



Mujeres en Lucha:
We Are All Cuba

El pueblo Boricua se opone
a Ley de robo de tierras



USS Nimitz stalks Cuba as Trump targets Raúl Castro

By Gary Wilson

The USS Nimitz carrier strike group entered the Caribbean Sea on May 20, placing one of the U.S. Navy's largest instruments of air power near Cuba.

Its arrival came as Washington escalated its campaign against the island: sanctions, fuel strangulation, surveillance flights, political ultimatums and a new federal indictment against 94-year-old Raúl Castro, one of the historic leaders of the Cuban Revolution.

U.S. Southern Command calls the deployment "maritime cooperation." But an aircraft carrier is a floating military base. From the Caribbean, the Nimitz puts a full U.S. carrier air wing – fighter jets, spy planes, radar-jamming planes, helicopters and support aircraft – within striking distance of Cuba.

The USS Gerald Ford directly supported the Jan. 3 operation that killed more than a hundred Venezuelans and 32 Cuban soldiers, and ended with the kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores.

The U.S. government is now trying to spin

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In Havana: Homeland or Death.

Photo: Bill Hackwell

U.S. revives 30-year-old CIA threat against Cuba, cuts fuel, sends ultimatum • Cubans vs homophobia & transphobia

Supreme Court on voting rights:

- Louisiana's move to recall Gov. Landry
- Louisiana to Havana: Law as a weapon
- MD student NAACP call for mass struggle

Remember the MOVE bombing

Food prices up, wages down

Tobacco profits trump children's health

Utility shutoffs – corporate terror kills

Musk's AI poisons Black communities – backed by Trump's DOJ



SLL photo: Melinda Butterfield

Philippine army massacre;
U.S. base for war on China

Trump in Beijing

Bolivia strike grows



Sam Marcy archive

Stop sale of stolen Palestinian land!

Brooklyn remembers the Nakba

Cruise ship virus exposes a sick system

No NYU Langone sellout of trans youth!

By Melinda Butterfield

New York, May 16 – About 100 people came out to a press conference and rally at Washington Square Park to demand that New York University Langone Health resist a federal criminal subpoena seeking protected information on trans youth patients and providers since 2020.

The subpoena was issued by a court in Texas, thousands of miles away, as a result of “judge shopping” by the U.S. Department of Justice.

NYU Langone, one of the largest health systems in the northeastern U.S., already capitulated to the Trump regime earlier this year by ending all care for trans youth, despite New York State laws protecting trans health care. So far these laws have not been enforced by the state.

Speakers – including trans and queer activists, impacted young people, and local politicians – pledged to protect trans youth, their families, and providers. They warned



SLL photo: Melinda Butterfield

that handing over confidential patient records under government pressure would set a dangerous precedent that could affect anyone.

The protesters gathered near New York University on graduation weekend, project-

ing their message to thousands of students, alumni and family members. NYU is one of the city’s biggest landlords, and among the most brutal in its crackdown on student-led protests against the U.S.-Israeli genocide in Gaza. #

USS Nimitz stalks Cuba

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Cuba’s self-defense into a federal murder case.

Raúl Castro was Cuba’s defense minister in February 1996. A historic leader of the Revolution and Fidel Castro’s brother, he succeeded Fidel as president and served from 2008 to 2018. Washington is targeting him not simply for an office he held 30 years ago, but as one of the leaders of the Cuban Revolution.

The indictment stems from Cuba’s February 1996 shutdown of two aircraft operated by Brothers to the Rescue. Alongside Raúl Castro, the indictment names five Cuban military pilots who defended Cuban airspace after repeated violations by the group. Four Brothers to the Rescue members were killed.

Brothers to the Rescue was not a humanitarian outfit. It was founded in Miami in 1991 by José Basulto, a CIA operative and Bay of Pigs veteran, as part of a CIA-created anti-Cuba

terrorist network built to destroy the Cuban Revolution. It called its first flights rescue missions for Cuban rafters, but it rescued no one. Its flights were directed against Cuba, including repeated incursions into Cuban airspace.

That network carried out bombings against Cuban tourism targets, assassination plots and paramilitary operations. Alpha 66, Omega 7, Comandos F4 and the Cuban American National Foundation operated within that U.S.-protected machinery. Basulto himself later acknowledged a CIA-sponsored commando mission into Cuba. In 1962, he fired a 20mm cannon at a Cuban hotel.

Cuba documented more than 25 violations of its airspace by Brothers to the Rescue between 1994 and 1996 and filed formal complaints with U.S. and international aviation authorities. In that context, the flights raised the danger of another Cubana de Avi-

ación-type attack – like the 1976 bombing organized by CIA agent Luis Posada Carriles that killed 73 people.

After the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Cuba entered the Special Period, a severe economic crisis. The Soviet Union had been Cuba’s main trading partner and a major source of oil, machinery, food and industrial supplies. U.S. officials predicted the Revolution would fall. Cuba survived because its people fought to defend their freedom and their socialist Revolution. Raúl Castro helped hold the country’s revolutionary institutions together, including the armed forces, through one of the island’s most difficult times. Trump is now trying to break Cuba through fuel strangulation, sanctions, indictments, spy flights and military pressure.

By May 14, Washington’s fuel blockade had exhausted Cuba’s reserves. Since February, hostile U.S. surveillance flights near Cuba’s coast have increased sharply – the kind of

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Louisiana voters move to recall Gov. Jeff Landry

By Gregory E. Williams

New Orleans, May 11 – Today, after work, I headed straight to the Gwangi and Hollywood Community Center in Algiers, a working-class, majority-Black neighborhood on the west bank of the Mississippi River. At 5:30 p.m., people were in a line wrapping around the block, there for the same reason as me: to sign the statewide petition to recall Louisiana’s Governor Jeff Landry, an oil-and-gas investment millionaire known for his total subservience to Donald Trump.

The recall campaign was launched by Baton Rouge residents Marian Gbaiwon and Katilyn Stepter just after the U.S. Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act with its Louisiana v. Calais ruling. Violating norms, the Court sent its ruling down immediately, bypassing the usual 32-day waiting period. Landry’s government also moved immediately, pausing a U.S. House primary election that had already started and redrawing the state’s voting map before the November midterms. These moves are an attempt to suppress Louisiana’s Black voters.

Landry is also trying to throw out the New Orleans Criminal Clerk of Court election that already happened last November. He did this by supporting a state bill to merge the New Orleans criminal and civil Clerk of Court offices into one. The bill passed, and it elimi-

nates the office won by Calvin Duncan, a Black, formerly incarcerated man who was exonerated in 2021 after spending 28 years in prison. He ran on a platform of reforming how court records are stored and accessed so people can actually obtain the documents they need. The people made their choice, with

68.2% voting for Duncan. Landry doesn’t care.

What really impressed me about the petition site today wasn’t that a lot of people showed up: it was that the operation was so well-organized. The campaign only started a week ago, but the organizers in Algiers had figured out how to handle high volumes. It was a lot like a voting site. They had set up separate sign-in tables under tents for residents of different parishes (counties). Volunteers directed people to where they needed to be and checked IDs.

They were also serving food inside the community center. The whole atmosphere was friendly and upbeat.

An older woman who was next to me in line told me, “Landry doesn’t care about Louisiana. The only person he’s loyal to is his Daddy

Dearest – that’s what I call Donald Trump.”

This recall effort is required to get signatures from 20% of registered voters, or about 600,000 signatures, in 180 days from the time of filing. Then it would go to a vote. This may be a tall order, but the organizers have already done a great deal in one week. The campaign has announced petition drives in at least six towns through the remainder of the week, with a bigger push planned for the weekend.

As Malik Rahim with the community center in Algiers told WDSU, “They thought we were powerless. This is showing we have the power. It has been white, Black, all people have been coming here.”

Gregory E. Williams is a public health worker from South Louisiana.

USS Nimitz stalks Cuba

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flights that can map targets, guide attacks and intimidate a country under siege. CIA Director John Ratcliffe had visited Havana carrying Washington’s demand for political surrender. Then came the Nimitz – a floating air base backed by the world’s largest military machine.

Cuba’s Revolutionary Government rejected the charges against Raúl Castro on May 20 and upheld Cuba’s right to defend itself against violations of its airspace.

“Cuba’s response to the violation of its airspace constituted an act of self-defense,” the statement said, citing the United Nations Charter, the 1944 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation and the principles of air sovereignty.

The statement also pointed to Washington’s own record in the region: “It is highly cynical that this accusation is made by the very same government that has murdered nearly 200 people and destroyed 57 vessels in international waters of the Caribbean and the Pacific,

far from U.S. territory, through the disproportionate use of military force.”

The contrast is plain. The figures who ran violent operations against Cuba from U.S. soil – bombing hotels, plotting assassinations, running paramilitary camps – lived freely in the United States. Posada Carriles, the CIA agent behind the Cubana de Aviación bombing, died a free man in Miami in 2018.

But Raúl Castro – a historic leader of the Cuban Revolution who helped defend Cuba through invasion, blockade and economic crisis – now faces federal murder charges for Cuba’s defense of its own airspace.

May 20 was not a neutral date. It marks the day in 1902 when Cuba was formally constituted as a republic – under U.S. military occupation, with the Platt Amendment embedded in the Cuban constitution. That amendment gave Washington the claimed right to intervene at will.

Trump used the anniversary to say Cuba was “free for the first time” on that date. Secretary of State Marco Rubio made the same claim earlier in the week.

Cuba in 1902 had no genuine sovereignty. The U.S. retained military bases on the island, controlled its foreign policy and intervened repeatedly over the following decades. By the 1950s, U.S.-backed rulers had turned the impoverished island of 7 million people into a casino and playground for the wealthy, with gangsters, corporations and landlords feeding off Cuban labor and land. The 1959 Revolution was a direct rejection of that neocolonial arrangement.

The Nimitz deployment belongs to that same history. Today, that old claim is backed by sanctions, indictments, spy flights and military threats.

Cuba is not on trial because of 1996. It is under attack because of 1959.

The Cuban statement closed with a declaration of support for Raúl Castro and for the socialist Revolution. It reaffirmed the Cuban people’s resolve “to defend the Homeland and their Socialist Revolution.”

That is what the U.S. ruling class cannot tolerate: a Cuba that defends its sovereignty and refuses to surrender. #

From Louisiana to Havana: Law as a weapon against Black power and liberation

By Gary Wilson

The Voting Rights Act was won to break the machinery that denied Black people political power – not only the right to cast a ballot, but the right to elect Black representatives and shape the government under which they live.

That right was not handed down by the courts. Black people and their allies were beaten, jailed, bombed, lynched and assassinated to win it. From Reconstruction to the Civil Rights Movement, the struggle for Black voting rights was a struggle against the same Southern ruling class that used poll taxes, literacy tests, terror and gerrymanders to keep Black people out of power.

Now that right is under direct attack again.

On April 29, the Supreme Court's right-wing majority issued its ruling in *Louisiana v. Calais*, attacking what remained of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. That section was designed to stop states from diluting Black voting strength. It was one of the legal gains won by the Black freedom struggle.

The Voting Rights Act was not handed down by a liberal court. It was forced onto the national agenda by a mass movement and reaffirmed by Congress again and again, including a nearly unanimous reauthorization in 2006. The court is now attacking one of the most democratically won laws in U.S. history.

The court has turned that history upside down.

A law created to protect Black voting power is now being used to destroy a Black-majority congressional district in Louisiana. In the name of ending "racial gerrymandering," the court has opened the door to the very thing the Voting Rights Act was passed to stop: the organized weakening of Black political representation in the South.

On April 29, the Supreme Court struck down Louisiana's second majority-Black congressional district. The next day, Gov. Jeff Landry moved to suspend the May 16 U.S. House primaries. Early voting was set to begin May 2. Absentee ballots had already been mailed. More than 42,000 had already been returned. Those votes were thrown out. Then, on May 4, the Supreme Court rushed its own paperwork, bypassing the usual waiting period and clearing the way for Louisiana officials to redraw the map after voters had already cast ballots.

This was a political operation carried out through legal machinery.

The new map is designed to eliminate Black representation. It would take Louisiana's two Black members of Congress – Rep. Cleo Fields of Baton Rouge and Rep. Troy Carter of New Orleans – and force them into the same district. One of them would be driven out without losing an election. Black voters would be packed into one district instead of having the power to elect representatives in two. The result would be one less Black-held seat in Congress from Louisiana.

Louisiana is not alone. After Calais, Republican-led states across the South moved to dismantle Black-majority congressional districts and drive Black representatives out of Congress. The ruling gave them the opening they were waiting for.

A sitting Black representative can be pushed out without losing an election. Black voters can have their power reduced without officials openly declaring, "We are taking away your rights." The Supreme Court issues the ruling. The governor stops the election. The Legislature redraws the lines. The old disenfranchisement returns under the cover of constitutional law.

Black voters are told they still have the right to vote. Then the courts and legislatures redraw the districts so those votes cannot elect Black representatives. The ballot remains. The power behind the ballot is stripped away.

Courts and legislatures are being used to cut down Black political power before voters can act. The courts stand inside this attack. They are part of it. In *Dred Scott*, the Supreme 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. Calais*, the same court is using the language of "equal protection" to attack the voting rights and Black representation that generations fought, bled and died to win.

Now the courts are using the language of voting rights to restore the power of those who opposed them.

In Louisiana, the courts are defending the political order that benefits from cutting down Black voting power. Black representation gave oppressed communities a base from which to fight for food, housing, education, health care, jobs and public services. When Black people fought for voting rights, courts and laws bent under the pressure of mass struggle. Now



People line up in Algiers, a working-class neighborhood of New Orleans, to sign the recall petition against Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry. The campaign began after Landry moved to suspend congressional primaries and push through a new Jim Crow map cutting Black representation.

those same institutions are being used to claw back what was won.

The attack in Louisiana belongs to the same ruling-class offensive that funds war, cuts social programs, backs police repression, sends ICE against immigrant workers and attacks liberation struggles abroad. The same ruling-class machinery that attacks Black voting power at home uses indictments, sanctions and military threats against liberation struggles abroad – especially those that challenge U.S. colonial and neocolonial domination. In each case, the political decision comes first. The legal cover follows.

