most important conversations of my life – about the difference between sexuality and gender, something that had vexed me during my very challenging adolescence.

After "Stone Butch Blues" was published, Leslie was in high demand as a speaker at all kinds of meetings, protests, and campus events. Zie was also writing other important books, like "Transgender Warriors" and "Trans Liberation: Beyond Pink and Blue." We didn't get to see each other as often.

But when chronic illness forced Leslie to pull back from this grueling schedule and return to New York, we got to work together closely again. Zie taught me the art of editing for a radical news publication. It was another gift that continues to reverberate through my own life and work.

Solidarity in the LGBTQIA+ community

What is Leslie Feinberg's legacy for our movement today? I would argue that hir most enduring contribution to trans and queer liberation is the importance of building, defending, and fighting for solidarity.

See, while Leslie was doing book tours in the 1990s and early 2000s, zie was also attending meetings at hundreds of queer and feminist spaces large and small across the country, arguing for the inclusion of trans people and trans issues at a time when we were often excluded, even in our own rainbow community.

When the Michigan Women's Music Festival instituted its "women born women" ban on trans feminine people, Leslie could have

behind local trans and genderqueer initiatives. This unsung, unpublicized groundwork had a real, material effect within the community – as did hir long fight to be treated with dignity by health care providers.

That's one pillar of Leslie's legacy: strengthening solidarity within the LGBTQIA+ and Two-Spirit community. That struggle is just as important today. We see how certain groups co-opt feminism to join in the right-wing attack on trans lives, like the TERFs in Britain, and attempts on both sides of the Atlantic to establish astroturfed groups that are "LGB without the T."

The other pillar of Leslie's legacy is building solidarity between trans, Two-Spirit, intersex and gender-nonconforming people and other poor and working-class communities. And it's this one that often seems more difficult and scary to confront.

Leslie spoke at a rally in Washington on Sept. 29, 2001, just two weeks after the 9/11 attacks, as the U.S. was gearing up for its so-called War on Terror. Zie said: "If we have learned anything from the struggle against AIDS and the intransigence of the government, it's that racism and war are not the answer. We say health care and education and jobs and housing are the answer. Stopping racist terror in the United States is the answer."

This theme of fighting all forms of oppression while uniting for the things we all need runs through all of Leslie's work.

Outspoken for Palestine

As a Jewish worker, Leslie had a deep commitment to the struggle for Palestinian liberation. Zie would have loved to see the broad movement of young Jewish people coming out in solidarity with Gaza in the last few years.

But at that time, it was uncommon, and in many spaces, absolutely taboo. Just as it took a lot of courage to speak up as a trans person, it

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Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement celebrates 15 years of struggle

By Struggle-La Lucha Madison bureau

On April 25, activists and supporters from across southern Wisconsin gathered at the James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Hall to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement (WiBOPM or “We Bop ‘Em”). The joyful event emphasized solidarity with the LGBTQIA+ community, featuring talks and a drag show.

The WiBOPM was established in the wake of the historic 2011 occupation of the Wisconsin State Capitol to resist then-Gov. Scott Walker’s plans to gut collective bargaining. At its height, more than 100,000 union workers and community members joined the protests.

Today, WiBOPM is a multigenerational group with statewide reach and much experience under its belt, from supporting strikes in Madison to protesting racist police terror in Milwaukee, from opposing ICE terror against immigrants to demanding an end to U.S. wars.

Activists and allies traveled from cities and towns across southern Wisconsin to join the celebration, including members of the Burlington Coalition for Dismantling Racism Plus (BCDR+) and Indivisible Winnebago WI.

WiBOPM’s distinctive yellow banners and colorful protest signs, seen at protests and meetings throughout the state, were hung throughout the event space.

A representative of the James Reeb Unitarian Universalist congregation welcomed the crowd, explaining that Reeb was a minister murdered by white supremacists in Selma, Alabama, during the Civil Rights movement.

Kai Rasmussen of WiBOPM laid out the agenda for the evening, drawing special attention to the many photo displays highlighting the group’s history and the contributions of trans activists like Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, and Leslie Feinberg. A table was set up for people to write solidarity messages to Salah Sarsour, a Palestinian community leader from Milwaukee, kidnapped by ICE on March 30.

WiBOPM founder and longtime labor organizer Bryan Pfeifer recounted how the group mobilized to protect the LGBTQIA+ community when the neo-Nazi “Blood Tribe” menaced the Watertown Pride event in July 2023. A few months later, WiBOPM organized a counter-protest that drove the fascists out when they attempted to march on the Capitol in Madison.

Bianca Tomasini of the immigrant rights movement Voces de la Frontera said: “We are very grateful for all the times you have been there with Voces and for your support building

May Day. Our members appreciate the allies who are stepping up. It’s a big deal for them to know they are not alone.”

Joanna Weir, a Starbucks Workers United leader and WiBOPM activist, talked about the group’s work in solidarity with the Red Cup Rebellion, when baristas went on strike during the 2025 holiday season.

Ric Urrutia, a labor activist from Colorado who specializes in corporate research, spoke about how WiBOPM has organized teach-ins around the state to help local activists discover and expose the connections between big business, ICE, and data centers.

To mark the close of Lesbian Visibility Week, retired union member and WiBOPM activist Jana Bannon was honored for her contributions stretching back to the struggle to end the Vietnam War. Bannon was presented with a bouquet by WiBOPM’s Karissa Red Bear.

Struggle-La Lucha writer Melinda Butterfield was the keynote speaker, representing Women In Struggle-Mujeres En Lucha. Butterfield, visiting from New York City, was born and grew up in Wisconsin. “When I was a teenager in rural Wisconsin, I dreamed of finding an organization like this one,” she said. “I’m so glad it exists now.”

Butterfield spoke about the legacy of revolutionary transgender author and activist Leslie Feinberg for today’s struggle. Both Butterfield and Pfeifer worked with Feinberg, who passed away in 2014.

“Solidarity is hard when it feels like you’re the only side showing up, when trans people’s

health care and rights are being stripped away, and cisgender people, including many left and progressive organizations, seem mostly unaware and unconcerned,” Butterfield said.

“But Leslie Feinberg argued that, as hard as it may be, trans people can’t isolate ourselves from the rest of the working class. We’re a small population – about 1% of people in the U.S. by current measures – and to advance, we need the solidarity of our working-class siblings. But equally important, to change society, they need us.

“The way that our very existence challenges the underpinnings of capitalist patriarchy; the way our difficult life experiences gives us empathy, resourcefulness, and incredible internal strength – these things are necessary for the broader movement if we are going to advance to a new, more humane system and save the planet.”

Capping off the celebration was a fierce and fiery drag show organized by Madison icon and trans activist Cass Marie Domino. Energetic performances by Andi Withani Domino, Jacq Infiniti-Hall, Cici Voyer, and Pony Boy, accompanied by DJ Ravyn, had the crowd clapping and jumping to their feet.

The event concluded with people taking stacks of leaflets and posters to distribute for May Day.

