



Wall Street raids pension funds for Musk's SpaceX

By Gary Wilson

When SpaceX shares began trading on the Nasdaq on June 12, the trap was already set.

Millions of workers have 401(k)s and IRAs in retirement funds that copy Wall Street's stock lists. Wall Street calls those lists indexes — the Nasdaq 100, the Russell 1000, the S&P 500. If Nasdaq or Russell adds a company to one of those lists, the fund buys the stock. It does not ask whether the price makes sense. Workers get no vote. Nobody asks them.

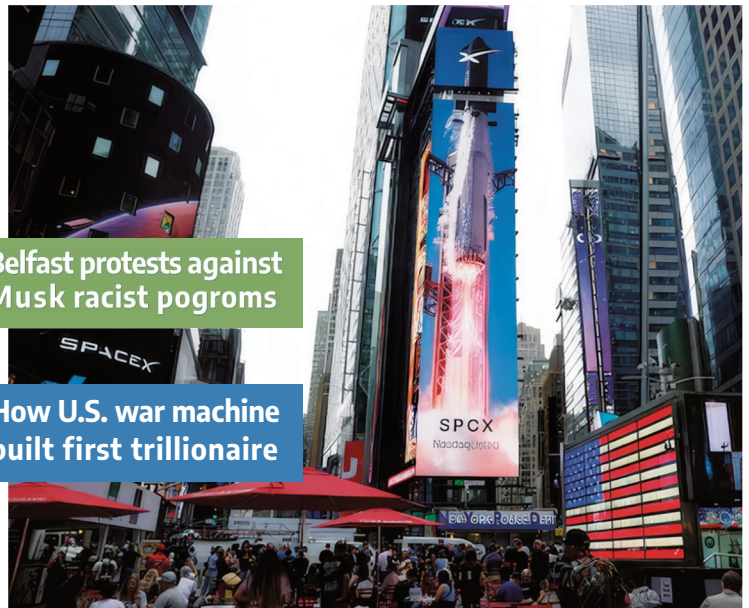
This is deferred wages — money workers already earned — used to buy Musk's stock without their consent.

SpaceX was losing money. Wall Street still priced it like a sure thing. To hold up that price, Musk needed buyers who would come in automatically. Workers' retirement funds supplied those buyers.

The sales pitch was rockets, Starlink, artificial intelligence and the fantasy of putting data centers in orbit. SpaceX also folded in Musk's xAI gamble, tying workers' retirement money to another speculative market that has yet to produce the profits Wall Street has already priced in.

Wall Street calls this passive investing. For workers, it meant forced buying with their own deferred wages.

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Belfast protests against Musk racist pogroms

How U.S. war machine built first trillionaire

A Nasdaq display in Times Square celebrates SpaceX's Wall Street debut.

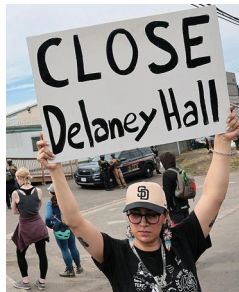
Karmelo Anthony: Right to self-defense

ICE ships Newark strikers out – and the strike spreads

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CHINA puts gig-app on the bargaining table



CHRIS SILVERA
A life on the front line of class struggle



BOLIVIA strike unbroken



U.S. retreats from Iran war to save oil profits & dollar
Wall Street highs rest on AI bets, paper wealth & war
CUBA DOES NOT SURRENDER
VENEZUELA under U.S. occupation

'Free Palestine!' at Pride march

By Stephen Millies

June 7 — Pro-Palestinian activists found plenty of support at the Queens Pride march here today. The parade —traditionally the first major Pride parade of the season and one of the largest in New York City — takes place annually in the Jackson Heights neighborhood of Queens.

It attracted thousands of participants, both in the parade itself and among people who lined 37th Avenue. It was inspired by the July 2, 1990, murder in Jackson Heights of Julio Rivera by bigots, which was initially ignored by police.

Dozens of activists gathered at the corner of 83rd Street and 37th Avenue who greeted marchers with signs and chants supporting Palestine. Many parade participants welcomed the Palestine supporters.

Among those who passed by was New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, who has been denounced by racists for not attending the "Israel Day" parade.

There was also a contingent of Palestine supporters in the parade itself, who held banners reading "Stonewall was an Intifada," "Free Palestine," and "Zionism is Racism." A truck carried Palestinian flags.

Support for Palestine is everywhere. #



New York, June 7 – Palestine liberation supporters participated in the Pride march in Jackson Heights, Queens.

SLL photos: Stephen Millies

CUBA's Queer Rights Revolution

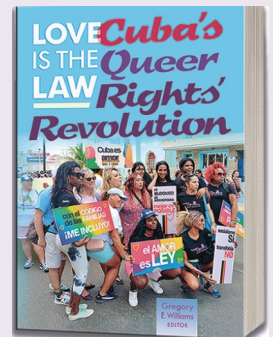
LOVE IS THE LAW

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 CENESEX director Mariela Castro Espín

The full text of Leslie Feinberg's 'Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba

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Book by Gregory E. Williams

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Karmelo Anthony and the right to self-defense

TWO JUSTICE SYSTEMS

By Kathleen Grant and Lev Koufax

Karmelo Anthony, a young Black man, is 19 years old and headed to prison for 35 years.

So, what was Karmelo's crime? And why has the system deemed fit to erase his adult life with a brutal prison sentence?

In April 2025, Anthony, then 17, was at a track meet in Frisco, Texas, a Dallas suburb. Rain began to fall, and he stepped under a pop-up tent. It belonged to a rival team. There he was met by Austin Metcalf and Metcalf's twin brother, both white. Anthony is Black.

They told him to leave. The confrontation turned physical. The twins assaulted him while others looked on. As the struggle escalated, Anthony used a Walmart multi-tool with a serrated blade. Austin Metcalf died.

Anthony did not run. He went straight to the nearest police officer and told the truth without being asked. His first concern was whether Metcalf would live. He did not resist arrest. He admitted the stabbing. He said it was self-defense.

That should have mattered. It did not.

From the beginning, the case was seized on by the right wing and sensationalized by the media. Far-right forces demanded that Anthony be made an example. His family faced constant threats and harassment.

Texas law recognizes deadly force when a person reasonably believes it is immediately necessary to prevent unlawful deadly force. On paper, that rule is supposed to apply to everyone. In practice, the courts decide whose fear is reasonable and whose life is worth defending.

Karmelo Anthony lived that contradiction.

This happened in Texas, a state with a long record of anti-Black terror. Between 1885 and 1942, nearly 500 Black, Latine and Jewish people were lynched there. In 1916, Jesse Washington, a 17-year-old Black youth, was murdered by a white mob in Waco after a false accusation. He was the same age Anthony was at the time of the Frisco track meet.

Texas is also the state of Sandra Bland, who was killed in the Waller County jail in 2015 after a state trooper arrested her over a turn signal. It is the state where Garrett Foster was killed in 2020 by a right-wing agitator while protecting his disabled Black partner during protests.

That is the world Karmelo Anthony faced. When two white teenagers advanced on him and the confrontation turned violent, his fear was not invented. It was rooted in U.S. reality.

Anthony was a minor. He did not start the fight. He did not flee. He showed no intent to kill. Still, he was denied the benefit of the doubt.



In Dallas, a supporter of Karmelo Anthony stands with signs.

The adultification of Black boys is a form of racialized dehumanization where Black youth are perceived as older, less innocent, and more culpable than their white peers. It follows Black youth into classrooms, streets, courtrooms and prisons.

The question in this case is simple: Who is allowed to defend themselves in the U.S.?

George Zimmerman killed Trayvon Martin and walked free. Daniel Penny killed Jordan Neely and walked free. Kyle Rittenhouse traveled to Kenosha, Wisconsin, with an AR-15-style rifle, killed two Black Lives Matter protesters and walked free. He then cashed in politically on the killings.

Derek Chauvin, the police officer who murdered George Floyd, received 22.5 years. Amber Guyger, the Dallas police officer who killed Botham Jean in his own apartment, received 10 years. Brock Turner served three months for sexual assault.

None of these punishments equals what the courts gave Karmelo Anthony.

There is another case that makes the same point. In Baltimore in 2022, Timothy Reynolds, an intoxicated white man, crossed nine lanes of traffic and charged a group of Black teenagers with a baseball bat. Tavon Scott was 14 when he shot Reynolds in self-defense. He was later tried as an adult and sentenced to 15 years.

This is not equal justice. It is class rule and racist punishment.

There are two justice systems in the U.S. One protects the wealthy, the police, the right wing and white defendants. The other cages the poor, the oppressed and the Black. Black people are arrested more, charged harder, convicted faster and sentenced longer. The U.S. Sentencing Commission has found that Black men receive sentences averaging 20.4% longer than white men.

That is not an accident of one courtroom. It is the machinery of a system built from slavery, segregation, prisons and police power.

Anthony's parents were asked whether their son received a fair trial. They answered, "Absolutely not."

He was first held on a \$1 million bond. There were no Black jurors. The judge was not impartial. The defense made weak decisions. The case moved fast.

Karmelo Anthony's case exposes how flexible the law becomes when the defendant is Black. The right to self-defense, celebrated when invoked by white vigilantes, disappeared when a Black teenager claimed it.

Black Lives Matter Grassroots supported Anthony and his family in Texas and called for his immediate pardon and release, an investigation into possible conflicts of interest and corruption, review and suspension of Judge John Roach, and continued support for the Anthony family.

Karmelo Anthony should be free. #

ICE ships Newark strikers out — and the strike spreads

By Gary Wilson

The people locked inside Delaney Hall stopped eating, and they stopped working. ICE answered with tear gas, beatings and night transfers — vans moving in the dark so no one outside could see.

It did not work.

As the strike entered its fourth week, nearly 40 women held in Unit 1 joined on June 11. They issued their own demands and carried forward the fight ICE had spent the previous week trying to scatter across the country.

The strike began May 22, when more than 300 people detained at Delaney Hall signed an open letter and launched a combined hunger and labor strike. They refused meals. They also walked off the jobs that keep the jail running — kitchen work, cleaning and the unpaid or barely paid labor GEO gets from detained people for \$1 a day.

That second refusal is what GEO most wants hidden. It exposes Delaney Hall as a business that cages people, then makes them run the cage for pennies.

Delaney Hall is run by GEO Group under an ICE contract worth \$1 billion. The 1,000-bed jail opened in May 2025. Its short history already includes a June 2025 uprising and the December 2025 death of 41-year-old Jean Wilson Brutus less than a day after he was booked.

The strikers' demands are direct. They call for the release of the medically vulnerable, the elderly, pregnant women and young people; for immigration judges to review their cases; for federal courts to hear their habeas petitions; and for an end to ICE pressure on detained people to sign their own deportations.