That method was used against Venezuela before U.S. imperialism moved to remove Nicolás Maduro. Washington conjured a drug-trafficking case out of whole cloth, producing an indictment instead of evidence. The claims kept shifting because the political decision came first: remove Venezuela's popularly elected president, a leader of the Bolivarian struggle against U.S.-backed oligarchy, oil domination and imperialist control.

Now the same machinery is being pointed at Cuba.

The Justice Department has indicted 94-year-old Raúl Castro over the 1996 shoot-down of planes tied to Brothers to the Rescue, a U.S.-created terrorist network that repeatedly violated Cuban airspace. Cuba had warned Washington about these provocations. The U.S. government knew what was happening and allowed it to continue.

Thirty years later, the incident is being pulled back into service.

Raúl Castro is being targeted as one of the historic leaders of the Cuban struggle that broke the island free from the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship and U.S. neocolonial rule. The aim is to criminalize the revolution through one of its leaders, just as Washington criminalized Venezuela's Bolivarian process through its attack on Maduro.

It is like arresting the head of a union in the

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Towson University NAACP rep says Mass struggle needed to defend voting rights

By Struggle-La Lucha

The following talk was delivered by a representative of the Towson University Chapter of the NAACP at an emergency press conference and protest to stop the Supreme Court's racist attacks on voting rights. The event was held by the Peoples Power Assembly on May 7 in front of the Garmatz Federal Courthouse in Baltimore, Maryland.

Good evening everyone, my name is Christian from the Towson University Chapter of The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and I am honored to serve as Towson University's first-ever Mr. NAACP, a role dedicated to connecting our chapter with the communities around us and uplifting the voices that too often go unheard.

Today, we are witnessing a dangerous step backward. On April 29, the Supreme Court's decision in *Louisiana v. Callais* weakened protections under the Voting Rights Act and opened the door for states to dismantle majority-Black voting districts. This is not just politics. This is an attack on Black self-determination, Native sovereignty, and the power of our communities to be represented fairly.

We have seen tactics like this before. During the era of redlining, Black communities were intentionally segregated and denied investment, opportunity, and political influence simply because of the color of our skin. Today,



SLL photo

Press conference on May 7 in front of the Garmatz Federal Courthouse in Baltimore, Maryland.

gerrymandering attempts to achieve a similar outcome by redrawing voting maps to divide and weaken Black voices and dilute our political power.

Different strategy with the same goal: Silence us.

But history reminds us that progress has never come from silence or complacency. The right to vote was not handed to us. It was fought for through protest, organizing, and collective struggle. Our ancestors marched,

resisted, and sacrificed so future generations could have a voice in shaping this country.

Now it is our responsibility to protect that voice. We must organize, educate, mobilize, and show up in every election. We must challenge systems designed to push our communities out of the conversation. Because when they try to erase our power, we respond by building even stronger movements.

Mass struggle won us the right to vote. And mass struggle will defend it. #

From Louisiana to Havana: Law as a weapon

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middle of a strike and pretending the issue is one person, not the struggle itself.

The pattern is the same. In Louisiana, a court ruling and a redistricting map are used to eliminate Black voting power before voters can decide. In Venezuela and Cuba, indictments and old charges are used to attack liberation struggles that challenged U.S. domination.

In Louisiana, the target is Black representation. In Cuba, the target is the Cuban Revolution. In Venezuela, the target is the Bolivarian Revolution. In every case, courts, prosecutors and executive officials move before the people can settle the question through struggle, organization or elections.

The fight for Black voting rights and the fight against U.S. imperialism are two fronts

of one struggle against the same ruling class.

The same courts, prosecutors, politicians, banks and military commands that serve capitalist rule abroad also attack voting rights at home. The same ruling class that cannot forgive Cuba for making a revolution 90 miles from Florida cannot tolerate Black political power in the South. The same law that protects counterrevolutionaries against Cuba is used to erase Black representation in Louisiana.

Legal defense matters. Elections matter. Every right must be defended. But Black voting rights were won by mass struggle – by marches, boycotts, organizing, sacrifice and rebellion against white supremacy. The courts moved only when the people moved.

The attack in Louisiana reaches beyond one district or one election. It is a warning. The

ruling class is testing how far it can go in using courts and state governments to cancel voting power before voters can act. If it succeeds in Louisiana, the method will spread.

The defense of Black voting rights must become a mass issue for labor, oppressed communities, anti-war forces and everyone who understands that democracy for working and oppressed people has always been won from below.

From Baton Rouge to Havana, the law is being used as a weapon. The answer is not trust in the courts. The answer is mass struggle – in the unions, communities, campuses and streets – to defend Black voting rights, Black representation and every liberation struggle against U.S. imperialism. #

Food prices up, wages down

By Stephen Millies

The real minimum wage has fallen 53% since 1968

Inflation always hurts the working class – both those employed and unemployed – the worst. The war on Iran has caused the cost of gasoline to jump 50%.

Not everyone has a car or truck, but everybody has to eat. Over the past year, from April 2025 to April 2026, the price of ground beef has gone up nearly 15%.

Coffee rose by 18.5%. The price of fresh vegetables increased by 11.5% while tomatoes cost almost 40% more than a year ago.

Worse may be coming. The war has cut off much of the natural gas that's used as a feedstock in nitrogen-based fertilizers. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization is warning that a worldwide food price crisis could erupt in six months.

In 2025, the World Food Program estimated 720 million people suffered "chronic hunger." That's twice the population of the United States.

Trump and Netanyahu are starving Palestinians. One out of five children in Gaza City suffers from severe malnutrition.

There's also hunger in the United States. More than 50 million people in the country depend on food pantries. Millions of workers who can't afford to shop at supermarkets anymore depend on 99-cent stores instead.

Falling wages create billionaires

Meanwhile, the purchasing power of the federal minimum wage – what it can actually buy – has fallen 53% since 1968.

The Black liberation movement drove the labor movement forward in the 1960s. As chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, Harlem congressperson Adam Clayton Powell Jr. pushed to have those employed in service industries – like hospitals and laundries – covered by minimum wage laws.

On Feb. 1, 1968, the federal minimum wage was raised to \$1.60 per hour. That was a poverty wage back then but to equal its buying power, you would need \$15.58 per hour in April, 2026.

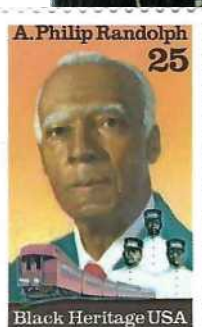
Yet the federal minimum wage has been frozen at \$7.25 per hour since 2009. That means minimum wage workers are cheated \$8.33 every hour or \$333 per 40-hour week.

If the poorly-paid employee was able to work 52 40-hour weeks, that amounts to annual wage theft of \$17,326.40. That's criminal.

This goes hand-in-hand with wages and salaries falling from almost 65% of the to-



August 28, 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. A. Philip Randolph third from right



tal economy in 1970 to just 56.8% in 2023.

No wonder the number of U.S. billionaires skyrocketed to 924. They're able to steal more. Their total stash amounts to at least \$6.9 trillion.

That represents more than \$20,000 for every person living in the United States. It's important to remember that at least half of this loot is stolen from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America. It's reparations money.

A. Philip Randolph wanted a \$21.70 minimum wage

When the corporate media recounts the historic Aug. 28, 1963, March for Jobs and Freedom – where Dr. King gave his "I have a dream" speech – it almost never mentions the 10 demands of the march.

Demand No. 8 was "a national minimum wage act that will give all Americans a decent standard of living. (Government surveys show that anything less than \$2.00 an hour fails to do this.)"

The U.S. Department of Labor determined this \$2 per hour figure to be a rock-bottom minimum.

Two dollars an hour in 1963 is worth \$21.70 in April, 2026. That's three times what the current federal minimum wage is.

A. Philip Randolph, the longtime president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, championed the minimum wage demand. He was the director of the March on Washington

for Jobs and Freedom with Bayard Rustin as his deputy.

Randolph led the March on Washington movement in the 1940s that forced President Franklin Roosevelt to establish the Fair Employment Practice Committee. It opened up jobs for Black workers.

Some states have established minimum wages above the federal level. Twenty states – including Indiana, Pennsylvania, Texas and Wisconsin – haven't.

The minimum wage in New York City is \$17 per hour. That still won't pay for housing in a city where the cheapest one-bedroom apartment goes for \$2,000 per month.

In California, the minimum wage for fast food workers in national chains like McDonald's is \$20 per hour. But McDonald's employees in Denmark get at least \$22 per hour and are guaranteed six weeks of paid vacation per year.

That's because these Danish fast food workers are union members. The labor movement needs to organize fast food workers coast-to-coast.

A real living wage is much higher than these figures. Experts at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have determined two working adults living in Manhattan (New York), with two children each, need a minimum hourly wage of \$40.61.

Winning that is no more impossible than gaining an eight-hour work day and a five-day week for most workers. We have to intensify the people's struggle on all fronts. #

Tobacco profits trump children's health

By Lallan Schoenstien

On May 2, President Trump met with executives and lobbyists from major tobacco companies over lunch at his golf club. They were appealing for a change in how the Food and Drug Administration regulates e-cigarettes.

When Trump could not reach FDA Commissioner Dr. Marty Makary by phone, he instead called Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Dr. Mehmet Oz, who heads the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Within days, the FDA approved two fruit-flavored e-cigarette products and announced it would not prioritize enforcement against unauthorized vapes and nicotine pouches, giving major tobacco companies a larger share of the roughly \$6 billion e-cigarette market. Dr. Makary resigned days later after clashing with Trump over the decision.

Nearly 90% of youth who use e-cigarettes use flavored products. The number of users was declining because of FDA restrictions on the varieties designed to appeal to them. Studies have found that young people who vape are more likely to become smokers, and many are low-risk youth who would not have otherwise smoked cigarettes.

E-cigarettes put millions of kids at risk of addiction to tobacco, the leading preventable cause of cancer in the U.S., and it's not just lung cancer. Tobacco smoke damages cells around your entire body and causes at least 16 types of cancer.

The deadly threat is fueled by tobacco companies that snare children and teens with flavors that mimic popular treats, such as cotton candy, gummy bears, bubble gum, fruit and various dessert options, to create addictions.

E-cigarettes deliver massive doses of nicotine, putting youth users at greater risk of addiction. Some e-cigarettes contain as much nicotine as 200 cigarettes or more.

Beginning in 2009, the Tobacco Control Act gave the FDA authority to regulate tobacco products. In 2016, the agency brought several new types of products under its purview, including e-cigarettes. The FDA was hesitant to authorize vapes with flavors other than tobacco and menthol because of the appeal to young people.

E-cigarettes pose serious risks to the health of young people.

The U.S. Surgeon General has concluded that youth use of nicotine in any form, including e-cigarettes, is unsafe. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug and can harm adolescent brain development, particularly the parts of the brain responsible for attention, memory and learning.

"By now, it seems pretty clear that using

e-cigarettes, or vaping, is bad for your lungs. But research about exactly how vaping affects the lungs is in the initial stages," says Johns Hopkins lung cancer surgeon Stephen Broderick.

"In the last 24 to 36 months, I've seen an explosive uptick of patients who vape," reports Broderick. "With tobacco, we have six decades of rigorous studies to show which of the 7,000 chemicals inhaled during smoking impact the lungs. But with vaping, we simply don't know the short- or long-term effects yet and which e-cigarette components are to blame."

Vaping is not harmless. Children and non-smokers should never vape.

Both smoking and vaping involve heating a substance and inhaling the resulting fumes. With cigarettes, you inhale smoke from burning tobacco. With vaping, a device heats up a liquid (called vape juice or e-liquid) until it turns into a vapor that you inhale.

Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is addictive. Other common substances found in heated e-liquid may also pose a risk to the lungs. These include:

Diacetyl: This food additive, used to enhance e-cigarette flavors, is known to damage small passageways in the lungs leading to permanent scarring in the smallest branches of the airways – popcorn lung – which makes breathing difficult.

Formaldehyde: This toxic chemical can cause lung disease and contribute to heart disease.

Acrolein: Often used as a weed killer, this chemical can damage lungs.

Secondhand e-cigarette aerosol is not harmless. It can contain nicotine, ultrafine particles, diacetyl and benzene (a chemical found in car exhaust).

The Johns Hopkins report lists various vaping-related disorders:

Lipoid pneumonia is the result of inhaling oily substances found in e-liquid, which sparks an inflammatory response in the lungs.

A collapsed lung can occur after vaping. Primary spontaneous pneumothorax (collapsed lung) is a hole in the lung through which oxygen escapes.

"At Johns Hopkins, we're seeing a rash of collapsed lungs in younger people," reports Broderick. "We always ask if they've been smoking, and they'll often say, 'No, I don't smoke. But I do vape.' Now we tell patients not to smoke or vape if they want to avoid another lung collapse and surgery in the future."

Broderick says cancer is definitely a concern, given that vaping introduces a host of chemicals into the lungs. But vaping products

haven't been around long enough for us to learn whether or not they cause cancer.

"We do know that smoking tobacco forces tiny particles to be deposited deep in the bronchial tree and can lead to the development of cancer. The same may be true for vaping," says Broderick.

In response to widespread outrage, White House spokesman Kush Desai issued a statement: "President Trump consistently pledged to expand access to vapes in light of an abundance of recent evidence finding that these products are beneficial for Americans trying to quit smoking. The only guiding factor behind the Trump administration's health policymaking is Gold Standard Science."

In response to the myth that e-cigarettes help adults to quit smoking, every major U.S. public health authority – including the U.S. Surgeon General, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, the CDC and even the FDA itself – has found there is inadequate evidence to conclude that e-cigarettes are effective at helping smokers quit. The International Pediatric Association, a consortium of pediatric societies, said last year that e-cigarettes have not proved significantly effective at getting people to stop smoking.

When considering the pro-vaping actions of Trump and his cronies, Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., and Dr. Mehmet Oz, one remembers the terrible health consequences for children from the lead-contaminated water in Flint, Michigan.

This is not the first time government officials have knowingly endangered children's health for political or financial reasons.