Another 15th anniversary event is planned for August 22 in Milwaukee. For more information and to get involved with WiBOPM, follow @wi.bopm on Instagram or visit wibailoutpeople.org.



WiBOPM activists and drag performers. Photo: WiBOPM

LOVE IS THE LAW *Cuba's Queer Rights Revolution*
Book by Gregory E. Williams

• The process of winning approval of the Cuba’s ‘Code of Freedom’ for Families;

- Reports from the U.S. Friends Against Homophobia and Transphobia delegation to Cuba;
- Reports from Cenesex – the National Center for Sex Education / Centro Nacional de educación Sexual director Mariela Castro Espín
- The full text of Leslie Feinberg’s ‘Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba’



Leslie Feinberg's legacy for the trans liberation struggle

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took a lot of courage to speak up as an anti-Zionist Jew. But that never stopped Leslie from being a vocal proponent of Palestine.

That commitment echoes through our community today. Queer and trans people have shown up for Palestine, all throughout the genocide in Gaza and attacks on student protesters. Last week in New York, Chelsea Manning and Hari Neff were among 100 people arrested at a protest demanding that Democratic Party leaders stop helping Trump send weapons to Israel.

The genocide trans people face today is different in form from the one being carried out against Palestinians in Gaza. But I think many of us see that there's a real basis for solidarity between two communities that have been told for generations that we don't really exist.

Queer and trans people have also shown up for our immigrant neighbors in the fight to stop ICE. Our lesbian sister Renee Good gave her life, but many other queer observers and protesters, both transgender and cisgender, were targeted in Minneapolis. Renee and her wife Becca had only recently fled Missouri before Renee was murdered by ICE.

An estimated 400,000 trans people fled from far-right-controlled states in the year following Trump's election in 2024. Many other queer people have fled, too. But even if you haven't seen the statistics, no one in our community is surprised by this. We're living every day with the urgent need to help siblings relocate, organize mutual aid, and prepare for what may come next.

And what does it even mean for Democrats to declare a sanctuary state or city for trans people, if there are no provisions for jobs, housing, and health care?

There's a massive internal refugee crisis, but you won't hear about it from any major media or mainstream politicians, even though sensationalist and outright fabricated reports on trans people litter the media every day. Because those stories, and the policies they justify, are designed only to further our isolation from those who should be our natural allies.

A vital part of the working class

Solidarity is hard when it feels like you're the only side showing up, when your health care and rights are being stripped away, and cisgender people, including many left and progressive organizations, seem mostly unaware and unconcerned.

It's not unusual to hear frustrated voices in our community. And that's understandable! A lot of us have been badly burned by people and groups we showed up for but didn't show up for us.

We're tired of hearing self-proclaimed liberal allies try to shove bigots like Gavin Newsom down our throats. We fantasize about setting up our own queer communes and giving the middle finger to the cis-het world.

I'll admit, I indulge in it too.

But Leslie argued that, as hard as it may be, trans people can't isolate ourselves from the rest of the working class. We are a small population – about 1% of people in the U.S. by current measures – and to advance, we need the solidarity of our working-class siblings.

But equally important, to change society, THEY need US.

Just like every advance in workers' rights in U.S. history has been predicated on the Black freedom struggle, trans people, too, are part of the vanguard.

The way that our very existence challenges the underpinnings of capitalist patriarchy; the way our difficult life experiences teach us empathy, resourcefulness, and incredible internal strength – these things are necessary for the broader movement if we're going to advance to a new, more humane system and save the planet.

And there are true allies out there. This room is full of them.

I was reminded recently of the work of Lloyd Barbee, a civil rights activist who for many years was the only African American member of the Wisconsin State Assembly. In 1967 – two years before the Stonewall Uprising – Barbee introduced the first bill to end so-called sodomy laws in the state. In 1971, he introduced the first anti-discrimination bill for LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people.

It took until the early 1980s, when Barbee was no longer a legislator, for those laws to finally be passed. But his groundbreaking acts of solidarity helped pave the way.

If you're a cisgender activist or organizer and want to be a real ally to trans people, there's something very concrete you can do: Make sure we are invited and included in whatever organizing work you're doing, on whatever issues.

Show up for us, and we'll damned sure show up for you.

Rainbow Flags for Cuba

That leads to the last point I want to share with you today, about another struggle near to Leslie's heart: the Cuban Revolution.

In the 1990s, Leslie helped organize a group called Rainbow Flags for Cuba. Its aim was to bring together queer activists to counter the dominant narrative in the U.S. that Cuba was some kind of hell for LGBTQIA+ people, which was then parroted by many mainstream gay groups.

The truth is, even 30 years ago, the struggle for queer liberation was advancing rapidly on the fertile ground of the Cuban Revolution. Leslie felt this was so important that he published a collection of his writings called "Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba."

In 2022, the Cuban people voted to adopt a new Family Code after several years of discussion and debate at all levels of society. This code enshrines the rights of trans and queer people as the law of the land, in ways far beyond anything we have experienced here. That includes the rights of trans and queer children, by the way, as well as women, disabled people, elders and all youth.

Cuba has advanced because its people made a profound revolution that removed the capitalists, landlords, and U.S. colonizers from power and empowered poor and working people.

It's not that a revolution can fix centuries of patriarchal culture overnight, or that it won't make mistakes. But it creates the basis for inequalities to be genuinely addressed at a societal level. Whereas, when we win a right in the United States, where the billionaires rule, it's always conditional and subject to being taken away.

Today, Trump is targeting Cuba like never before, blockading fuel and other essentials, trying to starve the people and threatening military attack to overthrow their government and socialist system.

Cuba is not a threat to U.S. national security. What Trump and successive U.S. governments before him really fear is Cuba's example.

What this small, blockaded country has been able to achieve in universal health care, education, housing, racial unity, women's rights, queer rights, and international solidarity puts the world's richest country to shame. That's why they want to destroy Cuba. We must not let that happen.

Cuba has persevered for more than 60 years under continuous blockade and threats.

The Palestinian people have never surrendered, even when they were treated like international pariahs. Now, after decades of struggle, the whole world understands the justness of Palestinian liberation.

The trans, Two-Spirit, gender-nonconforming and intersex community can learn and draw strength from their examples.

Trans people have always found ways to survive, be ourselves, nourish and teach the next generation. But we shouldn't have to just survive – we have to keep our eyes on the goal of trans liberation and human liberation.

Leslie would remind us that the material basis for a new world exists. It's so close, even though it feels light-years away. We have to keep fighting so it can be born – if not for ourselves, then for those who come after us. #

The dollar makes the world pay for U.S. wars – but the system is cracking

By Gary Wilson

For 55 years, Washington had a power no other government had. It could buy from the world, borrow from the world and wage war around the world with dollars it controlled.

Other countries needed dollars to buy oil, pay foreign debts and settle much of their trade. They had to get those dollars by selling goods, taking loans or imposing austerity.

The United States issued the dollars that other countries had to earn.

This was imperialist tribute organized through money.

