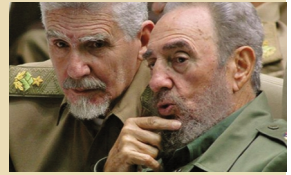


Ramiro Valdés, artífice de las defensas de la Revolución Cubana
Ramiro Valdés, builder of the Cuban Revolution's defenses



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LEONARD PELTIER: nothing to celebrate on July 4

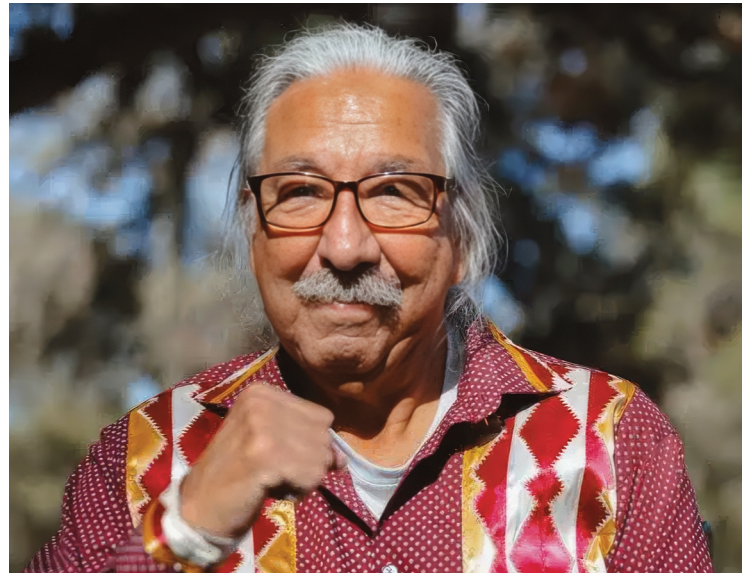
By Gary Wilson

On July 3, fireworks will burst over *Thunǰkášila Šákpe* (the Six Grandfathers), the sacred Lakota mountain the settlers renamed Mount Rushmore. The four presidents blasted into the rock will glow above the Black Hills — land the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty set aside for the Lakota Nation.

The U.S. seized *Pahá Sápa* (the Black Hills) in 1877, after gold was found there. In 1980 the Supreme Court ruled the taking illegal. The Lakota refused the money the court offered and demanded the land back. They are still waiting.

The monument was another conquest. It was designed and directed by Gutzon Borglum, the white supremacist sculptor who began the Stone Mountain Confederate memorial in Georgia, attended Klan rallies, served on Klan committees and drew Klan money into that project. His crews used dynamite and drills to turn the Six Grandfathers into a shrine to U.S. presidents.

Roughly 500 miles northeast, on the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota, Leonard Peltier will be in the house where the federal government keeps him under guard.



Leonard Peltier – still not free.

Continued on page 16



Trump's courts give 450 year sentences to try crush anti-ICE protest

10,000 ICE arrests in 5 days

Baltimore Sun smears Jill Carter

Vigil declares July 3

MUMIA LIBERATION DAY

UAW rank-and-file votes to defund Israeli bonds

U.S. sends war force under cover of **VENEZUELA** earthquake relief

U.S.-backed Paz sends army against **BOLIVIA**'s general strike

Generals over Congress

85 years after Hitler's invasion of Russia



New York: Protests hit Trump, bosses' attack on trans youth health care

CUBA

Trump wants to take LGBTQ+ Cubans' rights

Los Angeles: A vibrant day and night of solidarity

IRAN

The story of a nation that refuses to break

U.S. bombs Iran again because it is losing

HARLEM SAYS 'NO WAR ON CUBA!'

Coordinated protests hit Trump, bosses' attack on trans youth health care

By Melinda Butterfield

New York, June 24 – During evening rush hour, the Gender Liberation Movement and ACT UP NY held protests outside three New York City health care monopolies that cut off gender-affirming care to transgender youth earlier this year: Mount Sinai, NYU Langone and NewYork-Presbyterian.

The sudden end of this life-saving care came in response to executive orders and threats by the Trump administration. None of these carried the weight of law or official regulations.

New York State law provides legal protections against persecution for youth, families and health care providers. That didn't matter to the hospital profiteers.

Hospitals and health care systems across the U.S. in so-called "blue states" governed by Democrats have similarly rushed to comply with Trump's genocidal campaign against trans health care.

Outside a Mount Sinai Health facility in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood, organizers read out anonymous statements from affected youth and families who were blindsided by the hospital's actions.

In May, former patients were informed that NYU Langone and Mount Sinai were planning to hand over private medical records to the Trump regime in response to a federal subpoena. The government has announced its intention to prosecute providers and families. Earlier today, a federal judge placed a temporary block on the handover of protected patient records.