In April 2014, the state-appointed emergency manager changed Flint's water source from Lake Huron and the Detroit River to the Flint River as a budgetary measure, without proper corrosion control. Lead then leached from

aging pipes into the drinking water. When the community complained about the quality of the water, it was discovered that around 100,000 residents were exposed to elevated lead levels. Between 6,000 and 14,000 children were exposed to drinking water with the long-term effects of lead poisoning.

As a result of national outrage, criminal charges were filed against responsible government officials. But the legal system largely failed to hold them accountable.

Flint showed what happens when officials treat children's health as a budget item. The lesson is not only about Flint. When public health policy is handed over to corporations and their political servants, children pay the price. #



Stop utility shutoffs – corporate terror kills

By Stephen Millies

Electricity was cut off 13.4 million times to U.S. homes in 2024. Gas was shut-off to 1.7 million.

That's a national disaster. Since several folks usually live in a household, this means at least 40 million to 50 million people lost their lights and heat that year. Their crime was being poor.

Having your electricity cut off means your milk, meat and other refrigerated food will spoil. So will life-saving medications like insulin, which many people with diabetes need.

Shut-offs can kill. A May 15, 1982, fire in Baltimore killed 10 people, including seven children. The fire was caused by a candle that the family was forced to use after their electricity was shut off.

The family owed just \$808 on their electric bill to Baltimore Gas and Electric, now part of the Exelon Corporation with over \$20 billion in revenue. That works out to \$80.80 for every person killed.

A dozen years later, two adults and seven children died in another Baltimore fire on Feb. 26, 1994. Once again, an overturned candle started the inferno after their electricity was shut off.

Human life is cheap to the wealthy and powerful. For the utility executives in Baltimore, each child killed in that May 15, 1982, fire was worth just \$80.80.

Skyrocketing utility bills guarantee even more shut-offs. Since 2019, residential electrical bills in the United States have risen 36%. It's even worse in New York State, where they've jumped by 58%.

Meanwhile, the 10 highest paid utility CEOs raked in more than \$220 million last year.

Freezing and sweltering to death

Losing gas heat is also deadly. In 2022, 82-year-old Virginia Vigrass died after her gas



Protesters with housing rights organization “Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson” recently took to the streets to protest Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corp., a monopoly energy provider for the city of Poughkeepsie, New York.

was cut off in the Cleveland suburb of Lakewood. The freezing death of a Peshtigo, Wisconsin, senior in the early 1970s led to state moratoriums on heating shut-offs during the winter.

The struggle against utility shut-offs forced Congress to establish the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program in 1981. LIHEAP saves lives.

Its current budget is \$4.1 billion, less than three days of what Big Oil's war against Iran costs. Trump wants to eliminate LIHEAP despite one in six households being behind in their utility bills.

Trump's attacks on poor and working people aren't confined to the United States. He's cut much of Cuba's electricity by largely stopping the country's oil imports.

That's a war crime. Many Cuban hospitals have had to limit surgeries to daylight hours.

Deaths from heat stroke are even more common than deaths from cold weather. Over 700 people died during a July 1995 heat wave in Chicago.

Last year an estimated 350 people died from high heat in New York City. Why should these preventable deaths be occurring in a city with 123 billionaires?

In a wealthy country like the United States, air conditioning should be a right. Farm workers and all those working in construction and warehouses must be protected. Workplaces need to be shut down, with no cut in pay, if adequate relief isn't available.

Take over the utilities!

Working-class families are being squeezed by their utility bills alongside rising rents, increased medical costs and soaring prices at the gas pump. Electricity and gas heat are necessities that should be considered human rights.

The profit-mad utilities have neglected investments in the electrical grid. This has led to complete shutdowns like in the Northeastern United States in 2003 or Texas in 2021.

The biggest U.S. utility – Pacific Gas and Electric – cut back on tree trimming, which led to deadly wildfires in California. Lawsuits forced PG&E into bankruptcy.

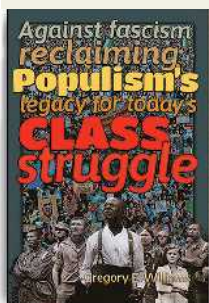
In New York, Con Edison locking out 12,000 utility workers during three weeks in 2012 could have led to a catastrophe. In 2014, a gas explosion in Manhattan's El Barrio (East Harlem), killed eight people.

The tragedy was caused by Con Ed's ancient, century-old, cast-iron pipes, which should have been replaced long ago. Corporation executives declined to do so because stock dividends might be cut.

Profits are more important to them than people. Greedy capitalists can't be trusted to operate these absolutely necessary utilities.

The people need to take over the utilities. Utility bills alone should never be more than 10% of a working family's income. Combined with rent, the burden on the lowest-paid workers has become impossible to survive.

The power of the people can defeat the electric and gas monopolies. #



AGAINST FASCISM Gregory E. Williams

Reclaiming populism's legacy for today's class struggle

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

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

tinyurl.com/Populism-book



Musk's AI power plant poisons Black communities –

Trump's DOJ backs him

By Gary Wilson

The NAACP has sued Elon Musk's AI company xAI over a massive gas-burning power plant it built without permits in a Black working-class community outside Memphis. The plant is now one of the largest fossil fuel power plants in Mississippi. The U.S. Justice Department, citing a Trump executive order, has moved to back xAI in that lawsuit.

The NAACP and its Mississippi State Conference filed the suit April 14 against xAI and MZX Tech. The companies installed 27 gas-burning turbines in Southaven, Mississippi, starting in August 2025 to power Colossus 2, xAI's data center just across the state line in South Memphis. They did it without Clean Air Act permits. Tens of thousands of people live within a mile of the turbines. Homes are half a mile away. An elementary school is a mile away.

By the time the NAACP asked the court for an injunction on May 6, the number of turbines on site had grown to at least 33. State regulators later confirmed 46.

The plant is already a major source of air pollution across the Memphis region. Memphis has been named an asthma capital. Both Shelby County, Tennessee, and DeSoto County, Mississippi, received failing grades for ozone pollution from the American Lung Association. xAI's plant is expected to be the largest single industrial source of smog-forming nitrogen oxides in the 11-county Memphis metropolitan area. An independent study projected the permanent installation would cause between \$30 million and \$44 million in annual health damages – through premature deaths, new asthma cases, heart attacks and hospital visits across North Mississippi and West Tennessee. The plant is also projected to release 19 tons of cancer-causing formaldehyde into the surrounding communities every year.

xAI's playbook: install first, permit later

xAI used the same approach when it opened Colossus 1 in Boxtown, a majority-Black South Memphis neighborhood, in June 2024. It powered that facility with up to 35 unpermitted gas turbines. Residents reported foul air and worsening health. University of Tennessee researchers confirmed the turbines had measurably worsened pollution. Only after the Southern Environmental Law Center sent a notice of intent to sue did xAI remove the unpermitted turbines and obtain permits for 15 remaining units.

Then xAI did it again. When SELC sent a second notice of intent to sue over the Southaven turbines in February 2026, the turbines



Tennessee state Rep. Justin J. Pearson called the xAI pollution 'a clean, clear-cut case of environmental racism,' speaking at a Memphis press conference where the NAACP announced plans to sue.

were already running. They had been running since at least October 2025.

xAI's legal defense is that the turbines are "mobile" – they sit on flatbed trailers – and therefore exempt from Clean Air Act permits for stationary sources. SELC says a turbine that has been parked and generating power for months is a stationary source under the law, not a mobile one.

Mississippi state regulators have not shut the plant down. In March 2026, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Permit Board issued a permit for xAI to operate 41 permanent gas turbines at the Southaven site – making it one of the largest fossil fuel power plants in the state.

But that permit did not cover the turbines named in the lawsuit. SELC says the 27 original turbines and the units added later are not part of the March permit, and MDEQ confirmed that the 46 temporary-mobile turbines were not covered by it.

The board approved the permit over overwhelming public opposition. Every community member who testified at the Southaven public hearing spoke against xAI. The Permit Board meeting itself was held in Jackson on Election Day – nearly three hours from the communities most affected.

DOJ intervenes for Musk

The Justice Department's filing turns Trump's AI policy into xAI's courtroom defense.

DOJ attorney Adam R.F. Gustafson filed a notice in federal court in Mississippi saying the federal government is considering intervening in the case, or submitting an amicus brief, because the NAACP lawsuit could conflict with Trump's policy of promoting U.S. "AI dominance." The basis for this position is

Trump's executive order of Jan. 23, 2025, directing federal agencies to clear obstacles to AI development. That order was never debated in Congress and no member of the public – including the communities now living next to Musk's turbines – had any opportunity to challenge it before it became policy.

The DOJ's Environment and Natural Resources Division – the office responsible for enforcing federal environmental protections – filed the intervention notice. The division argued that AI development serves "human flourishing, economic competitiveness, and national security." It did not address the formaldehyde, the nitrogen oxides, or the health of Southaven residents.

The filing also backed xAI's request for more time to respond to the NAACP's demand for an injunction. Earthjustice senior attorney Elias Quinn said the plaintiffs would accept a delay only if xAI shut off the turbines in the meantime. xAI refused.

The Clean Air Act is a law passed by Congress. Trump's executive order did not repeal it. The DOJ is now using that order to subordinate enforcement of federal environmental law to the expansion needs of Musk's company.

Tennessee state Rep. Justin J. Pearson, whose district includes part of the affected area, was direct: "This is a clean, clear-cut case of environmental racism."

A national pattern

What xAI is doing near Memphis is part of a wider pattern. AI companies are demanding more power, and utilities are answering with more fossil fuels. Mercury emissions from coal plants rose roughly 9% in 2025, reversing years of decline, according to a New York Times analysis of EPA data published May 11. In Indiana, where AI data centers have expanded rapidly, one coal plant increased its mercury emissions by 160% in 2025, generating 90% more power to meet rising demand.

The Trump administration has compounded the damage by scrapping the stronger mercury limits adopted in 2024 and sending coal plants back to the weaker 2012 rules. The rollback saved the industry \$120 million a year in compliance costs. Harvard researchers calculated the public health cost at \$200 million in the first year alone.

For families in Southaven and South Memphis, this is not a policy debate. The turbines have been running since at least October 2025. Every delay is more poison in the air. #

U.S. starves Cuba of fuel, then sends

By Gary Wilson

Cuba's energy minister declared May 14 that the island had exhausted its entire supply of diesel and fuel oil – the fuels that power its electricity grid.

“We have absolutely no fuel oil, absolutely no diesel. We have no more reserves,” Vicente de la O Levy said in a televised statement.

Hours later, CIA Director John Ratcliffe flew to Havana with Washington's demand for “fundamental changes.”

That sequence tells the story. U.S. imperialism first tightened the fuel siege. Then it sent the head of the CIA to deliver the political ultimatum.

A CIA official said Ratcliffe carried a direct message from President Trump: the U.S. is “prepared to seriously engage on economic and security issues, but only if Cuba makes fundamental changes.” Ratcliffe urged the Cuban side to take a lesson from the Jan. 3 operation in which U.S. forces kidnapped Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro.

The message was clear: comply or face the same fate.

The human cost of Washington's blockade is not abstract. It is measured in darkened homes, hospital wards, broken equipment, uncollected garbage and infants who should have lived.

Blackouts in Havana now exceed 20 to 22 hours per day. Hospitals are struggling to maintain basic care. At Havana's Eusebio Hernández Pérez maternity hospital, high-voltage surges from repeated blackouts have damaged incubators. Doctors manually pump ventilators to keep newborns alive. Only about 41.5% of the capital's 106 garbage trucks are running, with waste piling on street corners. Canadian mining company Sherritt has suspended operations at its Moa nickel facility.

Since Washington began tightening sanctions in 2017, Cuba's infant mortality rate has risen from 4.0 deaths per 1,000 live births to 9.9 in 2025. An estimated 1,800 Cuban infants died in those years who would have survived without the intensified sanctions. Washington's policy of collective punishment produced those deaths.

The current energy collapse was triggered by executive order on Jan. 29, when Trump imposed an oil blockade on the island, threatening tariffs against any country that supplied Cuba with fuel. Cuba's two largest oil lifelines – Venezuela and Mexico – were cut off under U.S. pressure. Venezuelan shipments were choked off after the January seizure of President Nicolás Maduro. Mexico halted deliveries under tariff threats.



Photo: Bill Hackwell

President Miguel Díaz-Canel made Cuba's position clear: Cuba will defend its sovereignty.

A Russian tanker, the Anatoly Kolodkin, arrived on March 31 with approximately 730,000 barrels of crude – enough to cover roughly 12 to 14 days of demand. That supply is now gone.

Two-thirds of Cuba's energy had been met by fuel imports. Eighty percent of its grid runs on thermoelectric units and diesel and fuel oil engines. What remains is Cuba's own scarce crude, natural gas, and 1,300 megawatts of installed solar capacity – much of which cannot be stored due to grid instability.

This is how imperialist siege works in practice: not only through soldiers and warships, but through oil contracts, shipping insurance, banks, tariffs and sanctions – the everyday machinery of monopoly capital – that decide whether a hospital has power.

As the pressure campaign intensified, the State Department publicly formalized an offer of \$100 million in aid – to be distributed through the Catholic Church and conditioned on “meaningful reforms to Cuba's communist system.”

The figure works out to roughly \$10 per Cuban man, woman, and child. It does not include a single barrel of oil. Washington created the crisis. The \$100 million offer is a ransom note.

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla said Cuba was “willing to hear the details” but named the only assistance that would actually matter.

“The best assistance the U.S. government could provide to the noble Cuban people at this time – or at any time – is to de-escalate the measures of the energy, economic, commercial, and financial blockade,” he said, describ-

ing the current siege as intensified “as never before in recent months.”

Trump's offer arrived as Cuba's energy minister said there was nothing left to run the grid. The offer is a public relations maneuver attached to a political ultimatum.