When Washington borrowed money, other countries bought the debt. They bought U.S. Treasury bonds – loans to the U.S. government that pay interest.

For central banks, oil monarchies and export economies, those bonds became reserves – a place to store wealth in dollars.

Wall Street gained a world market for dollar investments. The Pentagon could spend through a world economy already tied to the dollar.

Most countries live under the opposite rule. If they owe too many dollars, they cannot issue more dollars to pay. They have to get them through exports, new loans or austerity at home. If they cannot, their currency falls. Imported food, fuel and medicine become more expensive. Dollar debts become harder to pay. Then the International Monetary Fund arrives with demands to cut wages, subsidies and public services.

The United States stood on the other side of that relation. It borrowed in dollars – the currency it controlled. U.S. Treasury bonds became the place where governments, banks and oil monarchies parked their money. What was debt for Washington became savings for them.

Vietnam broke the gold-dollar promise

From 1944 to 1971, the dollar's world role was tied to gold. Under the Bretton Woods system, foreign governments could trade dollars for gold at \$35 an ounce.

That promise could hold only if the U.S. had enough gold behind the dollars it sent into the world. But Washington was spending far beyond that limit – on military bases, corporate expansion abroad and the war on Vietnam. More dollars flowed overseas, more governments demanded gold, and U.S. gold reserves fell. By 1971, Washington could no longer keep the promise.

President Richard Nixon ended dollar convertibility into gold. The U.S. kept making the world pay for its wars. The form of payment changed.

Oil replaced gold

After Nixon cut the dollar loose from gold, Washington still needed a way to keep the dollar at the center of world trade. Oil helped do that.

Oil was priced in dollars. Countries that needed oil needed dollars. Gulf monarchies took in huge dollar revenues and sent much of that money back into U.S. banks, bonds and markets.

That gave Wall Street a stream of capital. It gave the Treasury steady buyers for U.S. debt. The Pentagon armed those monarchies, kept bases in the region and protected the governments that kept oil tied to the dollar.

Gold was pushed out of daily trade, but it was not abolished as world money. Gold is a commodity produced by labor. It has value of its own. Dollars are claims on value – paper and digital promises backed by Washington, Wall Street and U.S. military power.

When dollar credit looks unsafe, central banks and funds still hoard gold.

Washington can issue debt, print dollars and expand credit. But it cannot print value.

Labor stood behind the dollar

The dollar system rested on labor that produced value.

This was the process the ruling class later called globalization. It was imperialist globalization under dollar rule.

Different parts of the world economy were tied into different roles under dollar rule: export production, assembly work, garment subcontracting, oil supply and the storage of dollar earnings in U.S. markets.

The countries drawn into those roles were not all the same. They did not have the same class character, state structure or political independence. But workers across this world market still produced value inside a system dominated by the dollar.

The channels differed. Multinational corporations extracted profits from factories and subcontractors, then shifted those profits across borders through transfer pricing. Dollar debt pulled more money outward through interest payments. Exporters and oil-producing states built up large dollar earnings, then recycled much of that money into U.S. Treasury bonds and dollar assets.

Different routes led back to the same center: Wall Street, the Treasury market and the U.S. war machine.

When dollars earned in export factories or Gulf oil fields end up in U.S. Treasury bonds, those dollars do not come from nowhere. Behind them is labor – workers assembling electronics, sewing garments, loading ships, drill-

ing oil and moving goods across the world.

The dollar system captures value produced by workers across the world and channels much of it to the big U.S. banks, corporations and war industries. Wall Street's expansion rests on that extraction. The Pentagon's wars are paid for with it.

The beneficiaries inside the United States are a specific class: U.S.-based monopoly finance capital – the largest banks, asset managers and military-industrial corporations. They capture the bulk of dollar tribute.

U.S. workers do not receive that tribute. The gains go to banks, corporations and war industries. Workers get stagnant wages, shuttered factories and public services cut back to protect the bond market. The same imperialist system that squeezes workers abroad holds down workers at home.

Washington made other countries pay

When monopoly capital cannot find profitable outlets in production, it turns more heavily to speculation, government contracts and war. The dollar system lets that happen on a world scale. Wall Street takes in excess capital. Pentagon contracts turn it into orders for missiles, warplanes, drones, ships and ammunition.

Each round keeps the system going while piling up new claims on future labor.

As Bretton Woods broke down, critics said Washington was forcing other countries to carry the burden of U.S. inflation. But higher prices were only part of the process. Washington made other countries pay for its own instability through the dollar system.

Other countries held dollars that lost purchasing power. They held U.S. bonds whose value depended on U.S. policy. They paid for oil and many imports in dollars. When the Federal Reserve raised interest rates to defend the dollar, their currencies came under pressure. Their debts became harder to pay. Their governments were told to impose austerity.

Washington spent beyond its means. Other countries held the dollars, bought the bonds and took the losses.

Force holds the system together

Dollar rule did not rest on markets alone. Governments that tried to break from U.S. control faced sanctions, coups, blockades, asset seizures and war. Iraq and Libya showed what could happen to countries with strategic oil reserves that challenged Washington. Venezuela and Iran have endured years of sanctions because they tried to keep control of

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China's labor law says a job is a right – even in the age of AI

By Gary Wilson

In the early 1980s, as the Reagan administration's assault on labor accelerated and plant closures gutted the industrial Midwest, a grassroots campaign put forward a demand that U.S. ruling-class politicians dismissed as utopian: a job is a right. Workers, the campaign argued, acquire a stake in their jobs through years of labor that corporations cannot simply extinguish – the right to work is a social right, not a management prerogative.

U.S. workers never won that demand as enforceable labor law. In China, the Labor Contract Law recognizes that right in concrete form – not as an abstract promise, but as a legal limit on arbitrary dismissal. Two recent Chinese rulings – one in Beijing and one in Hangzhou – did not invent a new right for the AI age. They upheld existing labor law against employers trying to use AI as a short-cut around it.

The issue was not whether companies may use AI. It was whether management can treat its own decision to automate, restructure or cut labor costs as an outside force that cancels its obligations to workers. The answer was no. A company's business decision is not a natural disaster. It does not by itself wipe out the worker's claim under the labor contract.

The cases

The Beijing case came first. In late 2024, a tech company eliminated the department of a map data collector named Liu after switching to AI-powered automated data collection. The company terminated Liu's contract, citing "major changes in objective circumstances" – language from China's Labor Contract Law that permits dismissal in cases of genuine, unforeseeable disruption, such as natural disasters, company relocations, or regulatory shifts.

Liu challenged the firing. In December 2025, the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Human Resources and Social Security published the case as a model ruling for the year. The arbitration committee found that the company's decision to adopt AI was a voluntary business choice to stay competitive – not an uncontrollable event outside the normal scope of management decisions. Terminating Liu's contract on those grounds was ruled illegal. The company sued to overturn the arbitration award, but both the trial court and the appeals court upheld the ruling.