Letters smuggled out and testimony from physicians describe medical neglect, expired food, water unfit to drink and unusable bathrooms. Dr. Chanelle Diaz said detainees report roughly 95% of bond hearings denied — people with no criminal record held for months, some for more than a year.

Then the women answered. They demanded the release of women, starting with those under 21, mothers and those with medical conditions. They demanded qualified nurses in place of GEO's medical staff and the removal of GEO security personnel. They also demanded the firing of one guard, a GEO employee whom detained women say has faced 10 separate complaints of sexual assault but remains on the payroll.

"We are mothers, daughters, sisters," the women said in a video recorded inside the jail.

The state's answer has been strikebreaking.



Protesters outside Delaney Hall in Newark demand the ICE jail be shut down as detained workers continue a hunger and labor strike inside.

ICE transferred more than 200 detained hunger strikers out of Delaney Hall — by some counts as many as 400 — moving them at night to evade protesters who had gathered for weeks to block the vans. Local authorities installed fencing across the driveways to keep demonstrators away.

Scattering organizers to distant facilities is a tactic for defeating a strike and cutting it off from support outside the walls.

But solidarity did not break. New Jersey Gov. Mikie Sherrill responded by rotating ICE, state police and local police outside the jail. None answered a single demand. Nightly protests continued. So did the detained workers' refusal to labor. Paulo Almiron of Resistencia en Acción said families report their loved ones are still abstaining from work: "this doesn't mean that the strike is over."

Washington's official position is denial. DHS has claimed there is no hunger strike at Delaney Hall at all, calls the allegations political and insists detainees get proper food, water and medical care.

The facts tear that denial apart. ICE's own policy classifies anyone who has not eaten for 72 hours as on hunger strike. This strike has run for weeks. Members of Congress reported spoiled

food and ignored medical needs. Physicians warned that people tear-gassed on May 28 were then denied clean water and eye-flushing.

The denial is easier when inspectors cannot get inside. When New Jersey health inspectors came on May 28, GEO let them into part of the building but barred them from the medical unit, sleeping areas, bathing areas and toilets. On June 2, the state sued GEO to compel full access. Newark, which had already sued GEO over unpermitted building work, is moving to demand the jail be closed.

Those suits matter. But they do not reach the heart of the strike. Officials are fighting over inspection. The people behind the walls are fighting confinement itself.

Delaney Hall is part of a national revolt. The ACLU counts active hunger and labor strikes in immigration jails in six states as the detained population has climbed from 40,000 to a record 73,000.

ICE cages people. GEO profits from them. Both depend on isolation, fear and forced obedience to keep the jail running.

The people locked inside have answered together. They are refusing food. They are refusing work. They are refusing to be buried alive inside the detention system. #

CHRIS SILVERA

Chris Silvera speaking at the Million Worker March on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in October 2004.



A life on the front line of class struggle

By Lallan Schoenstein

The U.S. labor movement lost a beloved giant on June 12. F. Christophe “Chris” Silvera. He served as secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 808, representing a diverse group of workers including railroad, building maintenance, factory and public sector workers. Silvera was the longest serving principal officer in the Teamsters and one of the most important radical voices in the long history of struggle of the Teamsters, as well as among all workers, organized and unorganized.

Silvera died June 12 of a heart attack en route to the Teamster national convention. Undoubtedly, this charismatic leader was on his way to support the Fearless Slate, led by Richard Hooker, and a new generation of Teamsters poised to take on the pro-Trump leadership of Sean O’Brien.

In 1999, Chris Silvera became the first chairman of the Teamsters National Black Caucus (TNBC) to be elected by the membership. As a chair of TNBC, Silvera was a critical East Coast organizer of the Million Workers March at the Lincoln Memorial on Oct. 17, 2004.

The following year he became a co-convenor of the Millions More Movement, which gathered in Washington on Oct. 15, 2005, and called for a workers’ blockade to force President George W. Bush to rescind his executive order suspending the Davis-Bacon Act in the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina. Eleven days later, Bush rescinded the anti-labor order.

Silvera played a critical role in reclaiming May Day in the labor movement. A contract provision ratified by divisions of Local 808, along with other unions, made May Day a paid union holiday in their collective bargaining agreement.

Trent Willis, a leader of International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 in San Francisco, reported to the Longshore Caucus on June 12: “Silvera addressed the Longshore Caucus in 2004, regarding his union’s support of the MWM, endorsed by the ILWU Longshore Caucus! He addressed our members and guests on Bloody Thursday, July 5, 2024. He spoke of the shared history of the West Coast waterfront strike and the Teamsters strike in Minneapolis, Minnesota, both taking place in May of 1934. He was a true freedom fighter and a champion for the working class.”

Silvera’s book, “1934: A Year of Good Trouble,” describes the police killing of two striking dockworkers, Nick Bordoise and Howard Sperry, who were shot in the back. Their deaths helped spark the San Francisco general strike.

Clarence Thomas, a co-author of the book, submitted the resolution inviting Chris Silvera to speak at the Bloody Thursday commemoration. Thomas is a retired leader of ILWU Local 10 and an initiator of the 2004 Million Worker March.

Silvera spoke of the 1934 labor upsurge that gave birth to the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO): “The CIO chose to organize all workers, significantly increasing the mass of workers who were unionized and

fighting to include more Africans in America. The break with the craft unionism of the AFL was generated by three historic strikes: Toledo AutoLite; West Coast Longshoremen and the Minneapolis Teamster strike.”

Silvera said: “Today, workers are threatened by greed and technology. Our wellbeing in the workplace and in retirement is threatened as never before. We must reach back and call our ancestors in the workplace and imbue the militancy of 1934 to protect our future and the future of our children and grandchildren.”

According to LaborPress, in 1995 Silvera led a four-year-long battle with Metro North. “Then AFL-CIO President, John Sweeney to comment in 1995 before the Association for a Better New York that Local 808’s actions have re-energized the labor movement. In contrast, the MTA referred to Silvera in the New York Times as a labor terrorist. That struggle brought significant wage and benefit improvements to the workers at Metro North. Under Silvera’s leadership, Local 808 is a beacon of labor activism and militancy, continuing a history of militancy since the Local was chartered in 1922.”

His record at the bargaining table matched his record in the streets. Silvera negotiated a groundbreaking “shutdown agreement” with Swingline’s parent company, Fortune Brands, winning workers extended health coverage and enhanced pension benefits.

Asked what had been most meaningful over more than three decades leading Local 808, Silvera told LaborPress in November 2024: “Changing the trajectory of peoples’ lives.” #

Trump's war on labor: The biggest union-busting drive in U.S. history

By Gary Wilson

The bosses came after the unions the moment Trump took office.

In a little over a year, the Trump administration paralyzed the National Labor Relations Board, stripped bargaining rights from nearly a million federal workers, cut wages on government contracts, and joined Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and other union-busters in a court fight that could wreck the labor board itself.

The first blow landed Jan. 27, 2025, when Trump fired Gwynne Wilcox, chair of the NLRB and one of its last three members. The board needs three members to act. Without them, it froze.

The blow fell on private-sector workers. The NLRB runs union elections, rules on unfair labor practice charges, and orders bosses to rehire workers fired for organizing. With no quorum, bosses could fire organizers, delay elections and keep operating while workers waited.

Trump fired Wilcox for rulings he said “unduly disfavored” employers. Then he picked Crystal Carey, a former partner at Morgan Lewis — the firm defending SpaceX against the NLRB — for general counsel. At her confirmation hearing, Carey would not say whether she believed the NLRB was constitutional.

DOGE piled on. A board whistleblower said Musk's operatives likely pulled roughly 10 gigabytes of sensitive data from the case system — live labor cases, union election disputes and worker protection proceedings.

Then the corporate court attack came. On Aug. 19, 2025, the Fifth Circuit gave SpaceX and two other companies a green light to block NLRB cases against them. The court accepted the corporate claim that the labor board itself is unconstitutional.

The coordination is open. Musk, Bezos and the tech monopolists work through the White House, DOGE, the courts and the board's own leadership. They are hollowing out the labor board from within and battering it from without.

The biggest single blow came March 27, 2025. Trump signed an executive order stripping hundreds of thousands of federal workers of bargaining rights, using “national security” exemptions in the 1978 Civil Service Reform Act.

A federal judge blocked the order, calling the



Federal workers rally against attacks on union rights and government jobs.

excuse a pretext. An appeals court lifted that block in July. On Aug. 28, Trump escalated again. Together with an earlier attack on Transportation Security Administration workers, the orders stripped rights from 84.4% of the unionized federal workforce.

More than 400,000 workers at the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Environmental Protection Agency saw contracts torn up. In December 2025, Homeland Security canceled the union contract covering 47,000 TSA workers.

The attack hit private-sector workers directly, too. On March 14, Executive Order 14236 revoked the \$17.75 wage floor for workers on federal contracts. For some, the floor fell to \$13.65. Others lost the executive-order wage floor entirely. The same order scrapped union neutrality on federal infrastructure projects.

DOGE ran a parallel assault through mass firings aimed at agencies with high union density. Some 175,000 federal workers were shoved onto paid leave with no jobs at the end of it. The firings gutted the IRS, USAID, Social Security and Housing and Urban Development — agencies workers and the poor depend on, and places where unions had footholds.

The bosses built this on Taft-Hartley.

The Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 (Taft-Hartley Act) was the bosses' counterattack against the strike wave that built the CIO. It banned secondary boycotts and sympathy strikes. It attacked the closed shop. It

gave employers room to campaign against unions. It let presidents break strikes with injunctions. It opened the door to right-to-work laws, especially across the South.

The Wagner Act of 1935 had already excluded agricultural and domestic workers — jobs held by many Black workers in the South and Mexican and other oppressed workers in Southwestern agriculture. Taft-Hartley widened the exclusions to supervisors and independent contractors. Federal workers were left outside until Kennedy's 1962 order, and their rights were codified in 1978 with the loopholes Trump now uses.

Democratic administrations left Taft-Hartley intact. The bans on solidarity stayed. Right-to-work stayed. The president's strikebreaking power stayed.

That is the ground Trump stands on. In 1983, one in five U.S. workers carried a union card. Today it is one in 10, and fewer than one in 17 in the private sector.

For the bosses, the attack buys time: time to fire organizers, stall elections, scare workers and break momentum. For workers, it proves labor law is no shield when the government, courts and corporations move together.

The answer cannot wait for a friendlier administration. The bosses are using every weapon they have. Workers have one answer strong enough to meet it: organization in struggle, solidarity across shops and industries, and the power to withhold labor at the point of production. #

The app is the bosses' union-buster

By Gary Wilson

A UPS driver in a brown uniform carries a union card, a contract, overtime, safety rules, a pension and a guaranteed wage.