Washington is escalating on every front simultaneously. The Justice Department has indicted 94-year-old Raúl Castro over Cuba's 1996 shutdown of planes operated by Brothers to the Rescue. U.S. media presents the group as a humanitarian exile organization. It was not. Brothers to the Rescue was part of the U.S.-created anti-Cuban terrorist network based in Miami. Its founder, José Basulto, was a CIA operative and Bay of Pigs veteran who had worked in intelligence, communications, explosives, sabotage and subversion. He later acknowledged a CIA-sponsored commando mission into Cuba and an armed 1962 attack in which he fired a 20mm cannon at a Cuban hotel. Brothers to the Rescue repeatedly violated Cuban sovereignty, including flights over Havana to drop leaflets. On Feb. 24, 1996, its planes again entered Cuban airspace. Cuba shot them down after repeated warnings. Washington now revives that decades-old provocation as one more instrument of pressure.

Since Feb. 4, U.S. Navy and Air Force surveillance planes and drones have conducted at least 25 intelligence-gathering flights near Cuba's coast, some within 40 miles of shore. CNN analyzed publicly available aviation data from Dec. 28, 2025, to April 28, 2026, and

Continued on page 11

CIA chief with ultimatum

Continued on page 10

found the first such flight during that period occurred Feb. 4. The same platforms – P-8A Poseidons, RC-135V Rivet Joints and MQ-4C Tritons – were deployed before the Jan. 3 Venezuela operation.

The flights are being conducted visibly, with transponders active on public tracking sites.

“When preparing for operations, we go completely dark,” retired Navy Commander José Adán Gutiérrez, an intelligence specialist, told the New York Times. “The fact that these flights were purposely made public basically indicates that there is a message.”

Cuba’s Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernández de Cossío described the military

buildup as “part of a coldly calculated communications strategy” and warned that those participating in it “would be complicit in the eventual bloodbath.”

A senior U.S. administration official offered his own summary to Axios: “They have no fuel. They have no money. They have no one coming to rescue them.”

CIA pressure, State Department ransom, Justice Department charges, Pentagon surveillance, Treasury sanctions and economic strangulation – the coordinated machinery of the imperialist state, all aimed at the same goal: forcing Cuba to surrender its sovereignty.

Washington is using Venezuela as the warning and Cuba as the next target.



March of the Cuban people in front of the U.S. Embassy in January 2026. Photo: Yaimi Ravelo

President Miguel Díaz-Canel made Cuba’s position clear: Cuba will defend its sovereignty. The Cuban people have resisted U.S. aggression, blockade and sabotage for more than six decades. That resistance demands active solidarity from workers and oppressed people inside the United States.

The demand is straightforward: end the blockade now. No invasion. No regime-change ultimatums delivered by CIA directors. U.S. hands off Cuba. #

Always remember the MOVE bombing

By Stephen Millies

Forty-one years ago, Philadelphia police bombed the MOVE organization’s house at 6221 Osage Avenue, killing 11 Black people – five children and six adults. The May 13, 1985, inferno destroyed an entire neighborhood of 61 homes, making 250 people homeless.

A somber gathering was held on May 13, at Cobbs Creek Parkway and Osage Avenue in West Philadelphia to commemorate this mass murder. Volunteers formed a line while holding paintings of those who perished.

The program began at 5:27 p.m. – the time when the bomb containing two pounds of C4 plastic explosive was dropped on the MOVE house. The names of those who were killed were read while a musician played a violin. The names began with the children:

The children killed were Tomaso Africa, age 9; Phil Africa, age 11; Delisha Africa, age 12; Netta Africa, age 12; and Tree Africa, age 14.

The names of the adults were then spoken: Conrad Africa, Raymond Africa, Frank Africa, Rhonda Africa, Theresa Africa, and John Africa, the MOVE organization’s founder.

The crimes committed against these MOVE family members didn’t end with their deaths. Remains of two children – Delisha Africa and Tree Africa – weren’t given to their families.

They were kept by the University of Pennsylvania instead. Even in death these Black children were not allowed any dignity.

There were just two survivors: Ramona



Mike Africa Jr. spoke at the May 13 commemoration of the MOVE bombing. SLL photo: Stephen Millies

Africa and 13-year-old Birdie Africa, both of whom suffered severe burns.

None of those who committed these killings were ever charged. The only person convicted was the injured Ramona Africa, who spent seven years in prison.

‘Let the fire burn’

It was recounted that the police assault began the day before on May 12, 1985, which was Mother’s Day. Police fired thousands of bullets into the house while the fire department poured in water. Tear gas was also used, choking the surrounding blocks.

The assault continued on the following day.

The Pentagon and FBI helped assemble the bomb which was dropped from a Pennsylvania State Police helicopter.

Police fired 10,000 rounds. Cops shot at anyone trying to leave the MOVE house. With the house and the neighborhood in flames, Police Commissioner Gregore J. Sambor gave an order to “let the fire burn.”

Mike Africa, Jr. was the main speaker. He was born in the prison where his parents – Debbie Africa and Mike Africa, Sr. – were incarcerated. They were imprisoned 40 years after being framed as part of the MOVE 9.

These MOVE members had been assaulted and arrested after their home in the Powelton Village neighborhood was attacked by police in 1978 under orders from super racist Mayor Frank Rizzo.

Mumia Abu-Jamal – the revolutionary journalist who was originally sentenced to death and has been imprisoned for 44 years – defended John Africa and the other MOVE members.

Mike Africa, Jr. is now leading a campaign to reclaim the MOVE house on Osage Avenue.

People in Philadelphia are horrified by the MOVE bombing. In 2020, the city council finally apologized for the atrocity. The same year while the Black Lives Matter movement swept the United States, racist Frank Rizzo’s statue across from City Hall was finally taken down.

A historical marker was erected on Cobbs Creek Parkway near the site of the MOVE house. Real justice will come. Never forget the MOVE holocaust. #

U.S. revives a 30-year-old with invasion



Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel with Raúl Castro, one of the historic leaders of the Cuban Revolution. Washington's threatened indictment of Raúl Castro is aimed not only at one man, but at the revolution Cuba has defended for more than six decades.

Photo: Bill Hackwell

By Gary Wilson

The Justice Department has indicted 94-year-old Raúl Castro, one of the historic leaders of the Cuban Revolution, over Cuba's 1996 shutdown of two planes flown by Brothers to the Rescue – not a humanitarian group, but one arm of a U.S.-created anti-Cuba terrorist network rooted in the CIA's war against the Cuban Revolution.

Raúl Castro was a commander in the revolutionary struggle that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. He later served as Cuba's defense minister and president. Washington is not just naming an individual. It is targeting a leader identified with the revolution itself.

That indictment threat sits alongside everything else Washington has deployed against Cuba in recent months: a fuel blockade that left the island with no diesel and no fuel oil reserves as of May 14, a visit from CIA Director John Ratcliffe carrying Trump's ultimatum for "fundamental changes," a \$100 million aid offer conditioned on political concessions, and at least 25 U.S. military surveillance flights near Cuba's coast since Feb. 4 – the same platforms used before the Jan. 3 kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro.

This is how imperialism operates: the courts, the CIA, the Pentagon, the Treasury Department, Congress and the corporate media move as different arms of the same class state.

The administration has been open about the Venezuela frame. Ratcliffe urged the Cuban side to take a lesson from the Maduro operation. Senior officials want the option of running the same playbook against Havana.

That is why the Venezuela comparison matters. Nicolás Maduro was targeted not simply as a head of state, but as a leader of the Bolivarian Revolution. Raúl Castro is being targeted in the same way: as one of the historic leaders of the Cuban Revolution. It is like arresting the head of a union in the middle of a strike and pretending the issue is one person, not the struggle itself.

The possible indictment is part of that architecture – not as genuine legal cover, but as a propaganda point Washington can point to when everyone already knows what it is. Remember the Maine. The pretext doesn't have to be credible. It just has to exist.

But to understand what the indictment would actually charge, you have to understand what Brothers to the Rescue actually was.

José Basulto and the CIA's anti-Cuba network

Brothers to the Rescue was founded in Miami in 1991 by José Basulto. The group claimed to search for Cuban rafters in the Florida Straits as a humanitarian cover. Its few rescue flights soon gave way to political and provocative missions toward and into Cuban airspace, using the humanitarian image as cover for a role inside the wider anti-Cuba CIA operations. Basulto himself was no ordinary humanitarian worker. He was a CIA operative, a Bay of Pigs veteran, and a man with a long record in intelligence, communications, explosives, sabotage and subversion. He later acknowledged a CIA-sponsored commando mission into Cuba. In 1962, he carried out an armed attack in which he fired a 20mm cannon at a Cuban hotel.

Brothers to the Rescue operated inside a U.S.-run anti-Cuba network. Through the 1990s, that network planned and carried out bombings against Cuban tourism targets, assassination plots and paramilitary operations against the island. Alpha 66, Omega 7, Comandos F4, the Cuban American National Foundation, Independent and Democratic Cuba, and Brothers to the Rescue itself operated with impunity in the United States – with the knowledge and support of the FBI and CIA, according to Marjorie Cohn, former president of the National Lawyers Guild and Thomas Jefferson School of Law professor.

The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals later documented the record. Alpha 66 ran paramilitary camps, attacked Cuban hotels in 1992, 1994 and 1995, tried to smuggle hand grenades into Cuba, and sent members who were intercepted on their way to assassinate Fidel Castro in 1997. The Cuban American National Foundation planned to bomb a Havana nightclub. Comandos F4 was involved in a separate Castro assassination attempt.

This was not simply a Cuban American political current. It was a U.S.-based terror apparatus aimed at overthrowing the Cuban Revolution. Washington encouraged it, shielded it and, in key instances, directed it.

Luis Posada Carriles showed what that protection meant. Posada had been a CIA agent since 1961. He was the mastermind of the 1976 bombing of Cubana de Aviación Flight 455, which killed all 73 people aboard. He later admitted responsibility for a campaign of hotel bombings in Havana in the late 1990s that killed an Italian tourist and wounded dozens more.

In 2005, Posada surfaced in the United States after years moving through the U.S.-protected anti-Cuba network in Central America. He had been arrested in Panama in 2000 in a plot to assassinate Fidel Castro, then pardoned in 2004. Prosecutors later said he lied about how he entered the United States; testimony put him on a boat from Isla Mujeres, Mexico, to Florida, not on the land route he claimed. The FBI acknowledged that he posed a potential threat to national security. A federal judge dis-

CIA provocation to threaten Cuba

missed the charges anyway. Posada died a free man in Miami in 2018.

Cuba had warned Washington about these operations. U.S. authorities did not stop them. Posada's freedom was the answer.

The aircraft Brothers to the Rescue flew carried a history of their own. Cuba documented that the group used aircraft previously employed in U.S. wars and proxy wars, including Vietnam and El Salvador. They had been passed along from the U.S. Air Force with "USAF" markings not fully erased.

These were not innocent private aircraft. They came through the same U.S. military and CIA pipeline that armed the dirty wars in Central America. At least one plane used in Brothers to the Rescue operations had previously been flown by the CIA-backed Nicaraguan Contras. Now that same matériel was being turned against Cuba from Florida. The civilian markings were the cover. The mission was provocation.

These were called "propaganda" flights. They were a terror tactic. The U.S. Army used the same method in Vietnam: send aircraft overhead and make the people below wonder whether this time the payload would be leaflets or bombs. Over Havana, the message was not only the paper dropped from the plane. The message was the plane itself.

As Brothers to the Rescue took on a more open political role, its flights into and toward Cuban airspace became a campaign of provocation. In July 1995, one of its aircraft scattered anti-government propaganda over Havana. The following year, Cuba brought the record to the United Nations: 25 airspace violations in the 20 months before Feb. 24, 1996. Cuba repeatedly warned Washington that continued violations would be met with force.

Washington did not stop the flights.

The shutdown

On Feb. 24, 1996, three Brothers to the Rescue planes departed from the Miami area. Cuban Air Force MiGs intercepted two of them over Cuban coastal waters. Four men were killed: Carlos Costa, Mario de la Peña, Armando Alejandro Jr., and Pablo Morales. Basulto piloted the third aircraft and returned to Florida.

Cuba defended the action at the United Nations as a sovereign response to serial violations of its airspace and to the broader hostile operations – bombings, sabotage, propaganda flights – that U.S.-directed networks were running against the island from U.S. territory.

In a Feb. 13, 2026, letter to Trump, four Republican members of Congress asked the Justice Department to indict Raúl Castro. They claimed he personally approved the intercept order while serving as Cuba's defense minister.

The political effect of the shutdown in 1996 was immediate and lasting. Congress passed the Helms-Burton Act within days – long-stalled legislation that conditioned the removal of U.S. sanctions on the fall of the Castro government and gave new rights to U.S. and Cuban American claimants to property seized after the 1959 revolution. President Bill Clinton, who had hoped to liberalize relations with Havana, signed it into law on March 12, 1996.

The Cuban Five and the legal inversion

The shutdown did not stay in the realm of diplomacy. It became a weapon in a U.S. courtroom.

Cuba had deployed agents to South Florida to monitor the most dangerous U.S.-backed organizations operating against the island – including Brothers to the Rescue. Those agents, the Cuban Five, were arrested by the FBI in 1998. Among them was Gerardo Hernández, the network's coordinator. He was charged not only with espionage but with conspiracy to commit murder in connection with the 1996 shutdown.

The charge turned reality upside down. Cuba's agents were monitoring groups that were planning and carrying out attacks against the island. That was the real context. The Miami trial pushed it aside.

The trial lasted seven months in a city saturated with anti-Cuba politics. A pretrial survey found that 49.7% of the local Cuban American population strongly favored direct U.S. military action to overthrow the Cuban government. During deliberations, jurors said they felt pressured. Some said their license plates had been filmed on the way to their cars.

In 2005, a three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit unanimously overturned the convictions. It found that seating an impartial jury in Miami was "an unreasonable probability because

of pervasive community prejudice." The full court reinstated the convictions the next year.

The Cuban Five were eventually freed in December 2014. The actual result of the proceedings: the people monitoring terrorist operations against Cuba ended up imprisoned for years. The architects of those operations – Posada among them – remained free.

Now Washington wants to use the same incident to indict Raúl Castro, Cuba's defense minister at the time.

Frank Mora, a former ambassador to the Organization of American States who now teaches at Florida International University, described the indictment threat as a psychological operation – aimed as much at Miami's right-wing Cuban American political machine as at Havana. It signals to that layer that Trump is serious about ending revolutionary rule on the island.