The Hangzhou case followed a similar arc. Zhou had worked since November 2022 as a quality assurance supervisor at an AI-related

Workers reviewing digital content and data. In China, recent AI-related labor rulings held that employers cannot shift the cost of automation onto workers through firings or forced pay cuts.



tech company, earning 25,000 yuan per month. His job involved matching user queries with large language models and filtering problematic content – tasks that AI systems eventually took over. The company tried to reassign him at 15,000 yuan per month. When Zhou refused the pay cut, the company terminated his contract and offered 311,695 yuan in compensation.

Zhou contested the sum. An arbitration panel ruled his dismissal unlawful. The company appealed, first to a Hangzhou district court and then to the Hangzhou Intermediate People's Court – in Zhejiang Province, one of China's main AI industry hubs. The intermediate court upheld the lower rulings on April 30, 2026, the day before Workers' Day. The Hangzhou court published the case alongside a set of "typical examples of protecting the rights of AI enterprises and workers" – a deliberate signal timed to May 1.

The court found that AI-driven job displacement does not constitute a "major change in objective circumstances" under the Labor Contract Law. It also ruled that offering Zhou a 40% pay cut was not a reasonable reassignment proposal. The dismissal was unlawful on both counts.

The principle

Wang Xuyang, a lawyer at Zhejiang Xingjing law firm, summarized the legal logic running through both rulings: while companies may benefit from AI-driven efficiency gains, they must also bear the corresponding social responsibilities. The costs of technological transformation, legal scholars emphasized in both cases, should not be borne by workers.

Companies that automate cannot simply announce that AI has erased a job. They must deal with the worker – through negotiation, training, reasonable reassignment or lawful compensation – instead of dumping the cost of technology onto the worker.

The Beijing arbitration committee put the underlying principle plainly: the company's termination of Liu's contract was essentially shifting the risk of technological change onto

the employee. That, the committee ruled, is illegal.

This is the legal recognition of what the "A Job Is A Right" campaign argued four decades ago in the United States – that a corporation's voluntary decision to restructure does not erase workers' claims. China's Labor Contract Law, as interpreted by these rulings, encodes that claim as an enforceable right.

The rulings arrive as AI adoption accelerates across Chinese industry. China's core AI sector exceeded 1.2 trillion yuan in 2025, with more than 6,200 AI-related enterprises operating across the country. The government's 2026 work report called explicitly for measures to address AI's impact on employment – marking the first time the issue entered the national policy framework at that level.

What U.S. workers don't have

No equivalent legal protection exists in the United States. U.S. labor law does not restrict employers from eliminating positions due to automation. The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act requires 60 days' notice before mass layoffs at large employers, but it does not prohibit AI-driven terminations or require negotiation, retraining, or reassignment. Workers in non-union workplaces – the vast majority of the U.S. workforce – have no contractual recourse at all.

U.S. tech companies have moved aggressively on AI-driven workforce reduction. Since 2023, major technology employers have cut tens of thousands of positions while publicly attributing the reductions to AI efficiency gains. But no broad U.S. rule treats AI replacement itself as an unlawful reason to fire a worker.

The demand that animated the streets of Detroit, Baltimore and Philadelphia in the 1980s – a job is a right – remains unmet in the country where it was raised. In China, labor law gives that demand legal form, and courts have now upheld it against employers trying to use AI as a firing weapon. Whether workers in the United States can ever win the same will depend, as it always has, on their fight for it. #

Claude Mythos & the AI protection racket

By Gary Wilson

Anthropic announced Claude Mythos Preview on April 7. The company described the model as too powerful for general release. It said Mythos had discovered thousands of zero-day vulnerabilities in major operating systems and web browsers. Access would be restricted through Project Glasswing, a controlled consortium including Amazon Web Services, Google, JPMorganChase, Microsoft, Nvidia, Cisco, CrowdStrike and other major technology and security firms.

The story dominated the technology press from April 7 through mid-April. It dominated because Anthropic had not only announced a model. It had announced a business.

Mythos is presented as a cybersecurity tool. It can crawl through code, find vulnerabilities and, according to Anthropic, exploit them. That makes it dangerous, the company says, if released broadly. But it also makes Mythos indispensable to the corporations and state agencies being told they face a new wave of AI-driven cyberattacks.

That is the business model. Create the alarm. Restrict the tool. Sell access to protection.

Anthropic's public argument is simple: models like Mythos will soon make cyberattacks easier, faster and more dangerous. Therefore, the most powerful version cannot be released to the public. It must be placed in the hands of trusted partners who maintain major software systems and critical infrastructure.

But those "trusted partners" are not the public. They are the monopolies that already control the internet's infrastructure: cloud platforms, chipmakers, cybersecurity firms, banks and major software companies. The same corporations that dominate the digital economy are being invited into a private security arrangement around a model the public is told is too dangerous to use.

Mythos is a protection story as much as a technology story. Anthropic's message is clear: The danger is coming. We have the tool that understands it. Releasing the tool would make the danger worse. Therefore, access must run through us.

Safety language does the market-forming work. Danger makes controlled access more valuable – even if similar bug-finding work can be done with open-source models and human security expertise. Restriction makes the consortium look necessary. The consortium makes Anthropic look like the gatekeeper for the next stage of cybersecurity.

The company does not need everyone to use Mythos. It needs governments, software monopolies, cloud platforms, banks and security firms to believe they cannot afford to be

outside the circle.

The timing gives the announcement another edge. Bloomberg reported in late March that Anthropic was weighing an Initial Public Offering (IPO) as soon as October, with a potential raise above \$60 billion, following early discussions with Wall Street banks. Bloomberg reported again in April that Anthropic had received investor offers valuing the company at around \$800 billion or higher – offers the company had so far declined. By late April, secondary-market trading on Forge Global pushed Anthropic's implied valuation to \$1 trillion.

Whatever Mythos can or cannot do, every headline about it still pays off financially. A model described as too dangerous for general release also tells investors that Anthropic controls something scarce, powerful and indispensable.

The rollout had its own complications. Reports said unauthorized users had gained access to Mythos through a third-party vendor environment after its restricted launch. Even a breach folds back into the sales pitch: a leak or vendor failure makes the case that this technology belongs under tighter corporate supervision.

Several AI researchers and industry figures pushed back. Gary Marcus, a cognitive scientist and AI researcher at New York University, called the risk "overblown" and said researchers had been "played." Yann LeCun, one of the original neural network pioneers, dismissed Mythos as "BS from self-delusion." Heidy Khlaaf, chief AI scientist at the AI Now Institute, criticized the vague language around the announcement and the lack of clear metrics needed to verify the strongest claims.

Britain's AI Security Institute, which tested the model, offered a more limited assessment. It found that Mythos represented a step up over previous frontier models on cybersecurity benchmarks. But the tests were carried out in controlled environments that lacked active defenders or defensive tooling. Real-world systems would be harder targets.

A report from The Register sharpened the point. Ari Herbert-Voss, CEO of the AI security startup RunSybil and the first security researcher at OpenAI, told Black Hat Asia that open-source models can find bugs as effectively as Mythos when they are properly scaffolded – that is, organized to run together in a coordinated workflow. Different models catch different flaws, he said, which can strengthen

defense by reducing dependence on any single system's blind spots.