Down the same street, a driver in a personal car carries a package for Roadie, the platform UPS bought in 2021. No union card. No contract. No overtime. No pension. No guaranteed wage.

That driver supplies the car, gas and insurance, takes a flat rate per delivery, and must keep a four-star rating. UPS calls Roadie drivers independent contractors, so it owes them none of what it owes a Teamster.

UPS signed the largest private-sector union contract in North America with 340,000 Teamsters in 2023. Beside it, UPS runs a non-union contractor shop.

Teamsters Local 804 charges that UPS is diverting work to Roadie drivers, dodging overtime and safety law and taking work that belongs on union trucks.

That is the platform model: a contractor operation inside a union shop, used to hollow out the union contract from within.

Uber, Lyft, DoorDash, Instacart, Amazon Flex and UPS Roadie all sell the same lie. They call workers contractors, partners, entrepreneurs — anything but employees. But who sets the rate? Who changes the pay formula? Who tracks every movement? Who deactivates the worker and cuts off income?

The app is the boss. The algorithm is the foreman. AI is the personnel department.

Workers have answered in practice. On May 22, 2026, Massachusetts certified the App Drivers Union as bargaining representative for nearly 70,000 Uber and Lyft drivers — the first recognized rideshare union in the U.S. They won while still classed as independent contractors. Isolated workers acted together as a class.

New York City's deliveristas proved it too. Los Deliveristas Unidos won the country's first minimum pay rate for app delivery workers, including waiting time. The rate rose to \$22.13 an hour April 1, 2026, and now covers grocery delivery workers. In January, the city announced a \$5 million settlement and reinstatement for as many as 10,000 workers fired by the algorithm.

Scattered drivers organized industry-wide in Massachusetts. Scattered couriers cracked



Rideshare drivers rally in Boston during the campaign that led to certification of the App Drivers Union, the first recognized Uber and Lyft driver union in the U.S.

open the pay formula in New York. The bosses' claim is broken.

By McKinsey's count, 36% of employed people in the U.S. identify as independent workers. Capital wants a vast zone of precarious labor where the boss sheds the duties of employment while keeping control over the worker. Sam Marcy called this "High Tech, Low Pay." The platform is that process in app form.

The worker supplies the car, bicycle, phone, gas, insurance, maintenance, time, body and risk. The company supplies the platform and takes the profit. A driver who owns a car is no boss. A delivery worker who owns a bicycle is no capitalist. They do not own the platform, data, algorithm or market. They sell their labor power to survive. That makes them workers.

The legal fiction of "independent contractor" status is worth billions. In California, Uber, Lyft, DoorDash and Instacart spent more than \$200 million to pass Proposition 22 and exempt themselves from a 2019 law making gig drivers employees. One study found Prop 22 pay came to about \$5.64 an hour once waiting time and costs were counted.

Trump's war on unions belongs in the same picture. His administration has moved to strip bargaining rights from federal workers, weaken the National Labor Relations Board and aid the corporate legal assault on it. The platform bosses deny workers are employees. Trump tears away rights from workers who

already have contracts. Both attacks aim to destroy collective power.

But scattered workers are still workers. Many are immigrants, Black, Latine, Asian and women workers. Many were pushed into platform work by layoffs, low wages, unstable schedules, discrimination or the need for a second income. The app measures that need and pays the least it can to workers with the fewest options.

The demands must be concrete: minimum pay for all time worked; transparency in pay formulas; protection against arbitrary deactivation; workers' compensation; company payment for costs pushed onto workers; and the right to organize, bargain across the platform and strike without retaliation.

Workers need the right to bargain over the algorithm. The algorithm assigns the work, sets the pace, fixes the pay, polices the worker and cuts off income. That makes it a workplace rule. Workers must have the right to know it, challenge it and bargain over it.

The job itself is a property right. Deactivation is loss of livelihood. A worker cannot be stripped of it by code.

Every boss says this is impossible before workers force it. Massachusetts drivers organized first, and recognition followed. The deed comes first. The law ratifies the struggle after workers make it real.

The platform is the workplace. The worker is a worker. Organize. #

China puts gig-app algorithms on the bargaining table

By Gary Wilson

On Sept. 6, 2024, a 55-year-old delivery rider named Yuan was found unconscious on his electric scooter outside a Hangzhou apartment complex. Other riders thought he was napping — because napping on the scooter was how Yuan rested. He worked 16 to 18 hours a day across several platforms, dropping down between deliveries and rising the moment the next order hit. He never got up again.

An app set Yuan's speed, his order count and his pay if he slowed. The factory foreman carried a stopwatch; the platform's foreman rides in the worker's phone, giving the order, setting the clock, docking the pay when the rider falls behind.

Now the Communist Party of China and the central government have ordered the algorithm itself — the machinery that assigns work, sets delivery times, calculates pay and imposes penalties — opened to workers and their unions. How work is assigned, timed and paid is no longer the platform bosses' private property.

On April 26, 2026, China issued central guidelines for workers in "new forms of employment" — delivery riders, ride-hailing drivers, livestream sellers and logistics workers on platforms like Meituan, Didi, Ele.me and JD.com. The country has some 240 million gig and nonstandard workers, 84 million on these platforms.

The directive orders the ministries and provinces to enforce the rules. Platforms must put labor terms in writing, pay the local minimum wage, and set maximum hours with the unions; when a rider hits that limit, the app stops sending orders. The algorithm comes under regulation — platforms must consult the unions before changing it, and open it to audit.

Why the union matters

The union here is the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, the world's largest, with more than 300 million members. Alone before the app, the worker has no power. Through the union, riders stand as an organized force instead of isolated app users.

Since 2021 the federation has pushed hard



Meituan and Ele.me delivery riders in China. New central guidelines open the platform algorithms that assign their orders, set their delivery clocks and dock their pay to union scrutiny.

into the platform economy: more than 10 million platform workers have joined unions, and nearly 3,000 companies have entered collective bargaining. Of 16 major platforms targeted, 15 have finished negotiating over their algorithms, beginning with an Ele.me deal with Shanghai riders in 2025.

The role of unions under a workers' state is an old question. Lenin answered it in 1920 and 1921: even with the workers in power, they still needed their unions, to defend their own interests against officials acting in the state's name.

Speed, pay and danger

In September 2020 the magazine *Renwu* published "Delivery Workers, Trapped in the System," showing how Meituan and Ele.me algorithms kept cutting delivery windows — pushing riders to run red lights and drive against traffic — while a hidden formula set their pay. In Shanghai in early 2017, one rider was injured or killed every 2.5 days. The platforms' answer was a button letting customers grant "five extra minutes." The windows kept shrinking.

Beijing moved because private platform capital had collided with a planned economy. The platforms treated labor power as something to burn and replace, and a socialist country cannot raise living standards while exhausted riders sleep on scooters and die.

The 15th Five-Year Plan, for 2026 to 2030, makes raising household incomes a central goal — out of reach while platforms drive wages down.

Pledges are not enforcement. In 2021, eight government departments issued guiding opinions on platform labor; the companies obeyed only in part, and delivery times kept shrinking. This time the guidelines set a deadline: these protections become the norm by 2027.

What U.S. workers don't have

Platform workers in the United States face the same algorithmic control with almost none of these

protections. The platforms make them sign on as independent contractors — take the label or get no work — outside labor law: no minimum wage, no overtime, no algorithmic transparency, no right to bargain over the rules that govern their work.

Driver organizing forced California to pass Assembly Bill 5 in 2019, making platform workers employees. The gig companies bought it back with Proposition 22 — \$200 million, the costliest ballot campaign in U.S. history — and a million drivers were demoted to contractor status. The state Supreme Court upheld Proposition 22 in July 2024. That is the U.S. model: the app commands, the bosses buy the law, the courts seal it.

Where U.S. platform workers have won anything, organizing won it. New York City's deliveristas fought more than three years for the country's first minimum pay rate for app delivery workers. Massachusetts rideshare drivers won their union on May 22, 2026, the first certified rideshare union in the country.

China has shown that corporate algorithms are not above society — they can be brought under union and public scrutiny. U.S. platform workers face the harder job: forcing the bosses to open the rules and bargain over the system. Every gain so far came through organization. The next step is the same — riders and drivers acting together, a force the bosses must answer to. #

Bolivia strike enters seventh week, unbroken

By Penny Pinotti

The general strike in Bolivia has eclipsed the 45 day mark. The main demand of the strike is the resignation of right-wing President of Bolivia, Rodrigo Paz Pereira. Paz is aligned with the Trump administration as corporations from the United States seek to control Bolivia's natural resources, particularly lithium, as well as tin, copper, zinc, silver, and natural gas. Currently, the areas of Bolivia rich in resources are surrounded by Indigenous territories.

To get around this to access the resources, Paz's government created Law 1720, which essentially allows corporations to take over land that is currently in the hands of peasant farmers and Indigenous communities. This brings us to another demand of the general strike: repeal Law 1720.

The other demands of the strike are higher wages and pensions, ending privatization plans, and lower taxes for small businesses. The general strike began just five months into Paz's presidency. His first legislative act as president was to end taxation on large fortunes, essentially giving cuts to the rich while leaving the working class without relief as prices soared.

The general strike has been led by trade unions and Indigenous communities. Over 70 labor unions have joined the strike. Indigenous protesters from Northern Bolivia marched 600 miles from April 8th to May 4th to the capital of La Paz. During the strike, workers and peasant farmers have established over 90

roadblocks across Bolivia to shut down the country until the demands of the strike are met. Workers and peasant farmers have also blocked airport runways, such as El Alto International Airport, halting passengers and cargo from entering or leaving.

In retaliation, Paz's government has arrested over 300 protesters. The government has also issued arrest warrants on terrorism charges for 25 union and Indigenous leaders. They have already charged Mario Argollo, the executive secretary of Bolivia Workers Central and Indigenous women's leader and ex-senator Simona Quispe. Additionally, on June 9, Rodrigo Paz signed Law 1740 into effect, which authorizes armed forces and police to carry out



Demonstrators march in La Paz on June 10 carrying Bolivian flags and Wiphala banners as the general strike against President Rodrigo Paz entered another week.



Indigenous women hold a highway blockade leading into La Paz in late May. The general strike has kept roads blocked despite Paz's threat to send in the military.

joint operations to suppress the protests.

The working class of Bolivia has not backed down as government oppression has increased during the duration of the strike. On May 23, a 3,000 person police and military force attempted to force open the road block on the La Paz-Oruro highway. The Aymara Indigenous community managing and supporting the road block held their position strong and eventually, the military forces withdrew. During the operation to break the road block, a 24-year-old Indigenous man, Victor Cruz Quispe, was shot and killed, 28 other protesters were injured and

admitted to the hospital, and 321 protestors were arrested. Similarly, on June 6, police and paramilitary forces tried to force open the roadblock on a major highway in San Julian, but again the workers stood strong. The workers held off the attack for five hours before forcing the police and paramilitary forces to retreat. At least one worker was killed and 27 were injured and admitted to the hospital.