William LeoGrande, a professor of government at American University, framed the broader strategy clearly: the administration is trying to force Cuba to capitulate at the bargaining table by building a credible enough threat that Havana blinks first. "The Cubans are not good at backing down," he said.

That is a historical understatement. The Cuban Revolution has withstood more than six decades of U.S. blockade, invasion, assassination plots, sabotage and economic warfare because the Cuban people have defended it. The Trump administration is deploying that entire toolkit simultaneously – fuel embargo, CIA ultimatum, Pentagon surveillance, Treasury sanctions, Justice Department indictment threat – and betting that the combination will produce what none of those measures produced separately.

The indictment of a 94-year-old man over a 30-year-old shutdown – one that followed 25 documented airspace violations by one arm

of a U.S.-created anti-Cuba terrorist network – is not a neutral act of law enforcement. It is a propaganda point, chosen for the same reason Ratcliffe's Havana visit was made public rather than kept secret: Washington is not looking for justice. It is manufacturing a pretext for aggression.

Cuba has seen this before. Washington may put Raúl Castro's name on the indictment. But the target is the Cuban Revolution itself – because it remains proof, 90 miles from Florida, that U.S. imperialism can be resisted and survive. #



A woman holds a Cuban flag and a photograph of former Cuban president Raul Castro, 94, who has been indicted by a U.S. court, during a rally outside the U.S. Embassy in Havana, on May 22, 2026.

U.S. turns Philippines into base for

By Gary Wilson

On April 19 and 20, the Philippine army's 79th Infantry Battalion killed 19 people in Toboso, on Negros Island. The killings came as Washington and Manila launched Balikatan 2026, their largest war games yet.

The massacre took place in Barangay Salamanca, Toboso, Negros Occidental. Local reports cited by the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines said the operation also forcibly displaced more than 653 residents from 168 households in farming communities in Barangays Salamanca and San Jose.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines called it a military encounter with the New People's Army. But the Communist Party of the Philippines said the dead included 10 NPA fighters and nine noncombatants: a journalist, student leaders, farmer advocates, overseas human rights workers, local residents and two children.

Among the nine were Roel Sabillo, 19; community journalist R.J. Nichole Ledesma, 30; Alyssa Alano, a University of the Philippines Diliman student councilor; Maureen Keil Santuyo, 24, of the National Network of Agrarian Reform Advocates-Youth; Errol Wendel Chen, 24, of the Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura; Jemina Gumadlas, 15; Lyle Prijoles, 40, of the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines from San Francisco; Kai Sorem, 26, from Washington state; and Dexter Patajo, 17.

Ledesma was a writer and editor with the local alternative media outfit Paghimutad-Negros and the Negros Island regional coordinator of Altermidya. Alano was conducting community work and immersion with farming communities. Anakbayan USA said Sorem was a musician and activist who helped launch Anakbayan South Seattle and had returned to the Philippines to serve oppressed and exploited communities.

Journalists, students, farmer advocates and community workers are branded "terrorists" or "communist sympathizers" and then treated as military targets.

The AFP's story shifted. According to the CPP statement, the military first claimed seven firearms were recovered, then raised the number to 20, then 24, to make it appear that all those killed were armed combatants. The CPP also said the AFP forcibly evacuated local residents, cordoned them off, and blocked reporters and independent investigators from speaking with them.

The Philippine Commission on Human Rights opened an investigation and said that "in case of doubt, persons shall be presumed civilians." ICHRP called for an impartial inves-

tigation into the killings and forced evacuation.

BAYAN USA later reported that an autopsy led by forensic pathologist Dr. Raquel Fortun found evidence contradicting the AFP's "armed encounter" story, including mishandled bodies, evidence problems and gunshot wounds from the back.

This is what U.S. "security" means in the Philippines: repression at home and missiles aimed abroad.

Washington arms and trains the Philippine military. The same force kills farmers, students, journalists, workers and organizers at home while the Pentagon sets up the Philippines as a base for U.S. war plans against China.

Balikatan rehearses war

The U.S. military is turning the Philippines into a forward missile base for war on China. Under the cover of "defense" and "security cooperation," Washington is again using a formerly colonized country as a launchpad for imperialist war, with Taiwan as the immediate pretext.

Balikatan 2026 is the largest U.S.-Philippines war exercise to date. More than 17,000 troops from the Philippines, the United States, Australia, Japan, Canada, France and New Zealand took part, with 17 more countries observing. The exercise covered command and control, maritime security, coastal defense, combined fires, ship-to-shore supply offloads and movement of equipment across Luzon.

No government has released the cost of this year's Balikatan war games, but the drills likely cost hundreds of millions of dollars. The Costs of War Project estimates that the U.S. spends about \$260 billion a year on its military buildup across the Indo-Pacific — more than \$3.4 trillion since 2012 — to preserve U.S. domination of the region.

Every missile fired is a payout to the weapons monopolies. Every new launch site, port facility and fuel corridor is built at the people's expense for a war plan written by the Pentagon. The Filipino people are handed the danger; U.S. arms makers, contractors and banks get the profits.

On May 5, U.S. forces in the Philippines fired a Tomahawk cruise missile from Tacloban City Airport in Leyte, striking a target roughly 370 miles away. Two days earlier, U.S. and Philippine forces displayed land-based anti-ship missiles in Batanes, about 100 miles south of Taiwan, on the Luzon Strait — a key sea lane in any U.S. war plan around Taiwan.

These are not ordinary drills. Washington is placing missiles, ports, runways, fuel routes and command posts across the Philippines. The old U.S. bases were formally closed after mass struggle in 1991. Now the Pentagon is back through "rotational access," contractors,

port access, joint exercises and EDCA — the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, which opens Philippine military sites to U.S. forces.

The Marcos Jr. government is not defending Philippine sovereignty. It is handing that sovereignty to the Pentagon. The same buildup aimed at China also strengthens the U.S.-backed military machine used against workers, farmers, Indigenous communities and activists inside the Philippines.

Taiwan is the excuse for the buildup. Batanes and northern Luzon face Taiwan, and the Luzon Strait and Bashi Channel would be central routes in any U.S. war plan.

The issue is not that China is crossing the Pacific to surround the United States. It is that the United States is crossing the Pacific to surround China. Washington calls this "deterrence." The Filipino people are told it is "defense." Their islands are being turned into firing positions.

EDCA gives the legal cover. Washington says these are not U.S. bases. But U.S. troops can rotate in, pre-position weapons, use airports, move fuel and direct operations. It is the old colonial base system under a new name.

Japan returns with missiles

Japanese combat troops joined Balikatan for the first time. They fired two Type-88 surface-to-ship missiles from Ilocos Norte, on the northwestern tip of Luzon, the largest island in the Philippines. The missiles sank a retired Philippine Navy corvette roughly 45 miles offshore, in waters between the Philippines and Taiwan.

Japan colonized Taiwan for 50 years, invaded and occupied large parts of China, carried out the Nanjing Massacre, and occupied the Philippines during World War II. Now Washington is bringing Japanese militarism back into the region under the banner of "security cooperation."

China's Foreign Ministry denounced the missile firing, saying Japan had "sent military forces overseas and fired offensive missiles" instead of reckoning with its history as an aggressor.

Japanese militarism is being revived as a junior partner in the U.S. war drive against China. Washington is rebuilding a military arc through Japan, Okinawa, Taiwan, the Philippines, Guam and Australia — with the Philippines as a launchpad.

China now challenges U.S. dominance in the technologies behind chips, artificial intelligence, computer systems, data centers and advanced weapons. That is what Washington is trying to block.

In April, Washington and Manila announced a 4,000-acre "Economic Security Zone" in New Clark City, inside the Luzon Economic Corridor. Reuters reported that the project is part

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war on China; army kills 19

of a U.S.-led plan to lock down the minerals, factories, computer systems and data centers behind chips, artificial intelligence and advanced weapons.

But even as Washington pushes the Philippines into its war bloc, Manila is turning to China for help. The U.S. war on Iran in West Asia has disrupted fuel and fertilizer supplies across Asia. Manila asked Beijing not to restrict fertilizer exports. Chinese diesel exports to the Philippines surged, and fertilizer shipments rose too.

That is the contradiction Washington cannot erase. The U.S. wants the Philippines as a base, Taiwan as a trigger and China as the target. The Filipino people are being put in the line of fire. #



Among those murdered in the massacre are community journalist R.J. Nichole Ledesma, 30; Maureen Keil Santuyo, 24, of the National Network of Agrarian Reform Advocates-Youth; Errol Wendel Chen, 24, of the Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura and Alyssa Alano, a University of the Philippines Diliman student councilor.

Trump goes to Beijing as Washington faces a changed world

By Gary Wilson

President Donald Trump arrived in Beijing on May 13 ahead of two days of talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping – the first visit by a sitting U.S. president to China since Trump’s last trip in 2017.

He brought with him a delegation from the biggest U.S. banks, tech firms, manufacturers and financial monopolies: Nvidia’s Jensen Huang, Tesla’s Elon Musk, Apple’s Tim Cook, BlackRock’s Larry Fink, Blackstone’s Stephen Schwarzman, Goldman Sachs CEO David Solomon, Boeing CEO Kelly Ortberg, Citigroup CEO Jane Fraser, Mastercard CEO Michael Miebach, Micron CEO Sanjay Mehrotra, Qualcomm CEO Cristiano Amon, Visa CEO Ryan McInerney, Meta executive Dina Powell McCormick, and others.

Trade, technology controls, Taiwan and the U.S. war on Iran are the immediate issues around the Beijing meeting. Artificial intelligence may also be discussed. But understanding what is really at stake requires stepping back from the daily headlines.

The U.S. corporate media covers the Trump-Xi summit as a clash between rival powers. That is the language of “geopolitics” – a way of describing world events that hides classes, hides imperialism and hides the struggle over who controls production, technology and the wealth created by workers.

China is not a mirror image of the United States. By nominal GDP – measured at market exchange rates – China’s economy is rough-

ly two-thirds the size of the United States’. In purchasing power terms, which adjusts for price levels and better reflects real productive output, China’s economy is larger. Still, China is not a rich imperialist country like the United States. Its enormous economy is spread across more than 1.4 billion people, including a vast rural population. Hundreds of millions have been lifted out of extreme poverty, but China still carries the burdens of a formerly oppressed country that industrialized late and unevenly. But something historically unprecedented has happened in China over the past four decades.

For the entire history of capitalist development, industrial production – and the industrial working class it created – was concentrated in a handful of countries. Britain first, then Germany, France, the United States and Japan – these were, and remain, the imperialist centers. Their dominance rested in no small part on the fact that they controlled the world’s factories, technology and productive capacity. The rest of the world supplied raw materials, cheap labor and markets for exports.

China’s industrial rise has upset the old imperialist division of labor. It now accounts for roughly 30% of world manufacturing output. Its manufacturing production exceeds that of the next nine largest manufacturing countries combined. It leads the world in robotics. China accounted for 54% of all new industrial robot installations in 2024 and now has the world’s largest operational stock of industrial robots, exceeding 2 million. China’s new robot installations rose 7% in 2024. In the United States,

robot installations are shrinking, down 9% a year. Its automaker BYD outsold Tesla globally in battery-electric vehicles in 2025 by more than 600,000. Its open-source AI models have pulled close to U.S. flagship systems at a fraction of the cost.

That is what Washington cannot accept. The issue is not “geopolitical rivalry” in the abstract. It is that U.S. imperialism no longer has an uncontested monopoly over the factories, technology, supply chains and industrial labor that shape the world economy. The industrial proletariat – historically the driving force of labor movements, of revolutionary politics, of the organized power of working people – is now concentrated in China. The center of gravity of the world working class has shifted. That is what underlies every major issue surrounding the summit – trade, chips, Taiwan, oil, Iran and artificial intelligence – whether the participants acknowledge it or not.

Iran, trade, Taiwan and AI

The most immediate issue in public reporting is Iran. The U.S. and Israeli assault on Iran began February 28, 2026. The subsequent closure of the Strait of Hormuz – through which roughly 20% of global oil trade passes – has sent Brent crude oil surging more than 65%, to above \$113 per barrel. Around 20,000 seafarers remain stranded on roughly 2,000 vessels in and around the waterway.

China is the largest buyer of Iranian oil. It has also built up enormous strategic oil inventories – nearly 1.4 billion barrels by December

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Bolivia strike grows as government hits

By Gary Wilson

On May 19, Bolivia's government charged the head of the country's main labor federation with terrorism. The charge is aimed not only at one leader. It is aimed at workers, Indigenous Peoples and poor communities – including miners, teachers, transport workers and health workers – who have entered an indefinite general strike against President Rodrigo Paz.

Attorney General Roger Mariaca confirmed that Mario Argollo, executive secretary of the Bolivian Workers Central (COB), is being prosecuted for alleged public incitement to commit crimes and terrorism. A separate arrest order was issued against Justino Apaza Callisaya, leader of the Federation of Neighborhood Councils of La Paz (FEJUVE).

"They will not break us in the struggle we have begun," Argollo said, accusing the government of trying to silence the movement's

leadership with legal actions and criminal complaints.

That is what the terrorism charge means. It turns a labor struggle into a criminal conspiracy. When workers block highways to defend wages, land and fuel, the government calls it terrorism. When the government sends soldiers, police, armored vehicles and tear gas against them, it calls that "restoring order."

TeleSUR reported that at least four protesters have been killed since May 16. AP reported that prosecutors announced 90 arrests on May 18; by May 19, TeleSUR reported that the number had risen to more than 127. The strike has not collapsed. At least 67 highways remain blockaded. The government-owned oil company YPFB has suspended gas supply to municipalities because fuel tankers cannot move.

Paz was elected president in October 2025 after the Movement Toward Socialism – Movimiento al Socialismo, or MAS – split and Mo-

rales was kept off the ballot. MAS, rooted in Bolivia's Indigenous, labor and coca-grower movements, brought Evo Morales to power in 2005 and governed for nearly two decades. Paz took office after years of U.S. sanctions, aid cuts and drug-war pressure battered Bolivia's economy, fuel supply and ability to defend its resources. Washington used the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, or DEA, as a weapon against Morales and Bolivia's coca-growing regions. In 2019, Morales was forced from office after the military demanded his resignation, and Trump praised the coup.