That cuts against Anthropic's central claim. If comparable bug-finding power can be built with open-source models and human expertise, the issue is not simply whether Mythos is technically powerful. It is who controls the workflow, who sells access and who gets positioned as the necessary gatekeeper.

Herbert-Voss also pointed to the labor question buried inside the AI hype. Human expertise is still needed to organize the models, assess their bug reports and separate real vulnerabilities from noise. AI bug-hunters, like the automated fuzzing tools that came before them, can generate so many warnings that they create more work for security teams. The technology does not eliminate labor. It reorganizes it around expensive systems built to justify more GPUs, more data centers and more corporate dependence.

Anthropic's framing invited readers to picture an AI system loose in the digital infrastructure of society. The testing shows something narrower. Mythos found bugs in a lab, with no live defenders, with security researchers organizing the runs, on hardware most organizations cannot afford. That is a useful tool. It is not an autonomous attacker loose in the world's networks.

The technology may eventually do everything Anthropic claims. But that is not the only question. The class question is who owns it, who controls access, who defines the danger and who profits from the answer.

Anthropic is not a public research institute. It is a private corporation backed by some of the largest concentrations of capital in the world. Its investors and partners include cloud monopolies, chipmakers, finance houses and Wall Street banks. Its future depends on convincing those same forces that AI capability is rising fast enough – and becoming dangerous enough – to justify deeper dependence on Anthropic.

Under capitalism, new technology is developed as private property that must yield a profit. A tool becomes an asset, a problem becomes a market, a danger becomes a moat.

Anthropic is not simply warning the world about AI cyberattacks. It is positioning itself as the toll gate through which protection must pass. Claude Mythos is a business built on danger – a protection racket for the age of artificial intelligence. #

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.



No ICE, no war: May Day takes aim at Trump

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that war. Israel and Washington made clear that Lebanon was outside the pause.

So when May Day marchers chanted “No war,” the demand reached beyond Iran. It meant Gaza. It meant the West Bank. It meant Lebanon. It meant the whole U.S.-backed war drive across West Asia.

The numbers tell the story of a detention system expanding and killing at the same time.

During all of 2024, 11 people died in ICE custody. In 2026, that number has already been surpassed. Denny Adan Gonzalez was the 18th person to die in ICE custody this year. Earlier this year, ICE detention reached a record high above 68,000 people; by April 4, ICE still held 60,311 people, a level higher than under any prior administration. The administration is pushing to expand capacity even further.

Overcrowding is only one part of it. Policy drives the crisis.

Oversight offices have been gutted or weakened. The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties at the Department of Homeland Security has been cut back. The Office of the Immigration Detention Ombudsman has been effectively closed. ICE health staffing has been cut. Congressional visits have been restricted. Public death reports have become shorter and less detailed.

The state is expanding detention while narrowing the channels through which the public can see what happens inside.

The May Day demand to abolish ICE is inseparable from the demand to end the war. U.S. imperialist wars, sanctions and blockades drive people from their homes. ICE then hunts, jails and deports the people displaced by the same system, while bosses use that terror to hold down wages and divide workers.

The same contractors, surveillance systems, detention infrastructure and legal doctrines move between foreign war and domestic repression. Defense contractors build camps. Border agencies use military technology. Police and immigration agents train in methods developed through war and occupation. The language of “security” covers both bombing abroad and terrorizing workers at home.

Cuba under blockade

Cubans took to the streets on May 1 under the slogan *La Patria se defiende* – the Homeland is Defended. The mobilization answered Washington’s blockade and threats with a declaration of national resistance.

Trump’s May 1 executive order against Cuba was another front of the same offensive.

The order authorizes penalties against foreign companies and financial institutions that conduct or facilitate significant transactions

with Cuban government-linked entities targeted by Washington. In plain terms, it threatens third countries for doing business with Cuba.

That is how the blockade works in practice. Beyond the ban on U.S. trade, Washington threatens banks, shipping companies, insurers, fuel suppliers and governments around the world: obey Washington or become targets of economic warfare themselves.

Cuba is already in a severe energy and medical crisis. Hospitals have scaled back operations. Surgeries have been delayed. Blackouts have stretched across the island. Fuel shortages have hit transportation, food distribution and power generation.

That is the goal of a siege. That is why the U.S. tightens the blockade.

Sanctions are economic warfare. They aim at the same result as bombs and blockades: to make life unbearable for the entire population until a targeted country submits.

The timing matters. On the same day workers marched against ICE and war, the White House expanded the economic war on Cuba. On the same day it claimed the War Powers deadline could be ignored, it escalated against

a country already under siege. On the same day ICE confirmed another death in custody, Trump widened the machinery of economic warfare abroad. The same ruling-class program runs through each front.

Against Iran, it is naval power, sanctions and bombing. Against Cuba, it is blockade and secondary sanctions. Against migrants, it is detention, solitary confinement, deportation and death. Against workers, it is austerity, union-busting, cuts to education and health care, and inflation driven by war.

The agencies differ. The target is the same: working people and oppressed nations forced to pay for a system they have no voice in.

The fight after May Day

On May Day, workers marched against ICE and war while the White House defied the War Powers deadline, ICE confirmed another death in detention, and Trump tightened the blockade of Cuba.

The next test is to carry that force beyond one day – into the workplaces, schools and streets where ICE, war and blockade can be fought as one struggle. #

The dollar makes the world pay

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their own resources, banks and trade.

The system also kept U.S. allies and clients in line. Washington armed and shielded the Gulf monarchies. Their role was to keep oil tied to the dollar, host U.S. bases and recycle oil wealth into Wall Street.

The Iran war exposed the weakness in that arrangement. The issue is control – who controls the oil, the shipping lanes, the payments and the reserves built from them. Iran restricted oil transport through its territorial waters in the Strait of Hormuz, and shipping through the waterway fell sharply. Insurance costs and war risk surged.

Some ships and oil buyers turned to payments in China’s currency, renminbi. Lloyd’s List Intelligence has reported that at least two ships paid Iran in renminbi to secure passage through the strait. Atlantic Council data shows that average daily payments through China’s Cross-Border Interbank Payment System rose to more than \$131 billion in March from \$86 billion in February, as countries bought Iranian oil.

Swap lines become a leash

Now Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent is arguing for expanded, possibly permanent, dollar swap lines for Gulf and Asian governments.

A swap line is a way for another country’s

central bank to get dollars from Washington. It hands over its own currency and receives dollars in return. Those dollars can then be lent to banks and companies at home that need them to pay debts, settle trade or avoid selling dollar assets in a panic.

Washington once treated these tools as emergency measures. Now it wants to build them into the permanent machinery of dollar rule.

What is presented as normal capitalist market functioning now requires more open intervention by the Treasury, the Federal Reserve and the Pentagon.

The United Arab Emirates shows the contradiction. Its currency is tied to the dollar. Its oil is sold in dollars. Its state investment funds hold huge stakes in U.S. markets. Yet Emirati officials have warned that without more access to dollars, the UAE may have to use renminbi or other currencies for oil and other transactions.