Former Bolivian President Evo Morales Ayma has been outspoken during the strike and declared that the strike is against neoliberalism and a government that subjugates itself to the United States. In the middle of the strike on May 16, a leaked document confirmed that Bolivian police in

coordination with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and U.S. Southern Command had plans to kidnap Evo Morales. In response, workers and Indigenous community members surrounded Morales' residence to protect him. Protesters also occupied the nearby airport to prevent U.S. helicopters and planes from landing.

Bolivia's general strike serves as an example of the power of the working class. When there is solidarity among the working class and across communities, the working class has the power to demand and force change. #

U.S. retreats from Iran war to save

By Gary Wilson

The U.S. launched a war on Iran to tighten its grip on oil, the dollar and West Asia. It retreated when the war began to choke oil, shipping and industry — and to shake the dollar system that carries profits to Wall Street.

That is the meaning of the memorandum of understanding Trump agreed to on June 17. It would lift the U.S. naval blockade, waive oil sanctions, begin releasing Iran's frozen funds and pull U.S. forces back from the vicinity of Iran.

Washington demanded surrender. It got a 60-day pause. It failed to seize control of the Strait of Hormuz. It failed to break Iran's government. It failed to impose the permanent terms it went to war to win.

Washington's plan was a fast regime-change war: assassinate Iran's leadership, break its missile forces, and force a political collapse. Instead, Iran named a new supreme leader, kept firing missiles, struck U.S. bases across West Asia, closed the Strait of Hormuz in its own territorial waters, and turned the opening attack into a prolonged war Washington could not control.

By early March, the first plan had already failed. Washington had not broken Iran. It had not won the open backing of the other imperialist powers. Britain, Germany, France and NATO would condemn Iran, but they would not join Trump's war or put their fleets under a U.S. command to force the strait open.

Trump's own advisers were looking for an exit. They wanted him to declare victory before the oil shock and political cost grew worse. But Iran was not offering Washington a free doorway out. Washington offered talks with one hand and readied the bombers with the other. Iran had no reason to trust that maneuver, and no reason to give Trump an exit, while the blockade, bombing and sanctions went on.

That was the catch: Washington needed an exit, and Iran controlled the door.

The oil system began to seize up

Trump retreated because the oil system was beginning to seize up. At the Group of Seven summit in France on June 17, he warned that with the Strait of Hormuz closed, oil supplies would run short in about four weeks.

"We run out of reserves at about four weeks," he said. He warned of "bedlam" if the oil stopped.

The Strait of Hormuz runs through Iranian and Omani territorial waters. It is too narrow for an open-sea lane. At its tightest it runs about 21 nautical miles across, and the 12-mile territorial limits of Iran and Oman cover the

whole width. No international channel runs between them. Every ship that passes moves through waters one of the two governments controls. Iran shut the strait on its own side and held it shut against the U.S. blockade.

This narrow waterway is one of the great choke points of world capitalism. Through it move crude oil, refined fuel, liquefied natural gas, petrochemicals and the raw materials for fertilizer, plastics and industrial chemicals. That flow runs production, transport, shipping, food distribution, heating, aviation, finance and war — the circulation U.S. banks, oil monopolies, shipping firms, insurers, refiners, chemical giants and war planners depend on.

Traffic through Hormuz had fallen to a fraction of normal. Before the war, more than 100 ships a day passed through the strait. By late May and early June, only about 10 a day were moving, and crude tankers were only a small part of that traffic.

The oil was piling up behind the strait. Kpler estimated 93 million barrels of non-Iranian crude were stranded in the Gulf. Vortexa counted 54 supertankers carrying about 87 million barrels stuck inside.

The oil that U.S. banks, oil monopolies and shippers fight to control sat bottled up. It could not move to refineries, ships, factories or markets. Oil that cannot move cannot be sold. It cannot become profit.

That is why the crisis spread so quickly from tankers to freight rates, insurance, futures markets and stock prices. The blockade and the war began to interrupt the circulation of capital itself.

The 1979 revolution still stands in Washington's way

Washington launched the war to overthrow Iran's government and reimpose imperialist control over Iranian oil — control the 1979 revolution had ended. In 1953, the CIA and British intelligence overthrew Mohammad Mossadegh after Iran nationalized its oil, restored the U.S.-backed shah's dictatorship, and opened Iran's oil wealth to the oil monopolies. In 1979, a mass uprising drove that shah from power and ended U.S. domination of Iran. Strikes by oil workers helped overthrow the regime. The revolution took Iran's oil out of the hands of the imperialist oil monopolies.

That is what U.S. imperialism has never accepted: that the 1979 revolution put Iran's oil beyond Washington's control. This war tried to seize again by bombs, blockade and sanctions what the Iranian people had won back.

Trump's war to seize oil control began choking the oil flow. Trump's war to strengthen U.S. financial domination began shaking the economic base of that domination.

The dollar was also on the line

Washington is holding billions of dollars that belong to Iran. It seized the money under sanctions and locked it in overseas accounts. The memorandum opens the way for Iran to regain access to those funds.

Trump explained why.

"It's not our money, it's their money," he told reporters. "If we didn't give it back, nobody would ever invest in the dollar again."

That is the whole dollar system in one sentence.

The dollar is the currency in which most of the world's oil is priced and paid. It is the currency held by central banks. It is the currency U.S. banks, oil companies and industrial monopolies use to pull tribute from the labor and resources of the world.

That power rests on force, debt, banking networks, oil pricing and confidence in the dollar as world money. A country that holds dollars must believe those dollars will remain usable. It must believe Washington will not simply seize them when it wants to punish a government.

Trump's war weakened the dollar while leaving its world role intact. The seizure of Iran's funds sent a warning to every central bank and oil-producing country: every frozen account, every blocked oil payment and every threat to keep a country's money teaches the same lesson — the farther they can move from U.S. banks and the dollar, the safer they are.

Washington was forced to pause

The balance sheet turned against the war. Oil prices were rising, tankers were trapped behind Hormuz, and the danger of a supply shock was growing. Trump said he did not want to be Herbert Hoover, the president in office during the 1929 crash and the Great Depression. He watched the stock market climb as the deal came together.

The argument inside Washington was never between war and peace. It was between those who wanted to pause before the oil shock spread and those who wanted to widen the war after the first plan failed.

Iran forced the pause.

That is a real defeat for U.S. imperialism. Workers and oppressed people everywhere are better for it.

A retreat, not peace

But this is only a 60-day pause. The war was priced out, not abandoned. The oil keeps moving. The dollar keeps its place. The same oil oligarchs, bankers, generals, war contractors and Department of War remain in command. They were forced to retreat from Iran.

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oil profits and the dollar

The wars on Gaza and Lebanon have not stopped. The press calls them Israel's wars. But the U.S. builds Israel's warplanes and pays for them as military aid. The U.S. supplies the bombs, the artillery shells and the missiles that fall on Gaza and Lebanon. Even the jet fuel comes from Texas. Valero refines it in Corpus Christi under U.S. war contracts. Military-chartered tankers carry it to the Ashkelon terminal in Israel. Israel is the U.S. forward base in West Asia. It strikes where Washington arms it to strike, when Washington fuels it to strike. #



Oil tanker near the Strait of Hormuz.

Cuba defends socialism under U.S. siege

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keep responsibility for health care, education, pensions and social protection. Strategic sectors will remain under public control.

This is the opposite of neoliberal "reform." In capitalist countries, reform usually means cuts, privatization and more profit for the rich. In Cuba, reform is meant to generate the resources needed to sustain the gains of the Revolution.

The test is who holds power, who controls the main levers of the economy and whose needs the economy serves.

Foreign investment under Cuban sovereignty

The most debated part of the program is the wider opening to foreign investment. Critics call this a turn toward capitalism. They are wrong.

Cuba has used foreign investment before. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the island opened selected sectors to international capital to obtain technology, foreign exchange, equipment and markets. Fidel Castro explained then that these steps were born of necessity, not ideology.

The same is true now. The measures aim to remove bureaucratic obstacles that have slowed investment. They expand partnerships among state enterprises, cooperatives, private firms and foreign investors. Cubans living abroad will also be encouraged to invest in productive projects.

But this is not privatization. Cuba is not selling off national industries, dismantling public ownership or handing strategic sectors to foreign corporations. Foreign capital is being invited to operate under Cuban law, planning and sovereignty.

The aim is not capitalist restoration. The aim is socialist survival and renewal.

More production, less restriction

Díaz-Canel has called for "more production instead of more restriction." That line goes to the heart of the program.

Cuba must raise output. Excessive controls have held back initiative, weakened state

enterprises and encouraged informal markets.

The measures seek to loosen those knots without giving up planning or social control.

State enterprises will get more room to decide on investment, employment and finance. Municipal governments will receive more authority for local development. Rules on non-state economic activity will rely more on regulation and less on blanket bans.

The socialist state enterprise remains the central pillar of the economy. But it cannot play that role if strangled by red tape. Planning must set priorities and social goals. Enterprises must have room to meet them.

Food and energy sovereignty

Nowhere is this more urgent than food. "There is no sovereignty with an empty plate," Díaz-Canel said.

Cuba still imports too much food, even though it has land, farmers and agricultural knowledge. The measures expand access to idle land, strengthen usufruct rights and improve access to seeds, fertilizer, equipment and technology. Farmers will get wider openings to export and to use foreign currency in production.

Land remains public property. Cuba is not creating capitalist landlordism. It is keeping land as a social resource while giving those who cultivate it stronger rights and better tools.

Energy is another front. U.S. sanctions have blocked access to fuel, financing, spare parts and infrastructure. Blackouts and fuel shortages are part of the pressure Washington brings to bear on the Cuban people.

The program pushes solar power, battery storage, electric transportation and local energy generation. Every kilowatt produced at home weakens Washington's grip and strengthens national independence.

Social protection remains central

The decisive test is whether reform protects the people. Cuba's answer is clear. Health care, education, social security and welfare remain public obligations.

The reforms will shift some broad subsidies toward targeted assistance for pensioners, children, seniors and low-income households. That change will have to be watched closely. But the stated aim is to direct scarce resources where they are most needed.

Here again, the class difference is sharp. Capitalist austerity cuts social programs to raise profits. Cuba's reforms seek to raise production in order to defend social programs.

No surrender

Cuba's future is not guaranteed. The blockade continues to cause enormous damage. Washington continues to seek recolonization by economic, political and diplomatic means.