Washington destabilized Bolivia and now wants the spoils. Paz quickly aligned with the Trump administration. The U.S. State Department backed him as his government moved to hand Bolivia's land and natural wealth over for exploitation by foreign capital.

Bolivia is one of South America's richest

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Trump goes to Beijing as Washington faces changed world

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2025, according to U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates, including about 360 million barrels in government-held reserves and about 1 billion barrels in commercial stocks that function as a second layer of emergency reserves. China has also positioned itself as a potential intermediary between Washington and Tehran. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Beijing on May 6, ahead of the summit, updating Beijing on negotiations with the United States.

Washington wants Beijing's help. U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said on May 4 that China should "join us in supporting this international operation" and "step up with some diplomacy and get the Iranians to open the strait." The United States launched the war to force Iran to submit. Instead, Iran did not concede, the Strait of Hormuz was effectively closed, and Washington was left trying to manage an energy crisis it could not control. Even Robert Kagan, one of the architects of the Iraq War and a lifelong defender of U.S. military domination, has described the outcome as a U.S. defeat. Trump now goes to Beijing as the head of an imperialist power seeking help with the consequences of its own war.

On trade, the two sides are expected to extend a truce reached at their October 2025 meeting in South Korea. Trump had at one point imposed tariffs of 145% on Chinese goods. China threatened to restrict exports of rare earth minerals and magnets – materials

essential to semiconductors, AI hardware and advanced manufacturing. China does not control all rare earth mining, but it dominates the decisive stages of the supply chain, controlling more than 90% of processed rare earths and rare-earth magnet production. The tariffs came down. The rare earths kept flowing. That truce is now up for extension.

Taiwan is also among the issues surrounding the summit. Beijing is pressing Trump to delay, reduce or halt U.S. arms sales to the island, including an \$11 billion package approved in December and a possible second package reportedly worth \$14 billion. Taiwan is part of China – a fact recognized in words by the United States and the United Nations, even as Washington has spent decades militarily and politically sustaining separation. Beijing has described the question as "the core of China's core interests." Xi is also likely to push for a shift in U.S. language – from "does not support" Taiwanese independence to "opposes" it – a change that sounds minor but carries significant diplomatic weight.

Artificial intelligence and semiconductor export controls are also expected to be raised.

Also on the international agenda

But the summit sits inside a wider world crisis – one where China has the weight to be heard and, as a socialist country, every reason to speak from the standpoint of sovereignty, peace and opposition to imperialist coercion.

Cuba has endured a U.S. blockade for more than 65 years. The country is in a severe ener-

gy crisis. Any discussion of trade, energy and sovereignty that excludes the blockade of Cuba leaves out one of the longest-running examples of U.S. economic war.

Then there is Venezuela. On Jan. 3, 2026, U.S. forces kidnapped Venezuela's elected president, Nicolás Maduro, and his partner Cilia Flores. Before the operation, China was importing roughly 82% of Venezuela's total oil exports and held significant investment stakes in Venezuelan oil production. After the kidnapping, Trump said U.S. oil companies would go into Venezuela's oil industry, while U.S. officials said Washington would control Venezuelan oil sales indefinitely. China lost a major source of discounted crude and its oil investments in the country.

Gaza is another. The Israeli assault – carried out with U.S. weapons, U.S. diplomatic cover and U.S. military support – continues. Israel functions as a forward base for U.S. power projection in West Asia. A socialist country should speak plainly for a free Palestine and against the U.S.-backed settler state that enforces imperialist domination in the region.

This is what sits behind the Beijing meeting. Washington wants China's help cleaning up crises U.S. imperialism created, especially the war on Iran and the oil shock spreading from Hormuz. At the same time, it wants to block China's industrial rise and keep control over technology, oil routes and world markets. But the old setup has already been broken. The center of world production has shifted. So has the weight of the world working class. #

labor leader with terrorism charge

countries in strategic resources: lithium, tin, silver, zinc, lead, copper, antimony, tungsten, natural gas, forests and water. The oligarchy wants to turn these resources – and the Indigenous territories that stand in the way of the grab – over to banks, agribusiness, mining companies and imperialist capital. Law 1720 is part of that larger plan.

The current wave of struggle began with Law 1720, the land measure passed in April. Indigenous communities saw it as an opening for land theft. The movement spread because years of U.S. economic warfare and the Paz government's austerity program had already hit workers and poor communities through fuel shortages, rising prices, low wages and privatization threats.

In December 2025, Paz issued Decree 5503, eliminating decades-old fuel subsidies overnight and sharply raising fuel prices. Bolivia once earned dollars by exporting natural gas. But U.S. sanctions, trade punishment, drug-war pressure and support for the 2019 coup weakened the country's ability to defend its resources, invest in production and control its fuel supply. Falling gas production and the dollar squeeze left Bolivia dependent on imported diesel and gasoline. Then the U.S. war against Iran and the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz made every fuel shipment more expensive, deepening the squeeze Paz was already shifting onto workers and Indigenous communities.

Paz and Bolivia's rich shifted the crisis onto workers and Indigenous communities. His first legislative act eliminated taxation on large fortunes. Fuel prices doubled, wages lagged, and the wealthy got relief.

That is the class issue behind the strike: who will pay for Bolivia's fuel shortages, rising prices, debt and land crisis – workers, Indigenous Peoples and poor communities, or the rich, the banks, the landlords and the importers.

Facing a massive May Day assembly in El Alto, the COB moved to declare an indefinite general strike on May 2. The first demand was Paz's resignation. The movement also demanded repeal of Law 1720, higher wages and pensions, an end to privatization plans and lower taxes for small businesses. More than 70 unions have joined the mobilization.

Land theft dressed up as credit

Law 1720 exposed the land question behind the crisis. The issue was not simply high-cost, extortionate credit for "small farmers." The law went much further. In Bolivia, small agricultural property is a protected legal category rooted in the struggles that broke up the old landlord system. It is protected family land: it cannot be seized, divided up or taxed as ordinary agrarian property.



Bolivian police seize a protester.

Law 1720 allowed titled small agricultural properties to be reclassified as medium-sized holdings through a fast administrative process at INRA, Bolivia's agrarian reform agency. Once reclassified, the land could be used as collateral for bank loans. That meant land protected from seizure could be mortgaged and lost for debt.

For Indigenous and rural communities, the danger went beyond individual plots. Many small titled parcels exist inside larger community territories. Pulling those parcels into the land market without community consent threatened to fracture collective territory from within. Indigenous land is not simply a commodity. It is held and defended as the basis of community life, production, culture and self-government.

The government called Law 1720 rural credit. Indigenous communities saw it as land theft dressed up as credit.

The Amazon march

The march began April 8 in Cobija, Pando, in Bolivia's northern Amazon lowlands, and was joined by people from Beni and other regions along the route. Bolivian reports put the route at roughly 1,000 kilometers – more than 600 miles – over nearly a month, from the tropics into the near-freezing Andes, before the marchers reached La Paz on May 4.

"Our life is collective, not individual," rural union leader Oscar Cardozo said in La Paz. "The land must be respected; it's not for sale."

That sentence cuts through the official language. The issue is collective life against private profit. It is Indigenous territorial rights against banks, landlords and corporations.

On May 13, Rodrigo Paz formally repealed Law 1720. But the Chamber of Deputies said it would draft a new law with the same intent. Protesters rejected the repeal as a maneuver and kept their demand for Paz's resignation.

The government's next answer was repression. On May 17, about 3,500 soldiers and police carried out a pre-dawn sweep of roadblocks around El Alto and along the La Paz–Oruro highway. When negotiation failed to stop the strike, the Paz government turned to force. It sent police and soldiers against workers and Indigenous communities defending the blockades.

The Paz government has tried to blame former President Evo Morales for the uprising. Morales rejected that charge, saying there are no "sinister plans," only "a country tired of being lied to" while the government protects business owners, bankers and agribusiness.

The previous week, authorities issued a warrant against Morales on contempt charges in a politically driven case that Morales and his supporters denounce as part of the effort to sideline him.

The meaning is clear. The Paz government is trying to smear labor and Indigenous resistance as terrorism. Roadblocks, strikes and union organization are tools of mass struggle, not terrorist acts. Prosecutors are trying to rename them as crimes: a roadblock becomes an "attack on transportation security," a strike becomes an "attack on public services," and a labor federation becomes a "terrorist network." It is a political fraud meant to break the strike.

Washington and Trump-aligned governments in the region quickly closed ranks behind Paz. Eight Latin American governments – Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay and Peru – issued a joint statement May 15 backing him and condemning the mobilizations. Most are tied to Trump's Shield of the Americas network, a U.S.-led bloc of right-wing governments built to police Latin America for imperialism.

Blackwater founder Erik Prince called publicly for U.S. military intervention. Bolivian lawmaker Rolando Pacheco of the Popular Alliance has alleged that Argentina's far-right President Javier Milei sent two planeloads of tear gas and crowd-control equipment to Paz's forces.

An IMF mission was in La Paz as of May 19, negotiating terms for Bolivia's first loan from the Fund in five years. That is the other side of the terrorism charges. While labor leaders are threatened with prison, the IMF is negotiating the next round of austerity.

Paz had already weakened environmental and water oversight by dissolving the Ministry of Environment and Water as one of his first acts in office. Then, after the government was forced to repeal Law 1720 – the measure that would let protected small agricultural property be reclassified, mortgaged and lost for debt – the Chamber of Deputies said it would draft a new land law "with the same spirit." The message was clear: the government had not abandoned the land grab. It had only retreated and repackaged it.

The target is not only land in the narrow sense. It is Bolivia's whole material base: land, forests, water, lithium, gas and minerals. These lands and resources were first stolen from Indigenous Peoples through conquest

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Sam Marcy archive expanded: A school for revolutionary Marxism

By Gary Wilson

The Marxists Internet Archive has added 243 articles by Sam Marcy, expanding one of the most important collections of Marxist writing produced in the United States in the second half of the 20th century. The newly added articles, transcribed by Melinda Butterfield, span 1959 to 1996. The Sam Marcy Internet Archive now brings together these articles alongside books, pamphlets and biographical material.

For readers who know Marcy mainly through the major pamphlets – High Tech, Low Pay, Generals Over the White House, The Klan & the Government, Perestroika: A Marxist Critique, A Marxist Defense of the Los Angeles Rebellion, and others – the expanded archive shows something more: Marcy’s method in motion. It shows how he applied Marxist analysis week after week to wars, strikes, rebellions, elections, economic crises, socialist countries, national liberation struggles, and the changing composition of the working class.

The national question at the center

Central to Marcy’s work was the fight against racism and national oppression. He did

Bolivia strike

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and landlord rule, then partly won back and defended through decades of Indigenous, worker and popular struggle. The same forces demanding “credit,” “investment” and “legal certainty” want to turn those gains back into property claims for banks, agribusiness, mining companies and imperialist capital.

One mining leader put the movement’s position plainly: “The sole demand of the mobilized people is the removal of the president due to his inability to solve this country’s structural problems. He is leading us adrift, giving away our natural resources, mortgaging the country for our children and grandchildren.”

That is why the Paz government reaches for terrorism charges. The terrorism charge is a weapon to break the strike. It puts prosecutors, police, soldiers and prisons at the service of the rich, the banks, the landlords and Washington. The aim is to clear the roads, break the blockades, bust the unions and push through fuel hikes, privatization and land theft. Bolivia’s workers and Indigenous Peoples are refusing to pay for a crisis made by capitalism and imperialism. #

not treat this as a separate question or a moral add-on to socialist politics. He treated it as a fundamental axis of the class struggle in the United States.

In “The Negro upsurge,” written in June 1959 as a letter to a comrade in the Deep South, Marcy argued that the Black liberation struggle was not simply a civil rights reform movement but a decisive revolutionary force. He looked back to Reconstruction and the Garvey movement as two moments when Black masses entered history on a vast scale – and when socialist and communist forces failed by not recognizing their revolutionary potential or making that struggle central to the fight for socialism.

That analysis runs through the archive like a spine. In July 1967, writing on the Newark Rebellion, Marcy hailed it as a “glorious answer to the master class.” In January 1970, he wrote on the government assassination of Black Panther leaders, linking the state’s violence to its long history of political murder. In November 1970, as the Black Panther Party-led Revolutionary People’s Constitutional Convention moved from the Philadelphia Plenary toward its planned Washington gathering, Marcy defended the Panthers against attacks from other left organizations that echoed the ruling-class campaign to isolate and vilify them. In September 1970, he wrote on U.S. responsibility for the genocidal assault on the Palestinian people.

The lesson running through these writings is clear: any Marxist analysis of the United States that does not put racism, national oppression and the Black struggle at the center is not a Marxist analysis of the United States.

Anti-war method

Marcy did not treat war as a mistake, a bad policy or a product of individual politicians. In “Anti-war strategy and the state as organized violence,” written in December 1967, he returned to Marx, Engels and Lenin to explain the capitalist state as an instrument of class domination – organized violence serving monopoly capital. The anti-war struggle, he argued, had to expose the state itself: the Pentagon, police, courts and prisons.

Generals Over the White House (1980) is the most sustained development of this analysis in the archive. Marcy’s view of militarism, he wrote, differed fundamentally from liberal anti-militarism, which treats the Pentagon as an aberration or a pressure group distorting otherwise reasonable state policy. For Marcy, the structure of capitalist society – the relationship between the basic classes – determines the politics of the capitalist state regardless of

which governing group is in power. That policy is inevitably imperialist, and inevitably serves a military-industrial complex propelled in the direction of war. The generals are not over the White House despite the Constitution. They are there because of the class character of the state.

Marcy’s writing runs through five decades of U.S. war-making and world struggle. The early articles analyze the Cuban Revolution, China, the Soviet Union, the India-China border dispute and the emerging conflicts in the world communist movement as part of a new period in the global class struggle.