A core U.S. client state is asking Washington for dollar support while raising the possibility of oil trade outside the dollar.

Washington wants to provide those dollars so the UAE does not have to sell U.S. bonds and other dollar investments to raise cash. That protects Wall Street and the Treasury market as much as it helps the Emirates. It keeps the oil monarchy tied to the dollar.

The swap line is a lifeline, but also a leash. #

U.S. piracy from Hormuz to Panama

By Gary Wilson

On April 19, U.S. forces boarded and seized an Iranian-flagged cargo ship near the Strait of Hormuz. In the days that followed, Iranian forces seized cargo vessels attempting to transit the Strait without authorization.

For decades, Washington claimed it could keep the sea lanes open through naval force, sanctions and control over the dollar system. Hormuz now shows the limit of that claim. Washington invokes “freedom of navigation” after setting off the war that closed the Strait. It is trying to dress up a loss of power as a defense of law.

The legal fiction

Neither Washington nor Tehran has ratified the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. The “freedom of navigation” Washington claims to defend has never operated as neutral law. It has been enforced by U.S. naval power, dollar-denominated trade and a hierarchy of states dressed up as universal rules.

The real practice was simple enough. U.S. warships moved where they wanted, and U.S.-backed cargo moved under protection.

As a coastal state facing U.S. aggression since Feb. 28, Iran has taken measures in accordance with international law and its domestic regulations to protect its security and national interests.

Washington cannot wage war in the Strait and then demand peacetime shipping rules.

Three aircraft carrier strike groups now ring Iran from the Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, and Indian Ocean. They can threaten Iran from offshore. That is different from forcing the Strait open under fire from Iranian coastal missile batteries, ballistic launchers and fast attack boats operating from a coastline Iran has fortified for decades.

But the carrier groups have limits too. A Wall Street Journal analysis found that replacing the munitions spent since Feb. 28 could take up to six years.

Panama: force where finance still works

Panama’s Supreme Court ruled in January 2026 that the concession held by CK Hutchison’s Panama Ports Company for the Balboa and Cristóbal terminals was unconstitutional. The ruling came after months of U.S. pressure. Trump had threatened to “take back” the Panama Canal and accused China of controlling the waterway. The pressure fell on CK Hutchison, the Hong Kong-based company operating terminals at both ends of the canal.

In March 2025, the company announced a deal to sell its controlling stake in Panama Ports

Company and most of its non-China global ports business to a consortium led by BlackRock, through its Global Infrastructure Partners unit, and MSC’s Terminal Investment Limited. The deal would have handed the two canal terminals to U.S.-aligned financial capital.

Panama’s courts and government later blocked the transfer of the canal terminals. But the fight did not end there. Panama granted temporary operating licenses to Maersk and MSC, while the wider CK Hutchison ports deal continued through a BlackRock-MS structure. The form changed; the pressure to push CK Hutchison out of the canal terminals did not.

Roughly 5-6% of world maritime trade passes through the canal. “Free trade” has always meant Washington’s freedom to decide who owns the chokepoints.

Washington cannot clear Hormuz. In Panama, it is still trying to pry the canal’s entry ports away from Chinese-linked control and into U.S.-aligned hands.

What is replacing the old order

Chinese state-owned entities invested nearly \$24 billion in 363 seaport projects across 90 countries between 2000 and 2025, according to AidData’s March 2026 report, *Anchoring Global Ambitions*. UNCTAD reported that China’s commercially owned fleet reached about 10,440 vessels in 2025. The U.S. merchant fleet is around 1,702 ships. More than half the value of that U.S.-owned fleet – \$60 billion of \$116 billion – is cruise ships, most of which are flagged to Panama, the Bahamas and Liberia to escape U.S. taxes and labor laws.

The U.S. merchant fleet did not just shrink. The U.S. ruling class let it die. Building and crewing cargo ships under U.S. flag stopped being profitable enough for finance capital, which moved into shipping the way it moved into housing and pharmaceuticals: extracting value, cutting costs, exiting the productive base. The same logic that produced BlackRock as the buyer at the Panama terminals produced the hollow U.S. fleet. U.S. capitalism hollows out its own productive base, then sends finance capital to buy control over what other countries built.

China is not doing the same thing in reverse. Building ports across 90 countries on multi-decade timelines is not the normal work of private capital looking for fast returns. It requires state direction, state banks and state-owned companies able to plan beyond the next quarter.

That capacity comes from China’s revolution. The 1949 revolution overthrew imperialism, the landlord class and Chinese capitalism and established a workers’ state. The market

reforms that began in 1978 introduced capitalist elements, but they did not privatize the state-owned banks, the commanding state-owned enterprises in finance, energy, heavy industry and transport, or state control over land. That is why China can direct billions into ports, rail and shipping while U.S. capitalism pours comparable sums into stock buybacks, mergers and financial takeovers.

The two systems are organized on opposing class principles.

Iran’s oil has kept moving because the route no longer depends on a single chokepoint. Some crude moves overland to loading points east of Hormuz, including a terminal handling roughly 350,000 barrels a day. Other cargoes move through shadow-fleet methods: ship-to-ship transfers, relabeling and intermediaries that make the oil harder to seize or trace. Chinese buyers then settle much of the trade in yuan, outside the dollar channels Washington polices.

What Western analysts called improvised sanctions evasion in 2022 has become permanent infrastructure.

Iran, China and other sanctioned countries built these oil routes, shipping methods and payment channels because Washington used the old system as a weapon. They had to find ways around U.S. control of sea lanes, dollar payments, insurance and sanctions. Washington calls that instability. What it is losing is the power to decide which countries trade, which ships move and which payments clear.

The danger comes from Washington’s attempt to preserve the old order by force – in the Strait of Hormuz, the Red Sea and the Black Sea.

The cost is being passed through the prices of gasoline, jet fuel, fertilizer, helium and aluminum – the inputs that keep daily life moving. The International Energy Agency’s Fatih Birol has called the current disruption the greatest global energy security threat in history. The Asian Development Bank warns that the crisis will drag down production, jobs and living standards across developing Asia.

U.S. naval power and dollar dominance have always worked together: one guarded the sea lanes, the other controlled payments, insurance, credit and sanctions. Now both are being challenged at once.

Trump’s shoot-and-kill order and the Panama ports fight come from the same crisis. Washington is used to giving orders and expecting ships, banks and governments to fall in line. Now it threatens crews in Hormuz, commits piracy against ships it cannot control and forces port deals in Panama – destroying what it cannot command and seizing what it still can. #

China tells firms: don't obey U.S. Iran sanctions

By Gary Wilson

China has directly challenged the U.S. sanctions campaign against Iran, ordering all Chinese firms and individuals to ignore U.S. penalties targeting five oil refineries accused of buying Iranian crude.