The measures also raise real internal questions. Cuban leaders have acknowledged that approved reforms were not always carried out with enough speed or consistency. Bureaucratic obstacles remain a problem. So does the larger question of how state structures, political leadership and popular participation work together in socialist construction.

Those questions must be faced openly. But debate cannot become a cover for U.S. interference. Cuba has the right to criticize itself, correct itself and choose its own road. Washington has no right to dictate anything to Cuba.

Díaz-Canel put the task before the Cuban people: "We are not going to come together only to resist. We are going to come together to create. To produce. To decide. To oversee. To prosper, and to transform."

That is the meaning of Cuba's new measures. Under economic warfare, sanctions and threats of recolonization, Cuba is defending its independence, sovereignty and right to self-determination. It is opening space for production without surrendering the Revolution.

The goal remains a Cuba with all and for the well-being of all.

Abridged from an article by Isaac Saney, originally published by Resumen Latinoamericano.

Wall Street raids pension funds for Musk's SpaceX

Continued from page 1

The rules were rewritten for Musk

Wall Street's stock lists are controlled by private companies. Nasdaq, FTSE Russell and S&P Dow Jones decide which companies get added. Their decisions move trillions of dollars.

For decades, new companies usually had to wait before entering the major lists. That delay gave the market time to test the price before retirement money was pushed in.

Those protections were stripped away for Musk.

Reuters reported in March 2026 that SpaceX demanded fast-track entry into the indexes as a condition of listing. Nasdaq rewrote its rules to admit SpaceX to the Nasdaq 100 after just 15 trading days. FTSE Russell cut its wait to five days.

SpaceX sold only a small piece of itself to the public — about 4% of the company. That left very few shares for sale. The new rules still forced retirement funds to buy. So much forced buying, aimed at so few shares, drove the price up.

Only the S&P 500 refused. On June 4, S&P Dow Jones Indices kept its rules requiring profits, time on the market and enough shares in public hands. It said the decision preserved "core index principles."

S&P was defending its own rules and credibility, not workers' pensions.

Nasdaq and Russell chose a different principle: serve the richest capitalist in the world.

A proven Wall Street racket

Wall Street has used this trick before.

Here is how it works. Wall Street announces that a stock will be added to one of its lists. Big traders buy the stock first. They know retirement funds will be forced to buy it soon. That forced buying drives demand up. Then the

early buyers sell the stock to the retirement funds at a higher price.

The retirement money pays the inflated price. The profit goes to those who got in first. If the stock falls later, the loss stays with the fund.

That is the racket.

A 2025 Harvard Business School study by Marco Sammon and Chris Murray showed how much money this drains. In earlier cases, funds forced to buy right away paid about 15% too much. From 2017 to 2023, more than \$5.8 billion was taken from funds that copy Wall Street's lists — including funds holding workers' 401(k)s and IRAs — and handed to speculators.

SpaceX takes the same racket to a new level.

Sammon estimated that funds tied to Russell, MSCI and Nasdaq could all be pushed into SpaceX stock within the first 15 trading days.

"I can't think of a precedent with this many indexes adding so much of a stock so quickly," he told *The American Prospect*.

Wall Street also aimed SpaceX shares at individual buyers. SpaceX set aside a record share of its first public stock sale for people buying on their own, far above the usual amount. Musk's promoters sold them stories about rockets, Starlink and colonies on Mars. Wall Street counted on them to buy at the inflated price.

How workers lost their pensions

Workers did not always have to gamble on the stock market to retire.

The labor movement fought for and won real pensions. They were called defined-benefit pensions because the benefit was set in advance: a monthly check for life. The amount was tied to years of work, not to the daily rise and fall of Wall Street.

Those pensions were deferred wages.

They were part of the pay package workers won on the job.

They also had federal protection. Under the

Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, private pension plans were backed by federal pension insurance. If a company stopped paying into the plan or went bankrupt, workers still had a guarantee, up to legal limits.

The bosses wanted out of that promise.

The 401(k) gave them the way out. Written into the tax code in 1978 and opened up by IRS rules in 1981, the 401(k) shifted retirement from a guaranteed pension to an individual account. The boss no longer had to promise a monthly payment for life. Workers were pushed into accounts tied to the stock market.

A 401(k) is not a pension. It is an account. It is not guaranteed. If the market falls, the worker takes the hit.

That is how the automatic stock fund became the least bad option for many workers. It had low fees, broad holdings and no need to pick individual stocks. By 2026, half of U.S. households held pooled investment funds of one kind or another, and the automatic kind dominated.

This huge pool of retirement money — deferred wages taken from workers' paychecks — is now managed by a few Wall Street giants: BlackRock, Vanguard and State Street. When Musk demanded rules that steered that money into SpaceX stock at his price, they carried it out.

The bill comes due later

SpaceX is tied to the same AI bubble now driving Wall Street. The promise is that artificial intelligence, Starlink and future space projects will produce profits big enough to justify the price. Wall Street has already collected on that promise. Workers' retirement money is being pushed in before those profits exist.

SpaceX is the test case. OpenAI and Anthropic are waiting behind it. Each new stock sale can use the same machinery: hype the company, change the rules, force retirement funds to buy, and leave workers holding the stock if the price falls.

If the bubble keeps rising, Musk, the banks and the early investors profit first. If it breaks, the damage shows up later in the 401(k)s of bus drivers, nurses, teachers and warehouse workers.

They never chose to bet their retirement on Elon Musk.

The capitalist class broke the guaranteed pension and pushed workers into Wall Street accounts. On June 12, 2026, Wall Street showed what that means: the bosses write the rules, the funds obey, and workers' retirement money is turned into a payday for Musk and the speculators. #

CHINA: Building socialism in an imperialist world

By Gary Wilson

This report looks at how over a billion people are building socialism in a world still dominated by imperialism. It follows the Chinese Revolution from land reform and collectivization, through the mass campaigns that built industry and expanded education and healthcare, to the Cultural Revolution's effort to curb privilege and keep the revolution on a socialist path.

It shows how socialist construction created the foundations of modern China: state ownership of key industries, technology and banking; planning; broad social participation; and an industrial base strong enough to withstand capitalist pressure. It also examines the strains created after 1978, when market policies widened inequality and allowed new privileged layers to grow, and how today's leadership is working to strengthen state ownership and planning against those pressures.

China is not treated here as a puzzle or a ready-made template, but as a workers' state developing inside a capitalist world system. Its advances and contradictions are rooted in the unfinished struggle of socialist construction, begun with the revolution of 1949.



Wall Street record highs rest on AI bets, paper wealth and war

By Gary Wilson

Wall Street hit a new peak in early June. On June 2, the S&P 500 and Nasdaq closed at records; all three major indexes had set records together the day before. Wall Street called it good news. For workers, it is a warning.

Stock prices have run far ahead of profits. In early June, stocks were selling for about 40 times average corporate earnings over the previous decade. In 155 years, that measure has been clearly higher only at the peak of the dot-com bubble in 1999, just before the crash erased trillions in paper wealth.

Who owns this boom? The richest 10% own about 87% of corporate stocks and mutual fund shares. The top 1% owns about half. Most workers own none, or the equivalent of none in real terms.

A stock price is a claim on profits a company has not yet made. Marx called this fictitious capital — paper claims on future surplus value, traded as wealth.

Real wealth is produced by labor using machinery, materials and land. Without workers, machines create no value. Stock prices have climbed far faster than the profits workers produce. Wages have crawled. The market measures the fortunes of the owning class, not the people who do the work.

Wall Street's biggest bet today is artificial intelligence. Nvidia is worth around \$5 trillion. Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, Meta and others are pouring hundreds of billions into chips, data centers and power. Goldman Sachs estimates AI capital spending will reach \$765 billion in 2026.

Labor is the source of value

The boom rests on a narrow base. Almost all recent U.S. GDP growth has come from tech investment, while investment in the rest of the economy has fallen. A handful of AI-linked companies now carry a huge share of corporate profits and stock-market value.

The data centers, chips and electricity systems are real construction. Wall Street has already priced in profits that may never be made.

Here is Marx's contradiction. Capital replaces workers with machinery, while labor remains the source of new value. As more capital is tied up in machines, buildings, chips and electricity, maintaining the profit rate gets harder.

The bosses answer in familiar ways. They cut



Data centers under construction in Leesburg, Va. The AI boom is not just software; it is a massive buildout of buildings, chips, power systems and cooling equipment that Wall Street has already priced as future profit

jobs, speed up work, attack unions and push down wages. They demand subsidies, borrow, gamble and chase war contracts. They turn future profits into paper wealth.

That is the AI boom: a real buildout inside a speculative mania. The technology may survive the bubble. These stock prices will not.

The permanent war economy sits under the boom.

The Pentagon's 2026 budget topline reached \$1 trillion for the first time. The 2027 request runs to \$1.5 trillion, the largest in U.S. history and a jump of about 44%. The cost of the war on Iran, opened Feb. 28 as Operation Epic Fury, is outside that request. Stephen Semler of the Security Policy Reform Institute put the war's cost at nearly \$72 billion in its first 60 days — about \$1.2 billion a day — counting weapons, lost equipment and subsidies to Israel. The Pentagon told Congress the figure was \$25 billion. Semler called that a lie.

War production weakens economy

Wall Street treats this as growth. War production drains workers and weakens the productive base capitalism needs. It consumes labor, steel, microchips and fuel, while producing no goods workers can use and no goods that expand useful production. It turns the means of production into means of destruction.

That is imperialist decay. While U.S. capital

is burned up in weapons, China — a developing socialist country, not an imperialist rival — directs investment into production, infrastructure, transport, industry and technology. One path expands the productive base. The other burns it up.

War remains profitable for the arms monopolies. Missile orders, warships, drones and battlefield software feed Lockheed Martin, RTX, Northrop Grumman, General Dynamics, Palantir and Anduril, along with the investment funds whose shares lift the indexes.

Those profits rest on a loss for society. The same labor and materials could have produced homes, hospitals, trains, schools, power systems and useful machinery. Instead they are consumed by war.

No measure can name the day of a crash. History still gives a warning. When stock prices climb this far ahead of profits, the market eventually falls hard.

The losses will come as layoffs, frozen hiring and closed factories, warehouses and offices. They will come through the 401(k)s and pension funds workers were pushed into after defined-benefit pensions were destroyed — a forced ticket to a casino workers neither own nor control.

The workers who never shared in the boom will be told to sacrifice when the bubble breaks. Workers have no reason to cheer Wall Street's record highs. #

How the military-industrial complex

By Gary Wilson

On June 12, Wall Street did not discover that Elon Musk had created a trillion dollars in wealth. It marked up a paper claim on rockets, satellites, military contracts, public research and the future labor of thousands of workers — and assigned that claim to one man.