The 1960 articles take up the Congo Revolution and the UN’s role as an instrument of imperialist intervention. The 1968 articles on Czechoslovakia and the French general strike show Marcy grappling simultaneously with the crisis of the socialist states, the explosive energy of the Western working class and U.S. strategy toward both. On Czechoslovakia, what stood out was his insistence on judging events by their class character: he rejected the imperialist “democracy versus Moscow” frame and argued that the Dubček reforms were opening the door to capitalist restoration by weakening socialist property relations through market reforms and ties to Western capital. At the same time, he did not present the Soviet leadership as revolutionary; he distinguished between revisionism and full capitalist restoration, and argued that the long-term defense of socialist foundations could only come through the working class itself. In December 1969, he wrote on the historical and political significance of the My Lai massacre – not only as an atrocity story but as a window into the nature of imperialist war.

His 1991 writing on the Gulf War shows the analysis at full power: the political origins of the war, Congress’s abdication to the executive, the role of mass anti-war movement, and the deeper crisis of imperialist overextension. “War,” he quoted Clausewitz, “is simply the continuation of politics by other means.” The politics, Marcy insisted, was monopoly capitalism’s drive for profit and domination on a world scale.

Economic analysis

The same class framework anchors Marcy’s economic writing. In 1962, after a stock market collapse, he warned against treating financial shocks as market psychology. In 1979, he argued again that financial and credit crises are symptoms of the deeper contradiction between socialized production and capitalist appropriation. In “The dollar decline and the

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Stop the sale of stolen Palestinian land!

By Stephen Millies

May 11 – Hundreds of people took to the streets of Brooklyn, New York, tonight to protest the illegal sale of Palestinian land. The auction was held at the Young Israel of Midwood synagogue in the Midwood neighborhood.

The action was called by PAL-Awda, which has been conducting protests against these racist auctions. Members of the Palestinian Youth Movement; Mamas 4 a Free Palestine; the Neturei Karta Orthodox Jewish Community; Students for Justice in Palestine; Jews Against White Supremacy; and Health Care Workers for Palestine also participated.

These sales of occupied Palestinian land, on the West Bank and elsewhere, violate international law and have been condemned by the United Nations.

Police blocked off Ocean Avenue with barricades at both L and M avenues. Cops used these metal barriers to attack protesters and arrested several people.

They should have stopped the sale instead, which was only open to Jewish settlers. That's illegal under federal, state and local laws banning housing discrimination.

Ironically, the phrase used in restrictive covenants that forged segregated neighborhoods in the United States was that homes could only be sold to "Caucasian gentiles." The Black freedom struggle that threw these Jim



Hundreds in New York City's Midwood neighborhood marched against the illegal sale of Palestinian land.

SLL photo: Stephen Millies

Demonstrators started marching through Midwood, going north on 19th Street. Racists came out to harass protesters and hurled sexist epithets towards women marchers.

Some of them also hurled eggs. It reminded this reporter of how young and old racists

attacked Ruby Bridges and other Black children attending formerly segregated schools. Zionism is racism. Protesters defended themselves and kept marching.

These bigots were particularly hostile to members of Neturei Karta. To these bigots, Hasidic rabbis saying no to racism was treason. It helps expose the lie that all Jewish people support the racist state of Israel.

Marching through the neighborhood

Hundreds of protesters faced off against police and local racists at the barricades on M Avenue. "Israel is killing children," and other banners and signs were carried.

Over 20,000 Palestinian children have been murdered in Gaza. Among them was five-year-old Hind Rajab, who was shot hundreds of times and was the subject of the award-winning docudrama "The Voice of Hind Rajab."

More children are being killed in Lebanon and the West Bank. Over 160 children were killed when their school was bombed in Minab, Iran.

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani has also condemned these apartheid auctions. So why don't you ban them, Mr. Mayor?

Some of the activists later went to a police precinct to support activists who had been arrested. The struggle against these racist land sales will continue. #

Sam Marcy archive

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rise of the military," he linked dollar instability to the monstrous growth of the U.S. military-industrial complex – corporate profit, state spending, inflation and war fused into one system.

High Tech, Low Pay, published in 1986, remains one of the archive's most important works for today. Marcy saw that new technology under capitalism reorganized exploitation rather than relieving it. The scientific-technological revolution shifted the composition of the working class – expanding lower-paid service and clerical labor, drawing in more Black, Latine, Asian, Native, women and undocumented workers, and undermining older privileged layers. This was not a disappearance of the working class but its transformation. Marcy called for a classwide strategy: unions going beyond routine contract struggle to prepare new forms of combat, up to and including seizure and workers' control of plants and industry.

His writings on the socialist countries are another strength of the collection. He defend-

ed the USSR, Cuba, China, the DPRK and other workers' states against imperialism without turning that defense into political passivity. In his 1991 writing on the collapse of the Soviet Union, he treated capitalist restoration as a world-historic defeat for the working class while tracing the internal class forces, national contradictions and imperialist pressures behind the crisis.

This is one of the archive's greatest strengths: it shows Marcy thinking through defeats without surrendering to them. In 1993, he asked directly how revolutionaries should understand China after the Soviet collapse, warning against letting the State Department set the terms of analysis for the movement.

Marcy did not write as an academic observer of events. His Marxism was directed toward organization, intervention and preparation. The point was not simply to explain each crisis, but to identify the forces moving within it and the tasks facing revolutionaries. That is why so many of the articles still read as guides to action rather than historical commentary.

A working school

The Sam Marcy Internet Archive is more than a collection of historic articles. It is a working school in Marxist method – historical materialism applied to living events. The archive shows Marcy using the method Marx displayed in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte: looking past personalities and surface events to uncover the class forces, state forms and social contradictions driving history forward. It shows dialectical materialism not as a phrase, but as a method of scientific analysis: tracing contradictions, identifying class interests, and placing each struggle inside the larger movement of capitalist crisis and working-class resistance. War, racism, police repression, financial crisis, high technology, layoffs, sanctions and attacks on socialist countries are not separate issues. They are different fronts in the same global class struggle.

The archive is freely accessible at marxists.org.

Editor's note: The Sam Marcy Internet Archive is maintained by the author.

Climate change breeds disease – public health cuts help it spread

By Gary Wilson

Before anyone boarded the MV Hondius, the conditions for an outbreak were already forming across the landscapes where climate disruption, rodents and human activity increasingly collide.

Argentina's health ministry has recorded 101 hantavirus infections since June 2025 – roughly twice as many as the same period the year before. Officials have not yet identified the cause of the surge. Climate science offers a strong candidate.

Argentina and neighboring countries endured years of severe drought from 2021 to 2024, including Argentina's worst dry spell in more than 60 years in 2023, followed by extreme rainfall in 2024. Those back-to-back extremes are precisely the conditions that push rodents into closer contact with humans and cause their populations to boom.

Kirk Douglas, a scientist at the University of the West Indies who studies hantavirus and climate change, explains the chain. Drought drives rats and mice toward people in search of food. Then heavy rain brings new vegetation and seeds, allowing rodent populations to boom. Flooding can drive them out of their habitats and toward homes, workplaces and settlements.

That danger can last. A 2024 study in JAMA Network Open found that severe flooding in China's Yangtze River basin left hantavirus risk elevated for up to three years.

"Hantavirus is sensitive to the changes climate change will bring," Douglas has said. "It's all dependent on what the prevailing climate impact is."

The climate connection runs deeper than rainfall. Heat, drought and crop failure are making farming harder across Latin America and the Global South. That pushes more people into crowded cities and informal settlements, where rats and mice thrive.

Climate change also strips ecosystems of biodiversity. When other species disappear, hardy survivors like rats and mice often gain ground. So do the diseases they carry. A 2022 study in Nature Climate Change found that climate hazards have already worsened more than half of known infectious diseases in some way.

Investigators are examining whether the first patient was exposed to infected rodents before boarding the ship, possibly during birdwatching or other land activity in the Southern Cone. The exact source has not been confirmed. The first known patient became ill



The MV Hondius at the Port of Granadilla in the Canary Islands on May 10, during the international hantavirus outbreak linked to the ship. The outbreak exposed how climate change, public-health cuts and "health freedom" politics put workers and the public at risk.

on April 6 and died on April 11. The ship kept sailing.

That decision protected the normal operation of the travel industry while pushing the danger outward – onto crews, port workers, airport workers, health care workers and the public.

A second passenger – the first man's wife – disembarked at Saint Helena on April 24, flew to Johannesburg the next day, and died there on April 26. She was confirmed on May 4 to have had the Andes strain of hantavirus.

The World Health Organization (WHO) was not notified of the cluster until May 2 – three weeks after the first death.

As of May 14, health authorities had reported 11 cases linked to the ship, with three deaths: a Dutch couple and a German woman. At least 41 people in the United States are under monitoring. Sixteen of them were not even passengers – they were on a Johannesburg flight with the Dutch woman who later died and have since returned to the U.S. on commercial flights. Their whereabouts have not been made public.

There is no vaccine for hantavirus. There is no specific treatment. Survival depends on reaching intensive care in time.

'Health freedom' and a 40% fatality rate

The Andes strain is the only known hantavirus that spreads between people. Yet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued no quarantine order for exposed passengers or contacts. Agency incident manager David Fitter told reporters on May 14 that adherence to isolation "would be hard to guarantee" and confirmed that no state or

federal quarantine orders had been drawn. The CDC is "encouraging" people to stay home for a 42-day monitoring period. It is testing only those who develop symptoms.

This is not administrative caution. It is class policy – the doctrine that individuals bear the risk so business, travel, trade and employers can keep moving. During a public health emergency, that means neighbors, co-workers, airport workers, health care workers and whole communities are exposed while the state avoids imposing controls that interfere with profit and commerce.

The framework has a name in current policy circles: "health freedom." This is the same "medical freedom" politics now being used to weaken vaccine requirements and public-health mandates. Its practical effect is to transfer risk from those who can afford to ignore it onto those who cannot. The 18 passengers brought back on U.S. government medical aircraft to the National Quarantine Unit in Omaha – the only federally funded quarantine facility in the country – are under monitored care. The passengers who disembarked at Saint Helena in late April, flew commercial routes across multiple countries and attended international conferences have been asked politely to consider staying in.

The system that wasn't there

The same ruling class that depends on fossil fuel corporations also requires the destruction of institutions those corporations find inconvenient. Climate science is one. Pandemic preparedness is another. They are connected.

Continued on page 21

Brooklyn remembers the Nakba

By Stephen Millies

Palestine will win!

May 16 – A thousand people marched through the streets of the Bay Ridge neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, to mark 78 years since the Palestinian Nakba, the Arabic word for catastrophe. The Nakba is marked on May 15, 1948, the day the British Mandate ended and the Zionist state was proclaimed. The mass expulsion of Palestinians had begun months earlier.

Nearly a million people were driven out of their homes as over 500 Palestinian villages were destroyed by terrorist gangs. At Deir Yassin, 140 Palestinian women, men and children were slaughtered. Bodies were thrown down a well by killers who included the Irgun gang, which was led by Menachem Begin, a future prime minister of the Zionist state.

Saturday's protest began with a rally on Brooklyn's Fifth Avenue, the "main street" of Bay Ridge that's lined with Arab restaurants and shops. For decades, Bay Ridge has been home to a large Palestinian community.

The rally and march were organized by PAL-Awda NY/NJ and the Palestinian Youth Movement.

"From the river to sea, Palestine will be free!" was chanted. Speakers from PAL-Awda, PYM, Mamas 4 a Free Palestine, the Free Tarek Campaign, CUNY Students for Justice in Palestine, Palestine Solidarity Working Group and the Party for Socialism and Liberation



Protesters marched through Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, on Nakba Day, carrying Palestinian flags and demanding an end to the U.S.-backed Zionist genocide in Gaza.

SL photo: Stephen Millies

denounced the genocide in Gaza and Lebanon. They pointed out that behind the Zionist apartheid regime was U.S. imperialism.

Many Orthodox Jews belonging to the Neturei Karta community came, holding Palestinian flags and carrying banners denouncing "Israel." Always welcomed, their representative didn't speak because it was the Jewish sabbath and they couldn't use a loudspeaker.

Despite police harassment, people marched

through the neighborhood led by a truck covered with artwork and slogans supporting Palestinian liberation. A musician played a tuba with slogans saying "Free Palestine" and attacking ICE painted on the horn.

After winding through different streets, the march ended with a short rally at Owl's Head Park. Just as the apartheid regime in South Africa was overthrown, so will the Zionist state fall. #

Climate change breeds disease – public health cuts help it spread

Continued from page 20

In June 2025, the Trump administration defunded the Centers for Research in Emerging Infectious Diseases (CREID), a network of 10 research centers studying zoonotic pathogens. One of those centers, the West African Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases, had secured funding to study the Andes virus in Argentina – the exact strain now circulating across Europe and North America – when the stop-work order arrived. The order stated that the research "has been deemed unsafe for Americans and not a good use of taxpayer funding."

Eleven months later, that virus has killed three people and put a French woman in Paris on an artificial lung.

The CDC's Vessel Sanitation Program had already been hit by the DOGE cuts. In 2025, all of its full-time civilian employees were laid off, including the epidemiologist who led cruise-ship outbreak response. Only a smaller group of U.S. Public Health Service officers

remained. The Hondius was not under U.S. jurisdiction, but the cuts showed the broader wrecking of public-health capacity.

The scientists who built these systems understood exactly what defunding them would mean. "If we can detect and stop a virus where it starts, that directly makes America and American citizens safer," said David Wang of Washington University in St. Louis, whose CREID center was shut down. He was ignored.

The question of why this infrastructure was dismantled has a straightforward answer. Pandemic preparedness requires international cooperation, functioning state institutions, and the subordination of profit and mobility to public health – the same things that serious climate policy requires. The ruling class that has blocked climate action for decades is the same class that defunded CREID, gutted the CDC, and replaced its leadership with opponents of public health measures. The logic is identical: the cost of prevention falls on corporations;

the cost of catastrophe falls on workers.

The drought cycle, the suspected rodent exposure, the birdwatching tour, the ship that kept sailing and the gutted public-health response are not random events. They are links in a chain that runs from fossil fuel corporations' emissions to the ecological conditions that concentrate disease, and from the political power of those same corporations to the institutional wreckage that could not interrupt the outbreak's spread.