A trans teen and her parent, who will soon leave the U.S., came to the picket and spoke in person.

They explained that their family lost many members in the Holocaust of Jewish, Roma, queer and other peoples under the Nazis. Last year, they had a difficult conversation about the situation for trans lives in the U.S., and realized "it's time to go."



NEW YORK



SLL photos: Melinda Butterfield

"NYU Langone and Mount Sinai have ended health care for transgender youth – not because of medical science, but because of political pressure from the Trump administration. NewYork-Presbyterian removed information about care for trans youth from their website and refuses to answer if they're accepting patients. Now, these hospitals may hand over private medical records of trans youth to the federal government.

"It was a hard decision to uproot our lives," said the parent, "especially because we know many like us are not in a position to leave."

'Honor your oath!'

In Chelsea, picketers carried bright green signs with photos of Mount Sinai Health CEO Dr. Brendan Carr, superimposed with the words "Do no harm!" They chanted, "Mount Sinai, honor your oath!" and "Wake up, wake up, this is your fight too. When they're done with us, they're coming for you!"

Hundreds of leaflets were distributed to patients, health care workers, and passersby: "This hospital abandoned trans youth and their families.

"We demand they:

- Restore gender affirming care for all trans youth patients;
- Publicly apologize to families harmed by these decisions;
- Meet with impacted families and advocates;
- Refuse to turn over patient records.

"If hospitals can abandon one group of patients because of politics, no patient's care is safe.

"Trans youth deserve health care. Families deserve dignity. Patients deserve privacy."

Organizers said this was the first in a series of actions to escalate pressure on the hospital bosses, state and local politicians. #

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Trump's courts give 450 years to crush anti-ICE protest

By Gary Wilson

Federal judges in Fort Worth, Texas, sentenced eight people to a combined 450 years in prison June 23 for a protest outside an ICE jail.

These are the harshest sentences in a U.S. political protest case since Haymarket.

On May 1, 1886, Chicago workers struck for the eight-hour day. Lucy Parsons helped lead 80,000 workers into the streets. Days later, after a bomb went off at a labor rally in Haymarket Square, the state hanged four anarchists, including Lucy's husband, Albert. Prosecutors did not prove they threw the bomb. They argued that their ideas made them dangerous.

The prosecutor told the jury to make examples of them. At Prairieland, a judge said the sentences were a message to "anyone who shares a similar ideology."

The government hanged the Haymarket men to break the eight-hour-day movement. Now it is trying to bury the Prairieland defendants to break the fight against ICE raids and deportations.

Benjamin Song got 100 years. Maricela Rueda got 70. Autumn Hill, Savannah Batten, Zachary Evetts, Meagan Morris and Elizabeth Soto got 50 years each. Daniel Sanchez-Estrada got 30.

None killed anyone. Seven were convicted of rioting, "providing material support to terrorists," and using and carrying "an explosive." The government called fireworks "explosives."

The charges grew out of a July 4, 2025, noise demonstration outside the Prairieland Detention Center in Alvarado, Texas, an immigrant jail run for profit by LaSalle Corrections. Protesters gathered to let the people caged inside know they had not been forgotten.

Some set off fireworks and damaged a guard station and vehicles. When police arrived, gunfire from a wooded area wounded Lt. Thomas Gross in the neck. Song was convicted of firing the shots. He says he fired only after Gross raised his weapon at an unarmed protester running away.

The sentence that exposes the whole operation belongs to Sanchez-Estrada. He was not at the protest. He is a teacher, a father and a green card holder. From jail, his wife, Rueda, asked him to move a box of political pamphlets the couple kept at home.

He moved it. For that, the government charged him with "corruptly concealing a document" and sent him to prison for 30 years.

The box held leftist zines. Owning them is no crime. The government could not make



Signs supporting protesters charged with domestic terrorism over an anti-Immigration and Customs Enforcement protest are seen outside the courtroom in Fort Worth, Texas on March 11.

leftist literature illegal. So it used the literature to paint Sanchez-Estrada and Rueda as part of a criminal political conspiracy. Then it punished him for moving the box.

That is the message the court intended. The punishment was for the ideas.

The Justice Department called the sentencing the first against people "affiliated with Antifa" since Trump's September 2025 order branding antifa a "Domestic Terrorist Organization." FBI Director Kash Patel said the FBI would keep "identifying, locating, and dismantling Antifa."

There is no national antifa organization with membership rolls, officers, headquarters or command structure. Antifa is a word meaning against fascism. The government knows this.

That is why the label is useful. It lets prosecutors take friends, neighbors and union members, call them a "cell," and turn their politics and associations into a criminal conspiracy. The court treated their beliefs as evidence against them.