That is how the first trillionaire was made.

The financial press called it genius. The record shows something else. The military-industrial complex took a company that private capital would not carry on its own, rescued it with government money, fed it with guaranteed contracts and protected it as a monopoly because the Pentagon needed it.

SpaceX lost \$4.94 billion in 2025 and another \$4.3 billion in the first three months of 2026. By the standard capitalism applies to workers and small businesses — pay your way or perish — SpaceX should have been punished. Instead, Wall Street priced it above JPMorgan Chase because investors know what the prospectus only hints at: SpaceX revenue is underwritten by the U.S. war machine, and the war machine does not let its chosen contractors die.

The capitalist market did not make Musk the first trillionaire. The capitalist state did.

Rescued by the state

SpaceX should have gone under in 2008. Three rockets had failed. The company was running out of money. The banks would not lend. Then NASA signed a \$1.6 billion contract for cargo flights to the International Space Station. NASA money and NASA's guaranteed market helped build the Falcon 9. Industry analysts have said plainly what the official mythology avoids: the contract saved the company from bankruptcy.

There was nothing exceptional about this rescue. This is how monopoly capitalism works in the U.S.: private capital takes the profit, and the capitalist state carries the risk.

The U.S. government bailed out Lockheed in 1971. It rescued the banks in 2008 and the automakers in 2009. It keeps Boeing alive today through military orders no matter how badly its commercial business performs. When a company judged strategically necessary by the capitalist state fails in the market, the state absorbs the loss and guarantees the profit.

When the company was failing, the government stepped in. When the company became valuable, Musk kept the property.

This is not a contradiction in capitalism. It is how U.S. capitalism developed. Railroads, steel, aviation, electronics, nuclear power, computers, the internet and spaceflight were all built through land grants, military orders, government research, subsidies drawn from the wealth workers created and guaranteed markets. Only afterward did the capitalists arrive to announce that private enterprise had performed a miracle.

NASA itself had been starved since the 1980s, when Washington began turning six decades of government-built rocketry, satellite and spaceflight technology over to private contractors. Musk's company inherited that work: the research, the engineers, the trained workforce, the launch systems and the contracts. Workers paid for it through the wealth they created. Musk got the property rights. Outbidding Boeing and Lockheed was a low bar.

The pattern runs through Musk's whole career. As historian Quinn Slobodian and writer Ben Tarnoff documented in *Foreign Policy* on June 12, Zip2, Musk's first company, ran on free data from the GPS constellation the U.S. military had just completed. PayPal worked because federal deposit insurance stood behind the accounts. Tesla survived in 2010 on a \$465 million U.S. Department of Energy loan when private banks refused him.

Musk repaid that loan nine years early for a reason: to cancel the stock warrants that would have given the public a share of Tesla's upside. Those warrants were worth about \$270 million the week he wired the money. The public took the risk. Musk took the gain.

Tariff walls now help protect Tesla from China's BYD, which sells an electric car in China for around \$10,000. It rivals Tesla on performance and, by some measures, surpasses it. The same politicians who preach "free markets" use the state to protect U.S. monopoly capital whenever competition threatens it.

A Pentagon asset with a stock ticker

SpaceX today holds about \$22 billion in federal contracts. Across the Musk empire, government contracts, loans, subsidies and tax

breaks run closer to \$38 billion. SpaceX launches the Pentagon's military and spy satellites. Starlink, the only consistently profitable part of the business, doubles as military infrastructure. The U.S. armed forces depend on it.

SpaceX is a weapons contractor in everything but reputation.

That is the foundation under the \$2 trillion valuation. Wall Street did not price an ordinary company. It priced a contractor lodged inside the machinery of the U.S. war state.

This is why losses did not matter. This is why private investors rushed in anyway. This is why the company could be valued above banks, manufacturers and whole industries with decades of profits behind them. SpaceX has what every capitalist wants most: protection from competition, guaranteed government contracts and a revenue stream backed by the Department of War.

The rockets are real. The satellites are real. The workers are real. But the market value is a claim on the future — future launches, future contracts, future military budgets, future exploitation.

What a trillion-dollar IPO really is

An Initial Public Offering (IPO) does not create the labor, technology or social wealth it prices. It creates a market price for shares. Once that price exists, the whole mass of shares can be revalued at once, including the shares the controlling owner never sells.

SpaceX put only a small slice of the company into public trading. Scarcity helped drive the price up. That price was then applied to the rest of the company. A sliver changed hands. A whole paper fortune expanded.

Marxist economics has a name for this: fictitious capital.

Fictitious does not mean imaginary. SpaceX has launch pads, factories, satellites, software, ground stations, workers and contracts. But the stock price is something different. It is a present price placed on profits that have not yet been earned — a claim on surplus value that has not yet been produced.

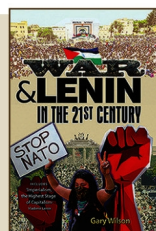
General Motors made \$185 billion in 2025 — ten times SpaceX's revenue — and Wall Street values it at \$73 billion. SpaceX lost \$4.9 billion on \$18.7 billion in revenue and Wall Street values it at more than \$2 trillion. Apply SpaceX's price to GM and GM would be worth \$17 trillion — more than half of everything the U.S. economy produces in a year. The difference is not productivity. It is a Pentagon contract and a monopoly position, capitalized

'WAR AND LENIN in the 21st Century'

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

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

At tinyurl.com/LeninAndWar



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built the first trillionaire



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launches from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. Wall Street valued SpaceX as a private company, but its rise was built on government research, military contracts and the U.S. war budget.

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into a number Wall Street can sell.

The rockets and launch pads, for all their physical reality, are constant capital. They produce no surplus value by themselves. The profit stream that justifies the price comes from living labor — the workers who design, build, launch and operate the systems — combined with monopoly position and state-guaranteed revenue.

Every rocket launch appears in the capitalist press as Musk's vision. In reality, it is the labor of the world concentrated in one launch. Miners, factory workers, chip workers, engineers, welders, machinists, software workers, technicians, launch crews, drivers, cleaners, guards and office workers all enter into it. So do the workers who build the computers, cables, sensors, engines, terminals, satellites, data centers and power systems. The launch is sold as one man's genius. It rests on the collective labor of millions.

The IPO did not reward their labor. It turned their future labor into Musk's collateral.

Musk's trillion capitalizes their future work and the Pentagon's future budgets together, then assigns the result to one man.

Paper wealth is real power

Paper wealth of this kind is not harmless. Musk does not need a trillion dollars in cash. He needs Wall Street to treat his shares as power. Those shares can be pledged as collateral, borrowed against, and used to fund acquisitions, political machines and new speculative ventures. Musk's purchase of Twitter ran on exactly this mechanism.

A paper valuation becomes borrowing power. Borrowing power becomes control over media, technology, politics and labor. The stock market turns a claim on future exploitation into command in the present.

But the danger is built in. A valuation resting on markets that do not yet exist and military contracts that can shift can collapse as fast as it inflated. When it falls, the collateral, the debt and the index funds holding workers' retirement savings can fall with it.

The capitalist gets the paper fortune. Workers get the risk.

What the trillion measures

The first trillionaire will bring demands for reforms to make the system look fairer. Tax him. Regulate him. Let the government take a

small equity stake. But none of that breaks the power underneath: the Pentagon contracts, the monopoly position, Wall Street's valuation machine and private ownership of the industries built by workers.

The question is not whether the state is involved. The state was involved from the beginning. The question is which class controls the state, which class controls the technology and which class receives the wealth.

The IPO proves nothing about one individual creating a trillion dollars in value. It proves that under capitalism, control over labor, technology, military contracts and financial markets can be converted into private paper wealth on a staggering scale.

The wealth appears as the property of one man. Its source is labor, wealth routed through the capitalist state and the power to turn future profits into something Wall Street can buy and sell today.

The answer to the first trillionaire is not to tax the fortune after the fact. It is to expropriate the war profiteers, take space and communications out of private hands, and reorganize production for human need — not monopoly profit and war. #

Belfast answers Musk-fueled racist pogroms with mass anti-racist march

By Lallan Schoenstein

Tens of thousands marched in Belfast, Derry and Glasgow on June 13, answering racist mobs that had terrorized immigrant families days earlier.

Outside Belfast City Hall, the message was clear: the racists do not speak for Belfast. Demonstrators carried signs reading “Refugees welcome,” “Belfast stands against racism” and “Riots don’t speak for Belfast.” The crowd chanted, “Say it loud, say it clear, refugees are welcome here.”

Trade unions joined the rally. Carmel Gates of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions praised health care workers, firefighters, bus drivers and teachers who “picked up the pieces” after the attacks. She led the chant: “Workers’ rights are migrants’ rights, same struggle, same fight.”

That is the answer the far right fears most: workers standing together against racism.

The marches came after days of racist violence across the North of Ireland. On June 9, masked racist mobs mobilized against immigrants and asylum seekers. In East Belfast, about 200 people burned cars, smashed windows and set fires in working-class neighborhoods.

Masked men set bins and cars on fire and blocked roads. Burning bins were pushed into a bus on Newtownards Road, forcing bus service to stop. A Middle Eastern supermarket in South Belfast was set on fire. A Turkish barber shop in Ballyclare, County Antrim, was attacked.

The far right used a Belfast stabbing as a signal to mobilize. Tommy Robinson, founder of the fascist English Defence League, posted a video calling the stabbing “another invader attack on our people.” The post carried the slogan “Millions must go” and listed times and places for street actions that night.

Elon Musk fueled the pogroms by spreading Robinson’s post on X and adding his own call: “Only by protesting REPEATEDLY and LOUDLY will there be any change!!” He also amplified far-right politician Rupert Lowe, who demanded that “millions and millions” be forced out of the country.



An anti-racist crowd of thousands filled central Belfast on June 13, answering the mobs that had terrorized immigrant families earlier that week

Musk claims, like other white nationalists, that immigrants threaten “Western civilization.” This is the politics of apartheid South Africa’s white settler class in modern form: immigrants as invaders, white people as victims, and billionaires as defenders of “civilization.”

The result was terror for immigrant families. Families had to be escorted from their homes as mobs set fires and built roadblocks out of burning garbage bins. Sudanese business owners closed early and pulled down steel shutters. The Belfast Islamic Center canceled evening prayers.

Racist mobs were also unleashed in Glasgow and Liverpool. A hotel housing asylum seekers was attacked in Liverpool.

The riots followed the stabbing of Stephen Ogilvie, who was gravely injured. Police charged Hadi Alodid, a 30-year-old Sudanese refugee, with attempted murder. Police also said Alodid threatened a health care worker after the attack and appeared to be in the throes of a mental crisis.