"Hantavirus is sensitive to the changes climate change will bring," Douglas said. So is every pathogen that depends on ecological disruption for its opportunity.

The ruling class has been warned. It chose profits, austerity and deregulation anyway. That is why the fight against climate disaster and the fight for public health are not separate struggles. Both are struggles against a system that treats prevention as a cost and catastrophe as somebody else's problem. #

Cuban Days Against Homophobia and Transphobia: A Political Commitment to Diversity

By Francisco Rodríguez Cruz

The following statement published in the Cuban trade union newspaper Trabajadores was written by Francisco Rodríguez Cruz, a gay Cuban journalist, activist, and communist thinker.

LGBTQ+ activists in Cuba, along with other social organizations, advocate today for the island's right to exist and defend itself against external aggression, particularly from the United States and its "hybrid war," placing the struggle for diversity within the broader framework of national sovereignty.

This was stated by Dr. Mariela Castro Espín, director of the National Center for Sexual Education (Cenesex), speaking at a press conference held at its headquarters on Wednesday, on the occasion of the 19th edition of the Cuban Days Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

The deputy to the National Assembly of People's Power also recalled that LGBTQ+ groups identified with the Revolution are considered an integral part of the Cuban social system, assuming both collective rights and duties, in contrast to the global setback affecting vulnerable populations and minorities in countries such as the United States and Argentina.

Castro Espín emphasized that, despite economic limitations and uncertainty, the movement has the support of the country's top leadership, reaffirming that the Cuban State and the Communist Party maintain funding for these activities as an unwavering political and ideological commitment.

"Faced with a global trend of regression, Cuba is positioning itself at the international forefront in the protection of the rights of the LGBTQ+ community, consolidating itself as a positive benchmark," said the director of Cenesex during her speech.

Regarding the main activities, Maiteé Navarro, national coordinator of the Days Against Homophobia and Transphobia, reported that on May 4 a sports meeting was held at the center of 23 and B, in El Vedado, with the participation of directors and the social networks of Cenesex: TransCuba, Network of Lesbian and Bisexual Women, and MSH Network.

The academic program includes the tenth edition of the international colloquium "Trans-Identities, Gender and Culture," which opened on Tuesday with the participation of Dr. Geydis Fundora Nevot, director of FLACSO-Cuba, and which concludes on Thursday, with the presence of national specialists and specialists from other countries.

The Cuban Gala Against Homophobia and Transphobia will take place at the Teatro



Mariela Castro Espín (right) speaks at a news conference announcing the 19th annual Cuban Days against Homophobia and Transphobia on May 13. Photo: Guillermo G. Vaillant

América this Thursday, May 14, at 5:00 pm, with the presentation of the Cenesex awards and under the artistic direction of Efraín Sabás.

Next Sunday, May 17, the date on which the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia is celebrated, the traditional Conga and the Diversity Festival will be held, culminating in the Cuba Pavilion.

These popular celebrations are not only festive, but also represent the taking of public space by a citizenry aware of its rights and duties, it was explained.

As a prominent community activity, a health fair was held in El Vedado, involving various institutions to offer services and direct information to the population, as well as the screening of the documentary "Umbral" at the Chaplin cinema.

Regarding the historical background, Mariela Castro Espín recalled that the process initiated with the Family Code of 1975 generated debates and dissatisfactions that drove decades of scientific research and social practice, with a fundamental role played by the Federation of Cuban Women and Vilma Espín.

The sexologist explained that the "Love is the Law" campaign celebrated the approval of the new Constitution in 2019 and the Family Code in 2022, achieving for the first time that the rights of the LGBTQ+ community were protected under the supreme law, positioning Cuba among the few countries with explicit constitutional protections.

Castro Espín highlighted that in addition to Havana, this year Artemisa is a shared venue for the Conference, as it is one of the provinces where a less favorable vote was recorded in the referendum on the Family Code, making it a priority target for educational work.

As a recent milestone in the work for the rights of LGBTIQ+ people, a collaboration agreement was formalized between Cenesex and the Ministry of Justice, specifically with the Ombudsmen's Offices—a young institution created in 2023—to channel cases of rights violations, and an upcoming meeting was announced with the Ministry of the Interior to raise awareness about the treatment of LGBTQ+ people in criminal proceedings and in light of the new facilities offered by the Civil Registry Law to trans people.

The launch of the podcast "After the Closet," produced by the Network of Lesbian and Bisexual Women, was also announced, and the first workshop "Uniting Voices," to be held on Friday, May 15, was highlighted. This workshop aims to define research priorities from within the LGBTQ+ population itself, including causes of cancer mortality in lesbian women and the life expectancy of trans people, among other issues.

Historically, these events have evolved from visibility gatherings to becoming processes of real political influence that transform the Constitution. This path has been marked by constant dialogue between grassroots activism and state structures.

The importance of these conferences lies in their capacity for self-criticism and constant evolution, ensuring that no one is left behind, according to their organizers. Each year, weaknesses and strengths are analyzed so that the next edition can be a further step towards full social justice.

"The conference will be held 'even if it's under the tunnels,' because the Cuban State's commitment to diversity is unwavering," concluded Mariela Castro Espín, alluding to the threats of military aggression from the United States government against Cuba, and reaffirming that in June the analysis will be carried out to begin planning the twentieth edition next year.

Translated by Melinda Butterfield

Source: Trabajadores

**LOVE
IS THE
LAW**

**CUBA's
Queer Rights Revolution**

Book by Gregory E. Williams

¡Todos y todas somos Cuba!

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el Departamento del Tesoro, el Congreso y todos los Medios corporativos que les sirven de resonancia.

Ante las absurdas acusaciones y amenazas de ese gobierno en contra de nuestra hermana Cuba, queremos recordar la generosidad demostrada en varias ocasiones por Cuba hacia el pueblo estadounidense.

Ese país pequeño en tamaño pero gigante en generosidad y humanismo. Un país pobre, que habiendo sufrido por décadas de un bloqueo criminal, ofreció en el 2005, luego de la devastación del Huracán Katrina en Nueva Orleans, ayuda médica. En aquel entonces, Fidel anunció el envío de un equipo médico completo, miles de médicos, 37 toneladas de medicamentos y equipo médico de diagnóstico. Una brigada médica que bautizó con el nombre de Henry Reeve, en honor de un joven neoyorkino que batalló por la independencia cubana. Pero el entonces presidente George W Bush, interesado más en la hostilidad contra Cuba que en el bienestar de su propio pueblo, rechazó el ofrecimiento.

Statement by Mujeres en Lucha - Women in Struggle | May 19, 2026

Mujeres en Lucha: We Are All Cuba

On this 131st anniversary of José Martí's death, Mujeres en Lucha-Women in Struggle would like to remember that in the United States, a country whose administrations throughout the years have unleashed the most cruel attacks against sister nations, there exists a people and diverse organizations, united in solidarity, who have carried Cuba in their hearts, defending it inside this Monster, as Martí called it.

It was in New York City itself, that financial center of Capitalism, where the Cuban Revolutionary Junta, led by Martí, forged plans to liberate Cuba from the Spanish yoke.

And it is in this spirit of sisterhood, resistance, and combativeness that today we raise our voices against U.S. imperialism, this time represented by the figure of Trump, but which works in favor of a minority class of billionaires who have an entire network operating in concert: the Courts, the CIA, the Treasury Department, Congress, and all the corporate media that amplify their message.

In the face of the absurd accusations and threats from the Trump government against our sister nation of Cuba, we wish to recall the generosity Cuba has shown on numerous occasions toward the U.S. people.

That country, small in size but a giant in generosity and humanism. A poor country, which, having suffered for decades under a criminal blockade, offered medical aid in 2005, after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. At that time, Fidel announced the dispatch of a complete medical team, thousands of doctors, 37 tons of medicine, and diagnostic medical equipment. A medical brigade he named Henry Reeve, in honor of a young New Yorker who fought for Cuban independence. But then-President George W. Bush, more interested in hostility toward Cuba

Y no nos olvidemos de los y las jóvenes estadounidenses que estudiaron en la Escuela Latinoamericana de Medicina (ELAM) de Cuba. Jóvenes que en Estados Unidos, por ser pobres, o negros, o latinos, se les imposibilita ingresar en las escuelas de medicina que tienen un carácter muy elitista. Pero que Cuba les ha ofrecido la oportunidad de una formación médica, con enfoque humanista y comunitario; becados por el gobierno cubano, para que a su regreso, sirvan a las comunidades más desfavorecidas.

Ante las amenazas del gobierno de Trump contra Cuba, decimos:
¡Amor con amor se paga! En los Estados Unidos, hay un pueblo agradecido.

¡Basta ya de bloqueo y amenazas!

¡Todos y todas somos Cuba!



Havana, April 7, 2026 - Women participate in a rally calling for an end to Washington's 66-year blockade of Cuba, intensified by Trump.

than in the well-being of his own people, rejected the offer.

And let us not forget the young U.S. Americans who studied at the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM) in Cuba. Young people in the United States who, because they are poor, Black, or Latino, are unable to enter medical schools, which are highly elitist. But Cuba has offered them the opportunity for medical training with a humanistic and community-oriented approach; they receive scholarships from the Cuban government so that upon their return home, they can serve the most disadvantaged communities.

In the face of the Trump administration's threats against Cuba, we say:

Love is repaid with love! In the United States, there is a grateful people.

Enough of the blockade and threats!

We are all Cuba!

In the book 'Love is the Law' -

- 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'

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



El pueblo Boricua se opone a Ley de robo de tierras

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Si algo ha caracterizado a la administración de la gobernadora Jeniffer González del oficialista Partido Nuevo Progresista, es su entrega ciega, sin ningún tapujo, ni vergüenza, a los poderes neoliberales mafiosos del imperialismo yanqui. Su total subordinación al criminal Trump y sus secuaces. El bienestar del pueblo no le importa en absoluto, al contrario, mientras más sufrimiento causa, más satisfacción parece producirle y proclama con bombos y platillos, su éxito como gobernadora.

Querida audiencia, en estos momentos, vivir en Puerto Rico, testigos de esta asquerosidad de gobierno, es sumamente agobiante. Pero la gobernadora es simplemente la figura visible de los intereses capitalistas tanto locales como extranjeros, de firmas corporativas que ven en nuestro archipiélago, un paraíso donde pueden hacer y deshacer lo que les venga en gana con nuestros terrenos. Construir en reservas naturales o protegidas, limitar el acceso del pueblo a las playas que por ley está prohibido, destruir valores arqueológicos de nuestros ancestros, etc., etc. Y en ese proceso, desplazar comunidades enteras, comunidades pobres a las que se les niega el derecho de una vivienda digna y asequible.

Pero el gobierno actual no es más que la continuación de gobiernos anteriores que han vendido a nuestra patria, aunque más cautelosamente.



San Juan, 28 de marzo, 2026 – Miles participaron en la marcha nacional contra la construcción del proyecto turístico-residencial Esencia. Este proyecto colonial valorado en 2.000 millones de dólares que pretende apoderarse de más de 2.000 acres de terreno, que abarcan tres millas de playas en Punta Melones, Cabo Rojo, para el año 2028.

Pero veamos qué pasó esta semana. Se ha aprobado una Ley, la Ley 82 del 2026, que básicamente prohíbe el acceso a la Justicia por parte del pueblo cuando quiere impugnar un permiso de construcción que destruiría ya sea el medioambiente, o la seguridad del pueblo. Si se quiere disputar una construcción porque va en detrimento de la vida del pueblo, se tendría que pagar un 10% del valor total de la construcción para poder iniciar una demanda judicial. ¿Quiénes en el pueblo tendrían esa cantidad cuando los proyectos de construcción comienzan en más de un millón de dólares? La ley se aprobó sin vistas públicas, tildando a quienes defendemos nuestros terrenos como terroristas y mercenarios pagados que estamos en contra del supuesto desarrollo

económico. La gobernadora por supuesto la firmó rápidamente.

¿Y por qué esta urgencia? Porque las últimas manifestaciones que se han convocado para protestar el robo de nuestros terrenos, han tenido una asistencia masiva. Y esto preocupa a los desarrolladores multimillonarios y por ende al gobierno, que ven en riesgo sus planes privatizadores de las tierras del pueblo.

Pero ya esta Ley está siendo criticada, protestada y se está levantando un movimiento popular para impugnar esta criminal legislación. Porque el pueblo seguirá en las calles en contra del robo de nuestra tierra.

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



¡Todos y todas somos Cuba!

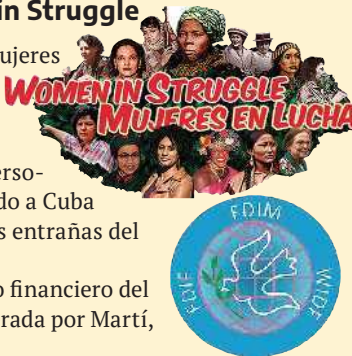
Declaración de Mujeres en Lucha / Women in Struggle

En este 131 aniversario de la muerte de José Martí, Mujeres en Lucha-Women in Struggle queremos recordar que desde los Estados Unidos, este país cuyas administraciones a lo largo de los años han traído los más crueles ataques contra pueblos hermanos, hay un pueblo con personas y organizaciones diversas, solidarias, que han llevado a Cuba en sus corazones, defendiéndola dentro de estas mismas entrañas del Monstruo como decía Martí.

Fue en la mismísima ciudad de Nueva York, ese centro financiero del Capitalismo, donde la Junta Revolucionaria Cubana, liderada por Martí, forjó planes para independizar a Cuba del yugo español.

Y es en ese espíritu de hermandad, resistencia y combatividad, que hoy alzamos nuestras voces en contra del imperialismo estadounidense, esta vez representado por la figura de Trump, pero que trabaja a favor de una clase minoritaria de multimillonarios que tiene todo un entramado que opera en conjunto: los Tribunales, la CIA,

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La Habana, 7 de abril de 2026 – Mujeres participan en una manifestación que exige el fin del bloqueo estadounidense a Cuba, que dura ya 66 años y que fue intensificado por Trump.

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