The machinery was built out of a fraud. After Charlie Kirk was assassinated in September 2025, Trump and the right blamed "the radical left." They had no left-wing organization, no antifa cell and no radical-left plot. So they invented one.

Days later, Trump signed National Security Presidential Memorandum 7, directing federal agencies to hunt the left under the banner of "domestic terrorism." Prairieland is the first test. The Justice Department used that framework to send people to prison.

The same double standard runs through Minneapolis. ICE agent Jonathan Ross killed Renee Good, a mother of three and a legal observer, on Jan. 7. She was sitting in her car. Border Patrol agents killed Alex Pretti, a VA intensive-care nurse, on Jan. 24 as he filmed them and directed traffic. Both stood against the raids.

The government claimed Good ran the agent over and called it "domestic terrorism." It said Pretti drew a gun and attacked. Videos showed both claims were lies.

Five months later, no federal agent has been charged. The agents who killed walk free. The people who protested the killing go to prison.

Judges Mark Pittman, a Trump appointee, and Reed O'Connor, a Bush appointee and Federalist Society judge, turned an anti-ICE protest into a warning to the whole movement.

The case is already a template. On June 16, U.S. Attorney Daniel Rosen invoked NSPM-7 to indict 15 organizers in Minnesota. He called them antifa. Their alleged crimes were blocking ICE vehicles, tracking agents and standing between federal cops and the neighbors those cops came to kidnap.

Trump did not invent the drive to make political protest illegal. Under Biden, Democratic officials, police and campus administrations attacked those protesting the Gaza genocide. Police broke up the Columbia encampment in April 2024, and the crackdown spread across the country. Biden gave the

Continued on page 7

Baltimore Sun smears Jill Carter for challenging machine politics

By Lev Koufax

On June 4, the Baltimore Sun Editorial Board published a piece headlined “Officials should condemn Jill Carter’s antisemitic comments.” The editorial went on to paint the former state senator as a vicious antisemite.

Before continuing, some things need to be put in context.

First, the Baltimore Sun, which was once heralded as the city’s flagship paper, has long been a propaganda rag for powerful capitalist interests in the Baltimore area. However, the Sun’s nosedive into reactionary propaganda took an even darker turn in 2024, when it was purchased by Sinclair owner and conservative media mogul David Smith. Since that purchase, the Sun’s coverage of local issues has become mired in racist stereotypes and jingoistic narratives. If one were to believe the Sun, Baltimore City seems to be an irredeemable Gotham overrun with crime and senseless violence solely due to the city’s majority Black population. This is, of course, a lie. But that seems to be all the Sun peddles these days, racist and divisive lies.

Second, Jill Carter is a long-time progressive activist and advocate for the Black community. She served as a state delegate and a state senator for the 41st district for 22 years combined. During that time, she advocated for Medicare for all, an end to racist police terror, reparations for Black families affected by lead poisoning, and investment in public housing. Due to her pro-people positions and advocacy, she has often found herself in the sights of the right-wing and the local capitalist class.

This recent smear campaign based on allegations of antisemitism is no different. So, what were Jill Carter’s words that the Baltimore Sun, the Baltimore Scoop (right-wing religious Zionist website) and Zionist commentators like J. Barry O’Connell and Jay Bernstein found so virulently antisemitic?

In a Facebook comment, Senator Carter referred to the fact that in a District where 63% of the population is Black, the entire Democratic Central Committee is composed of white Orthodox Jewish people. She explained in detail, “The 41st District is 63% Black. How is it not recognized that the efforts of leaders of the Orthodox Jewish community to control the politics of this majority-Black district are hostile to black people? I’m kind of glad this race is bringing out the truth of who people are, and who controls the so-called media.”

Jill Carter has long been a target of Baltimore’s political establishment for defending Black communities and challenging racist police and machine politics.

Let’s pause for a second. Just to be clear, the author of this article is a Jewish Baltimorean. He has family who live in Jill Carter’s district. He has counter-protested illegal Zionist sales of Palestinian land in Jill Carter’s district. There are plenty of working-class Jewish people who live in that district, who, like everyone else, do their best to get through the day and feed their families.

There is also no doubt that for hundreds of years, the idea that Jewish people control the media has been a foundational antisemitic principle that has been used to oppress and scapegoat Jewish people for the crises of capitalism.

But as with so many things, multiple facts can be true at the same time, even if they seemingly exist in contradiction. In Marxism, the analytical lens of this paper, we refer to this as dialectical materialism, and it is a particularly helpful lens for the issue at hand.

As stated before, while the 41st District of the Maryland Senate contains many working-class Jewish people who hold little systemic power, there is certainly a section of that community that does. This section of the Jewish community includes people like Izzy Patoka and Yitzzy Schleifer, both Zionist Jewish politicians who claim to represent the view of the entire Jewish community. They are both hardline Zionists who support the genocide in Gaza and have long peddled cheap racist lies.