Ogilvie’s family rejected the racist campaign built around the attack. They said migrants make “a deeply valuable contribution” to society. “We do not want this terrible tragedy to be used to divide people or fuel hostility,” the family said.

Nearly 4 million people have been forced to flee Sudan since 2023, when war broke out, spreading hunger, disease and political breakdown.

The Belfast attacks came after racist riots in Southampton and across England.

East Belfast is a historic stronghold of loyalists and the Orange Order, whose July 12 marches were often an occasion for attacks on Irish nationalist communities before the 1998 accord.

Today, old divisions are being stirred as Ireland is pushed toward the European war drive. The Irish Republic, with a military force of about 7,500, has never been part of U.S., British, European or NATO forces. Now the government has set aside €1.7 billion for military buildup from 2026 to 2030 — a 55% jump over the previous plan. In February, it unveiled its first Maritime Security Strategy, aimed at patrolling the Atlantic and enforcing sanctions against Russia.

Arms makers and oligarchs like Musk will pocket the windfall. Workers in Ireland and the North, like workers across Britain and Europe, are told to take the hit: less for wages, housing, health care and social needs, more for war.

That is the wider setting for the racist agitation. When governments demand more money for war and less for the working class, the far right looks for a scapegoat. It tells workers to blame refugees and migrants instead of the bosses, landlords, war profiteers and governments attacking their lives.

It is not working. The mass marches showed that the greater part of the population is disgusted by violence against their neighbors. The morning after the riots, when a list of possible target addresses circulated online, about 400 volunteers helped shelter some 200 people, including 12 families forced from their homes.

Belfast answered the pogroms in the streets. Its answer was solidarity. #





Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel Bermúdez.

Photo: Estudios Revolución / Granma

The following is abridged from a speech by Miguel Díaz-Canel, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba and president of the republic, at the Karl Marx Theater in Havana, June 5, 2026, marking the 95th birthday of Army Gen. Raúl Castro Ruz and the 65th anniversary of the Ministry of the Interior. Source: Granma.

Two anniversaries bring us together on National Defense Day: the 95th birthday of Army Gen. Raúl Castro Ruz, leader of the Cuban Revolution, and the 65th anniversary of our Ministry of the Interior.

The two are bound together. The Ministry, founded June 6, 1961, grew out of the Secret Service Corps of the rebel army's Second Eastern Front, created by order of a 27-year-old commander named Raúl Castro. In that order he set out the need to confront everything that could endanger the rebel forces. That early instinct — to study the enemy, anticipate his plans and never let down the guard — has stayed with Raúl all his life, in service of one duty: to defend the people and the Revolution.

Now the mafia's lair in Florida hurls slander and illegal actions at our army general. The people have answered with a phrase: "Raúl is Raúl." Like Fidel, he is irreplaceable. He stands as a moral shield, a man who survived repeated assassination attempts, marked from the start as a target of enemy intelligence. Raúl is Cuba, and Cuba is untouchable — untouchable as long as one worthy Cuban stands where the enemy means to aim his bullet.

He is also a statesman who helped proclaim Latin America and the Caribbean a Zone of Peace — the same peace now trampled by a U.S. administration restoring the Monroe Doctrine and treating our lands as its backyard. He was an active mediator in the Colombian peace talks that produced the accord between the FARC and the government. He guided, patiently and discreetly, the beginning of normalization with the United States — a path cut short in 2017 by the same anti-Cuban groups that have always opposed any understanding and now push for a military confrontation ruinous to both peoples.

CUBA does not surrender

The enemy meant to humiliate Cuba by accusing its leader. Instead they roused the rebellion of a whole people, who sang "Happy Birthday" to the army general on one of the most celebrated birthdays in memory. The poet Cintio Vitier put it plainly: "They have united us forever, they don't know what they have done."

To the Ministry of the Interior, on 65 years: you have confronted the darkest plans of the empire — armed groups in the mountains, sabotage, terrorism, bacteriological warfare, assassination attempts, economic and ideological subversion, psychological and media warfare — all directed and financed by U.S. intelligence. From the founding generation to the newest recruits, you never wavered. You proved that no adversary, however powerful, is invincible.

That was the message of the 32 combatants who fell in Venezuela on Jan. 3, 2026. Surprised, outnumbered and outgunned, they went out to fight, and they fought with ferocity. Their resistance drew admiration even from the invaders. Above all, they showed how millions of Cubans would defend the homeland if it is attacked. Soon after, five border guards defeated ten in a foiled terrorist landing aimed at planting an armed cell on Cuban soil; their gravely wounded commander never abandoned his post.

You have also stood with the people in disaster — in hurricanes, fires and floods. The images of your fighters pulling people from the waters of Hurricane Melissa, at great risk to their own lives, are still fresh in our memory.

Our nation faces imperialism as never before. Before the eyes of the world, violating international law, the U.S. government is committing genocide. It is carrying out a deliberate plan to force a humanitarian crisis — one whose effects already fall on children, the elderly, pregnant women and the disabled, on all our people without exception. There is a name for that: a crime against humanity.

The energy blockade imposed by executive order on Jan. 29 is an act of extreme cruelty. Washington threatened coercive measures against anyone who would sell us fuel. In the first five months of the year, Cuba received one shipment out of 40 requested — a single vessel of 100,000 tons, used in April. It did not cover our needs, but it showed how different daily life would be without the blockade.

Total fuel starvation was not enough. On May 1, after a massive show of popular support for the Revolution, they tightened the noose in evident rage: a new executive order of sanctions, confiscations and fines against any company, bank, institution or person that trades with Cuba, invests in Cuba, or supplies us with even basic food, medicine and hygiene products. The firms now fleeing the island are

fleeing that coercion.

They built it on a lie — the criminalization of GAE, a Cuban enterprise system they fear precisely because it works against the blockade. Without a shred of evidence, they invented a tale of corruption and favoritism that exists only in their own minds. The same method was used against Cuban medical collaboration, slandered to cut off a vital source of funding for our free and universal public health care.

This is how the empire operates: it destroys, and then builds a story to make the destruction seem deserved. They want the world to believe their war is aimed at a few individuals — a claim repeated so often it fools no one. From Haiti to Venezuela, from Iraq to Afghanistan to Libya, every chapter opens with a lie and closes in ruin and death. They started a war against Iran claiming, without proof, that Tehran was building a bomb — after the relevant agencies had ruled it out. Now they invent the same pretext against Cuba, this small blockaded archipelago, calling it a threat to the national security of the United States. They even circulate doctored images of Chinese and Russian bases that do not exist here.

They call Cuba a failed state. It is a state under attack, refusing to surrender. We do not turn a blind eye to our own shortcomings. But a country denied food, medicine, fuel and spare parts, cut off from credit and blocked from trading freely, cannot function normally. The long blackouts, the empty pharmacies, the broken transport, the falling tourism, the rising migration — these are the blockade's work. And then the imperialist chorus blames socialism for all of it. How hypocritical!

That is the uncomfortable truth: Cuba does not surrender. Cuba persists and resists. And that persistence is intolerable to the empire.

Cuba wants peace. Cuba does not provoke or attack. We still seek understanding with the United States on the basis of mutual respect, as has been shown to be possible. But if the homeland is attacked, we will answer in legitimate self-defense. And if they try to enter, let there be no doubt — there will be a decisive and resolute fight.

Sixty-five years ago, the CIA's Operation Patty aimed to assassinate Raúl in Santiago de Cuba and stage an attack on the Guantánamo Naval Base to justify an invasion. Within days of its founding, the new Ministry of the Interior dismantled the plot with a counter-operation it called "Candela." That victory preserved Raúl's life and exposed the enemy's intentions. As those old methods are reinvented today, our answer will be no different, and our confidence in victory no less.

Homeland or death. We shall overcome. #

Venezuela under U.S. occupation

By Gary Wilson

There is no honest way to discuss Venezuela today without starting from U.S. occupation.

This occupation wears modern clothes. It uses Treasury licenses, frozen accounts, oil permits, blocked payments, prison cells, military threats and control over state revenue. Washington has seized decisive functions of the Venezuelan government while pretending that Venezuela acts freely.

The U.S. military kidnapped Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores on Jan. 3, 2026. Maduro remains Venezuela's president, held in U.S. custody in New York. Delcy Rodríguez governs as acting president under conditions Washington imposed. Venezuela's oil policy, financial channels and access to revenue now operate under the supervision of the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control.

OFAC functions as a shadow finance ministry over Venezuela. Its licenses decide which oil contracts move, which companies operate, who can buy oil, who can ship it and where the money goes.

That is occupation in modern imperialist form.

The gunboat remains. So does the threat of U.S. military force. But the Treasury license, the frozen bank account, the blocked payment channel, the secondary sanction and the U.S.-controlled oil account have become weapons of rule.

Caracas chooses from what Washington permits.

Marco Rubio and the State Department want the world to see something else. Their story says Venezuela's present course comes from deals at the top, betrayals, private negotiations, oil contracts and political maneuvering. It places Delcy Rodríguez at the center and pushes U.S. imperialism into the background.

That frame serves Washington. It turns coercion into consent. It makes concessions forced by pressure look like free choices by Caracas. It hides occupation behind diplomatic language.

Trump made the operation plain. Venezuelan oil money is to be held under U.S. Treasury control. Companies may pay routine local fees inside Venezuela, while royalties and key federal payments are directed into U.S.-run accounts.

Washington is controlling the money flow of Venezuela. This is colonial control dressed up in banking language.

Venezuela must ask Washington for its own money. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Caracas has to submit a "budget request" before it can touch the oil revenue the U.S. Treasury holds.

This is how imperialism rules where it has



New York, March 26 — Demonstrators demand freedom for Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores. Their imprisonment is part of Washington's assault on Venezuela's sovereignty and the Bolivarian Revolution.

not fully conquered. It freezes assets. It blocks banks. It threatens ships. It licenses oil. It kidnaps leaders. It seizes revenue. Then it points to the narrow path left open and calls that "Venezuelan policy."

Alex Saab's deportation has become a point of dispute in parts of the solidarity movement. It should be treated in proportion. Many defended Saab because he was associated with efforts to bypass the sanctions blockade and secure food, fuel and financial channels. Washington targeted that effort because Venezuela was trying to survive outside U.S. control.

The questions raised around Saab, state contracts, private capital and concessions made under siege should not be dismissed. Workers have every right to ask what was done, who benefited and who paid the price. But those questions cannot displace the central fact: Washington created the siege, controls the revenue and now uses every contradiction it helped sharpen to divide the solidarity movement and recast coercion as consent.

The danger is to turn uncertainty into a simple betrayal story. That road feeds the very fragmentation U.S. pressure was designed to create.

Every contradiction inside the Bolivarian process has sharpened under occupation. Every weakness has been exploited. Every concession to private capital carries a heavier cost. Every retreat in wages, collective bargaining, popular participation or social protection weighs more heavily on the workers and oppressed.