China's Ministry of Commerce invoked its 2021 Blocking Statute on May 2 – the first time Beijing has ever used the law. The order was issued by China's Ministry of Commerce and reported the next day in People's Daily, the Communist Party's official newspaper. Its language is unambiguous: The U.S. sanctions targeting the five refineries “shall not be recognized, shall not be enforced, shall not be complied with.”

The targeted refineries were sanctioned under Operation Economic Fury, the Treasury Department's economic warfare campaign against countries and firms buying Iranian oil, sharply escalated since the war began Feb. 28. Among the five named is Hengli Petrochemical – not a small independent processor but one of China's largest integrated refining complexes, with annual crude capacity of 20 million tons.

Washington imposed the sanctions under two executive orders, EO 13902 and EO 13846. The ministry called the measures “illegal” extraterritorial overreach – Washington attempting to police what Chinese companies do inside China, with Chinese counterparties, using non-dollar transactions.

U.S. sanctions are not neutral regulations. They are one of the operating systems of U.S. imperialism. Washington uses control over banks, shipping, insurance, dollar clearing

Hengli Petrochemical's refining and chemical complex on Changxing Island. China's Ministry of Commerce ordered Chinese companies not to recognize, enforce or comply with U.S. sanctions targeting Hengli and four other refineries over purchases of Iranian crude.



and access to the U.S. market to punish countries that sell oil, companies that buy it and financial institutions that handle the trade. The sanctions against the five Chinese refineries are meant to scare away banks, traders, shippers and insurers. China's order strikes at that machinery. It tells companies and banks under Chinese jurisdiction: Washington put these refineries on a sanctions list; China says keep dealing with them.

China is Iran's dominant oil customer. Analysts tracking Iranian crude exports put China's share at around 90%. Beijing has not merely refused to comply with the sanctions – it has told Chinese firms to treat Washington's penalties as invalid, clearing the ground for the trade to continue.

The move creates a direct legal conflict for any multinational firm or financial institution operating in both markets. Comply with U.S. sanctions and violate Chinese law. Comply with Chinese law and face U.S. secondary sanctions. For firms whose primary market is China, the calculation is not difficult.

Washington now faces an enforcement problem. It can sanction major Chinese banks that continue servicing the affected refineries

– an escalation that would send shockwaves through global financial markets and effectively constitute a financial war against China. Or it can back down and absorb the enforcement failure, watching the credibility of Operation Economic Fury – and the extraterritorial reach of Washington's dollar-centered financial weapon – take a permanent hit.

Neither option is clean. The Trump administration has a summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the near horizon. Sanctioning major Chinese banks in the weeks before the summit would poison the meeting before it began. But letting the defiance stand without consequence signals to every country watching that U.S. secondary sanctions have limits Beijing can enforce.

The Blocking Statute itself has existed since 2021, written precisely for this moment – a legal instrument designed to give China the tools to push back against extraterritorial U.S. financial coercion. For five years it sat unused. The Iran war is what finally put it into motion.

The sanctions campaign against Iran was premised on the assumption that no major economy would openly defy it. That assumption no longer holds. #

Supreme Court

Continued from page 6

ruling marks a new stage in that attack.

From Louisiana to North Carolina, Florida to Mississippi, at least 15 House districts are now at risk. Losing even a handful could produce the largest drop in Black representation in Congress since the end of Reconstruction.

State officials moved immediately.

Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry moved first. He used the Supreme Court ruling to declare an “election emergency” and suspend the May 16 congressional primary after voting had already begun. Ballots already cast were thrown out. The Court had struck down Louisiana's second majority-Black congressional district; Landry moved to eliminate it.

Alabama moved next. Attorney General Steve Marshall asked the Supreme Court to lift the orders that blocked Alabama from using its old congressional map. That map had been

stopped because it broke up Black representation in a state where Black residents make up more than one-quarter of the population. Marshall cited the Louisiana ruling and demanded quick action in three cases.

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee called lawmakers back to Nashville to redraw the state's congressional map. The target is Memphis – the state's only majority-Black district.

Florida moved at the same speed. On April 29, lawmakers approved a DeSantis-backed map just two days after he unveiled it. The map could move Florida's House delegation from 20-8 Republican to 24-4. It reshapes Democratic areas around Orlando, Tampa-St. Petersburg and South Florida, and effectively eliminates one nearly majority-Black district.

Native sovereignty under attack

The attack on voting rights also reaches Native nations, where political representation is tied directly to sovereignty.

The Court has changed the rules to protect the politicians drawing maps that break up

Native communities. Native voters can show that a map splits their communities and denies their sovereignty. The Court ruling says that's okay.

For tribal nations, political voice affects infrastructure, health care, environmental protection, collectively held land and treaty rights. When Native voters are split among several conservative rural districts, their collective voting strength is destroyed.

Native sovereignty also shapes fights over land, water, pipelines and mining – exactly where corporations and the war economy press hardest. Breaking up Native communities serves the same class interests as breaking up Black representation in Memphis, Louisiana or Florida.

The ruling also shows what “colorblind” constitutionalism does. It takes the political map produced by slavery, Jim Crow, Native dispossession and centuries of exclusion, then declares that map neutral. The result preserves racist inequality while pretending race has been removed from the question. #

Rally demands: Free Maduro & Flores

By Stephen Millies

May 3 – People rallied outside the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York, to demand freedom for Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and First Combatant Cilia Flores. They were kidnapped in Caracas by Trump C and the Pentagon on Jan. 3 and flown to New York.

Over 100 Venezuelans and Cubans were killed in the attack. Four months later, these leaders of the Bolivarian Republic remain locked up in MDC Brooklyn, a federal jail notorious for overcrowding and abuse.

“No boots on the ground, no bombs in the air! U.S. out of everywhere” was chanted. Protesters said the chants could be heard inside the prison.

Among the protesters were the revolutionaries Inez Barron and Charles Barron. The for-



SLL photo: Stephen Millies

mer elected officials fought racism and colonial exploitation in both New York's City Hall and the state legislature. They currently moderate the radio show “Speak Truth to Power” on WBAI-FM, Fridays at 5 p.m. EDT.

Inez Barron recalled that as a school teacher and principal, she would have to deal with bullies on the playground. She said Trump and U.S. imperialism are bullies that have to be dealt with.

Charles Barron described being welcomed to Venezuela and said that the U.S. empire, while dangerous, is losing all around the world. He hailed Iran's resistance to Trump.

William Camacaro of the Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle of NY thanked Charles Barron and Inez Barron for their solidarity. A speaker from Struggle-La Lucha newspaper said Trump wants to turn back the clock to when the oil billionaire Rockefellers ran Venezuela.

Among the organizations building this action were Brooklyn Against War, the Bolivarian Circles, International Action Center, Struggle for Socialism Party, Code Pink and Workers World Party. #

Palestinian supporters attacked at stolen land sale

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tected and enabled by our city government.” The group demanded that the State Attorney General and New York City mayor “investigate, audit and stop stolen Palestinian land sales; remove the tax exempt status of those hosting these events; drop Jessica Tisch as Police Commissioner; and disband the Strategic Response Group now!”