The contradictions must be examined. But any serious analysis begins with the real

balance of forces. Washington is the occupier. Venezuela is the country under occupation.

The Bolivarian Revolution has suffered a military defeat and now operates under U.S. occupation. But it has not been politically defeated.

The revolution still lives in the organized people: the communes, communal councils, CLAP committees, workers' organizations, women's and youth movements, social missions, popular militias and neighborhood networks built over decades of struggle.

These structures have been battered by sanctions, migration, wage collapse and the pressure of occupation. They have lost resources. Many have lost cadres. Some have been weakened by bureaucracy and survival deals made under siege. Yet they remain real forces in Venezuelan society.

They organize food distribution, local production, public services, neighborhood defense, political mobilization and demands on the state. They are the living base that U.S. imperialism has not been able to erase.

That is why solidarity must reject the Rubio line. Washington wants the world to see only officials, oil contracts, debt talks and accusations of betrayal. The deeper reality is that the Bolivarian Revolution still exists as an organized popular force, even after a military setback and under occupation.

The question is whether that popular force can defend sovereignty, regain the initiative and make the country's resources serve the workers and oppressed — or whether Washington and capital can use occupation to push the people aside. #

ICE killers walk free as feds charge 15 Minneapolis anti-ICE organizers

By Gary Wilson

Federal agents killed Renee Good and Alex Pretti during Trump's ICE invasion of Minnesota. Five months later, no agent has been charged.

But on June 16, federal agents raided homes across the Twin Cities and arrested 12 immigrant-rights organizers. A grand jury charged 15 people with conspiracy to impede or injure federal officers. Several face additional counts. One defendant was already jailed; two remained at large.

The 94-page indictment names two Minneapolis groups — Direct Action Minnesota and the Black Cat Worker's Collective — and brands them “antifa.”

That label is the point. The government could not make its earlier cases stick, so it reached for conspiracy.

The earlier cases fell apart

Since Operation Metro Surge — the Trump administration's mass ICE operation launched in Minnesota in December 2025 — U.S. Attorney Daniel Rosen's office charged 36 people with assaulting or impeding federal agents. Those cases have fallen apart. Eighteen were dropped outright, three of them permanently. Prosecutors signed non-prosecution agreements in at least 11 more. A federal magistrate called one sworn statement behind the charges a “false affidavit” and asked why prosecutors were still pursuing the case.

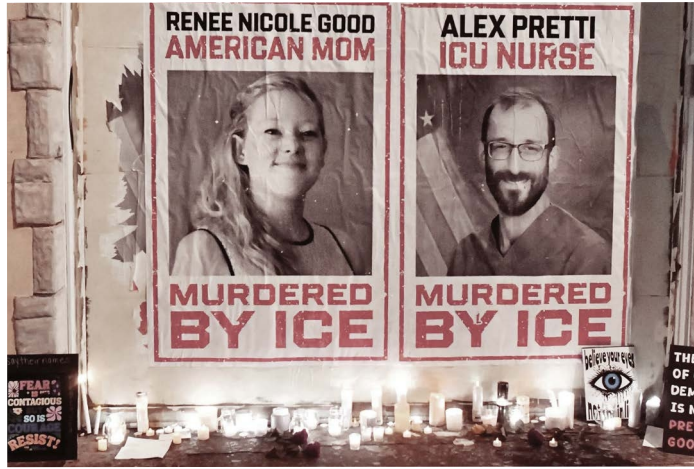
Unable to convict protesters one by one, the government changed targets.

The conspiracy count does not require prosecutors to show that each of the 15 struck an agent. It ties them together through meetings, encrypted group chats, rapid-response networks, homemade shields, tracking ICE vehicles, warning neighbors of raids and blockades at the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building, the federal immigration hub at Fort Snelling.

That is what the indictment really targets: the structure of community defense that Minnesota workers built against ICE.

At his June 16 news conference, Rosen spoke again and again of “violence.” Asked to name one federal agent injured by the people he had indicted, he named none. Pressed for evidence, he told reporters to read the indictment, handed out minutes earlier.

Erik Davis, a religious studies professor at Macalester College and one of the 15, said plainly what the case looked like from inside the courtroom: “I looked through the



indictment at all the things that include my name, and I seem to be indicted for holding meetings.”

The class character of the case comes into focus beside what the same prosecutors refuse to do.

Killers walk free

In January, federal agents shot and killed Good and Pretti during Metro Surge. No agent has been charged. Asked by KARE 11 why, Rosen said only that the investigations were “ongoing.”

Bruce Nestor, an attorney for one of the 15 and a past president of the National Lawyers Guild, says that instead of prosecuting those killings, Rosen's office called for investigating the victims' families and friends — the same impeding-ICE theory now aimed at the defendants. Several prosecutors quit after the office was pushed to turn the investigation away from the agents who killed Good and Pretti and toward people close to the victims.

So the line is drawn. The agents who killed Good and Pretti walk free. The people who organized to stop the kidnapping of their immigrant neighbors face years in federal prison.

The killers walk free. The organizers face prison.

The defendants are not a hardened cell. Natasha Rakotz, charged with assault on a federal officer, is a home health aide. She turned herself in on June 17. “I am not a violent person,” she said. “The only thing I did was care about my community and my neighbors.”

Cameron Kennedy, a 36-year-old sales representative, was one of the 12 arrested June 16. That morning his neighbors blew whistles and pounded on his door to warn him — the same kind of alarm neighbors raised across the Twin Cities to call out masked agents, and the same conduct the indictment now treats as a

crime. A dozen federal agents in tactical gear were already on the stairs, guns drawn, with a warrant and a battering ram. A sign in Kennedy's window read “ICE out of Minneapolis.” His doormat read “Come back with a warrant.” He raised his arms and opened the door. Agents seized his phone and his computer. He said he feared for his life.

Even the court refused to give prosecutors what they wanted. A judge rejected the demand for cash bail. The defendants were released under restrictions, including no contact with one another and no protest on federal property.

Outside the St. Paul courthouse, U.S. marshals answered community support with chemical irritants and flash-bang grenades. Dozens had packed the courtroom. When it filled, officials refused an overflow room and gassed the crowd trying to enter.

Nestor called Rosen's news conference a propaganda show. He said the indictment was designed to punish and intimidate.

That is its purpose.

A scare label, not a terrorism charge

The case rests on a label. In September 2025, Trump declared “antifa” a domestic terrorist organization by decree. But no such domestic terrorist designation exists in U.S. law. The Brennan Center for Justice has pointed out that the designation carries no legal effect, that no mechanism exists to brand a domestic group as terrorist, and that “antifa” describes a decentralized movement, not an organization in any ordinary legal sense.

The government is not charging the 15 with terrorism at all. It borrows the language of terrorism to prosecute people accused of blocking roads, holding meetings and warning neighbors about ICE.

That is the machinery behind National Security Presidential Memorandum 7 and Joint Task Force Vanguard. Counterterrorism language is being turned against immigrant-rights organizers, workers, students and neighbors who refused to let ICE operate in silence.

Minnesota workers and youth faced down Operation Metro Surge in the streets. They kept their neighbors housed and fed. They watched ICE vehicles, sounded alarms and stood in the way.

They did not back down then. The threat of conspiracy charges will not make them back down now. #

Ismael Guadalupe Ortiz, ¡Presente!

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Hoy quiero dedicar este comentario a una figura muy importante en nuestra lucha por la liberación. Un querido compañero de luchas ha fallecido, Ismael Guadalupe Ortiz. Este valioso ser fue un líder instrumental en la lucha para sacar a la Marina estadounidense de la pequeña isla municipio de Vieques.

Puerto Rico es un archipiélago, la isla grande, que todos conocen como Puerto Rico, y dos islas más pequeñas habitadas, Vieques y Culebra. Además de muchos cayos e islotes deshabitados.

Pues la Marina yanqui usó tanto Culebra como Vieques para sus prácticas de tiros y bombardeos. En Vieques, ocupó dos terceras partes, dejando una franja central donde habitaba hacinada la población. Una de las otras dos partes, la Marina la utilizaba para almacenar todo tipo de municiones y equipos bélicos en bóvedas subterráneas. Materiales que usaban en las prácticas de bombardeos, pero que también vendían a otros países, como si fuera un supermercado militar. Y la parte restante, la



Ismael Guadalupe (a la derecha) con la periodista palestino-estadounidense Dena Takruri.

Photo: Facebook de Dena Takruri

usaba para bombardear, manteniendo a la población en vilo día y noche.

Aunque siempre hubo oposición a la Marina por parte de los habitantes, no fue hasta el

1999, cuando una bomba mató a un guardia de seguridad viequense y el pueblo desde entonces no descansó hasta sacar a la Marina de su territorio.

Ismael fue figura clave en esa lucha.

Dedicó todo su tiempo a exponer el crimen que EUA cometía en su tierra, organizando conversatorios, marchas, entrevistas. Viajó a Estados Unidos para darlo a conocer a la población. También a Japón y a Corea del sur donde EUA tenía bases militares, ofreciendo y recibiendo solidaridad mutua de quienes se oponían a la presencia gringa.

Participó en varios Tribunales Internacionales sobre crímenes de EUA en Corea y en Puerto Rico.

Ahora rendimos tributo a este ser extraordinario cuando su constante trabajo en contra de la militarización y la independencia de Puerto Rico es hoy más relevante que nunca.

¡No a la remilitarización de Puerto Rico!

**Ismael Guadalupe Ortiz,
¡Presente!**

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



Cuba defends socialism under U.S. siege

By Isaac Saney

Cuba has announced one of its most important economic programs since the Special Period of the 1990s. Approved by the Extraordinary Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, the package includes 23 strategic axes and 176 proposals.

Its purpose is clear: confront the worst economic crisis in decades, raise production, attract needed investment, protect the people and defend the socialist foundations of the Revolution.

Cuba is not facing a normal downturn. It is facing economic war. President Miguel Díaz-Canel pointed to the intensified U.S. economic, commercial, financial and energy blockade, sharpened under Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Washington's aim has not changed since 1959: strangle Cuba, break the Revolution and restore U.S. domination over the island.

The damage is severe: energy shortages, inflation, falling production, import shortages and hard limits on foreign exchange. But these hardships did not come from socialism. They



come above all from the longest sanctions regime in modern history.

That is why the new measures are not a retreat from socialism. They are a fight to defend it under siege.

Reform as resistance

"Reality is forcing us to make urgent and necessary changes," Díaz-Canel said. That is not surrender. It is revolutionary realism.

Cuba's leadership says socialist construction must adapt to changing conditions. The goal is to create wealth, expand production and distribute resources more fairly. The state will

Continued on page 11

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