The illegal event – called “the Great Israeli Real Estate 2026” – was conducted by the Tivuch Shelly outfit that sells real estate in occupied Palestine to English speakers. Only Jewish potential buyers were allowed into the sale held at the Park East Synagogue on the ultra-wealthy Upper East Side of Manhattan.

As a sign carried by a protester said, “stolen land sales are illegal even when they happen in a synagogue.” Many Jewish people were among those demonstrating, including Rabbis from Neturei Karta, a worldwide group of anti-Zionist Orthodox Jews.

Continuing the Nakba

Among the Palestinian cities listed on the “Great Israeli” website where stolen land was being sold were Jerusalem (Al-Quds), Haifa and Ashkelon (al-Majdal). All of these cities were ethnically cleansed of their indigenous Palestinian populations during the 1948 Nakba that established the Zionist apartheid state.

Ninety-five percent of Palestinians were driven out of Haifa. Many of their descendants now live in the besieged Gaza Strip, being bombed and massacred for being born Palestinian in the land of Palestine.



May 5, 2026, protest in NYC against illegal sales of Palestinian land.

SLL photo: Stephen Millies

Also being sold was land in settlements in the occupied West Bank. According to the PAL-Awda Stolen Land Campaign, “Admission to these real estate sales is limited by ethnicity, and only to those who can pass Zionist screening questions, in violation of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 Fair Housing Act of 1968, state and international law.”

Police violence against protesters

Despite the illegality of the stolen land sale, hundreds of cops were deployed to protect it. Police viciously pushed metal barricades against protesters in front of Hunter College.

They were given the green light by recently passed legislation by the City Council that allows the NYPD to keep protests away from “places of worship” and schools. This law wasn't about freedom of religion. It was enact-

ed to strangle the freedom of speech of Palestinians and their supporters.

This legislation doesn't go into effect until June. Yet six square blocks of the neighborhood were blockaded by cops, who wouldn't even let residents go to stores. Police units included the notorious Strategic Response Group, which supposedly was restrained in a 2023 court settlement after hundreds of Black Lives Matter protesters were arrested in the Bronx.

There were originally two rallies on either side of the blockaded zone before they merged in front of Hunter College. Continuous chanting and drumming by hundreds of protesters could be heard for blocks.

People began marching through the streets. A bus operator and cars honked in support. Police attacked but didn't stop the demonstrators. #

La patria se defiende

Por Rosa Miriam Elizalde

El primero de mayo de 2026 quedará como una jornada de enorme densidad política para Cuba. Mientras más de 5 millones de personas se movilizaban en todo el país, con más de 600 mil habaneros concentrados frente a la embajada de Estados Unidos en el malecón, la Casa Blanca respondió con una nueva orden ejecutiva contra la isla. Fue una señal. Cuba llenó las calles para afirmar su voluntad de defenderse; Washington contestó endureciendo el cerco.

La orden ejecutiva firmada por Donald Trump no es simplemente “más bloqueo”. Su gravedad no está sólo en que congela bienes, impide transacciones y amplía castigos. Reside, sobre todo, en que no se dirige únicamente contra estadounidenses que violen las leyes del bloqueo, sino contra “cualquier persona extranjera” que, a juicio del secretario de Estado o del Tesoro, opere en sectores de la economía cubana o preste apoyo material, financiero o tecnológico al gobierno de Cuba. Es decir, convierte a funcionarios estadounidenses en jueces globales con capacidad para castigar a ciudadanos, empresas y bancos de terceros países por relacionarse con la isla.

La discrecionalidad es el corazón del mecanismo. No hace falta una sentencia ni un delito probado ni una violación cometida dentro de Estados Unidos. Basta con que la burocracia de Washington determine que alguien ha tenido relación económica o institucional con Cuba para activar sanciones. Ése es el verdadero salto: el bloqueo deja de ser política bilateral abusiva y se reafirma como pretensión de jurisdicción mundial. Estados Unidos no sólo sanciona: pretende decidir quién puede comerciar, financiar, invertir o cooperar con la nación caribeña.

Por eso la fecha importa. La orden fue emitida el mismo día en que Cuba demostraba músculo político, organización social y capacidad

de movilización. El mensaje de la Casa Blanca fue transparente: frente a la calle cubana, más castigo; frente a la soberanía, más presión; frente a la resistencia, más asfixia económica.

Horas después, Trump completó el cuadro con una intervención en Florida en la que afirmó que “tomará el control” de Cuba “casi de inmediato” y que la isla sería su siguiente objetivo después de “terminar” el trabajo en Irán. Añadió que quizá haría detener el portaviones USS Abraham Lincoln a “unas 100 yardas” (91.44 metros) de la costa cubana, hasta que los cubanos dijeran: “muchas gracias, nos rendimos”. La frase no sólo es agresiva: es absurda. Un portaviones de ese tamaño no se coloca a esa distancia de la costa. Sería técnicamente inviable, militarmente irracional y operativamente ridículo.

Pero el problema no es sólo la bravuconería: es la ignorancia con poder. Trump ya había dicho que por Cuba no pasan huracanes, como si desconociera la geografía elemental del Caribe. También afirmó que no le importaba que un buque ruso llevara petróleo a la isla porque “la gente necesita calefacción”, confundien-

do la realidad energética cubana con la de países de invierno continental. Ahora imagina un portaviones estacionado a un palmo del malecón. La acumulación de disparates revela que se amenaza alegremente a un país que ni siquiera se conoce.

El primero de mayo mostró dos imágenes opuestas. En La Habana y en toda Cuba, un pueblo movilizado bajo la consigna “La patria se defiende”. En Washington y Florida, un poder que responde con sanciones y fantasías de rendición. Pero cuando se amenaza a una nación que no se conoce, el error no es sólo político, es estratégico.

Cuba es una sociedad organizada, con memoria histórica, con experiencia en resistir bajo duras presiones y con clara disposición a defender su soberanía. Pensar que una aventura bélica sería rápida o indolora es una peligrosa subestimación de la realidad. Lo que Trump imagina como trámite que le reportará el gesto canalla del “muchas gracias, nos rendimos”, en la práctica podría convertirse en conflicto imprevisible, costoso y cualquier otra cosa, menos un “paseo” por el Caribe. #



Palestinian supporters attacked by cops at stolen land sale

By Stephen Millies

May 5 – New York City police attacked people protesting illegal sales of stolen Palestinian land. Officers used pepper spray and kettled demonstrators. Some of these cops were trained by the Zionist state’s military, who’ve committed genocide in Gaza.

The protest was called by PAL-Awda NY/NJ, which has long been campaigning against these illegal land sales. Members of Healthcare

Workers 4 Palestine, CUNY 4 Palestine and other groups also participated.

The stolen land sale had been condemned by New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, whose election campaign featured support for Palestinian rights. Well, Mr. Mayor, why don’t you tell the police to back off, and fire Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch, who herself is a member of a billionaire real estate family?

The PAL-Awda statement pointed out that “the ongoing sales of stolen Palestinian land reflect yet another day of violations of local, federal and international law – violations pro-

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