These are the sort of politicians who help run the Democratic Party machine in the 41st District and throughout Maryland. They do not speak for the Jewish community. They speak for the forces that finance and control machine politics: real estate, big business, utilities, developers and wealthy donors. Carter’s offense was that she named the political power of that machine in a majority-Black district.

With that said, examining Patoka and Schleifer’s monetary backers enlightens the entire situation. Izzy Patoka is backed by the Kushner family, the slumlords who deprived Baltimore residents of basic civil rights and who are a staunch ally of Donald Trump. Schleifer’s campaigns are funded primarily by big pharma, real estate barons, and local utility magnate Baltimore Gas and Electric.

Let us now return to exactly what Senator Carter said. She was indeed talking about how



certain members of the Jewish community in Baltimore exert disproportionate control over Democratic Party politics in a historically Black city. This is not antisemitic; it is simply a fact. And, it is not a fact that means that Jewish people are at the head of a vast conspiracy allowing them to control all facets of society, including the media. One is a local phenomenon based in racism and the opportunism of the capitalist class. The other is a hateful, jingoistic conspiracy theory. This is dialectical. It can be true that Jewish politicians, backed by secular business interests, hold some institutional power and play a role in depriving the Black community of a voice, but it is also true that Jewish people do not “control the media.”

Senator Carter was not espousing antisemitic conspiracy theories. She has spent her whole career fighting for genuine equality and justice for all people. She has stood against both antisemitism and Zionism since she stepped onto the local political scene.

The smear campaign against Jill Carter has nothing to do with protecting the Jewish community or combating antisemitism. It is just another attack on a pro-people figure and an attempt to undermine any voice for the Black community’s control of its own institutions.

As a Jewish Baltimorean, I stand in solidarity with Senator Jill Carter and reject the cynical attempts of Baltimore’s ruling class to undermine her advocacy on behalf of oppressed communities. #

UAWD photo



Rank and file emerge with a political agenda at the UAW convention

By Lallan Schoenstein

Delegates to the United Auto Workers' 39th Constitutional Convention in Detroit took up union business that ran well past contract bargaining, asserting the union's weight on behalf of all the workers who keep the world economy running.

On June 18, the delegates voted to pull union funds out of Israel bonds, refusing to keep bankrolling Israel's war of genocide. The vote makes the UAW the first major U.S. union to divest from the apartheid state, and it marks a rank-and-file struggle breaking into the open inside the labor movement.

UAW officials kept divestment off the convention agenda at the outset. Members at five locals — 869, 1115, 2320, 2325 and 7902 — had already voted to send divestment amendments to Detroit. On June 17, Olga Karounos, a legal services worker from New York and a member of Unite All Workers for Democracy (UAWD), moved to call the divestment amendment out of committee. By UAWD's count, 147 delegates stood with her, past the 128 needed to put it on the floor. The next day the convention debated it and adopted it, 321 to 287.

Earlier on June 17, UAWD member Mike Davis, a parts worker from Ohio, had tried to bring a stronger measure to the floor. That amendment, End Complicity With Israeli Genocide and Imperialist Wars, would have gone beyond divestment. It would have shielded weapons workers — protecting their jobs and pay if they struck to halt arms shipments to Israel or faced retaliation for doing so — and it would have cut union ties to the apartheid Histadrut labor organization. Davis' motion drew 69 delegates to their feet, short of 128 required.

The divestment vote was big step forward. A previous UAW Executive Board vote on divestment failed on May 3, 2024. The vote came after sustained worker pressure and demands for action on the issue from multiple union locals.

UAW members have been fighting to divest dues money from Israel bonds for over fifty years. In the 1970s, the UAW Arab Workers Caucus picketed UAW events, struck, and organized for the 1974 UAW Constitutional Convention demanding divestment. Workers redoubled their efforts after the apartheid state escalated its genocide in October 2023.

UAW's divestment shows the potential for greater militancy and labor solidarity action within U.S. unions, coming as workers around the world, in Belgium, France, Greece, Morocco, Spain, Italy, Sweden, and beyond have even refused to handle weapons and Israeli-bound cargo. The U.S. Palestine support movement has won the divestment of public funds in Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, and New York City.

In other UAWD actions, delegates introduced amendments to "Abolish ICE and Fight State Attacks on Workers," as well as an amendment to "Fight Layoffs with Work Sharing." Those amendments opened discussions and raised consciousness, but fell short of winning the vote.

June 16, UAWD member Shelly Pires introduced the amendment to Abolish ICE and Fight State Attacks on Workers. It would allow union meetings to discuss striking in the event of ICE attacks in the area. The amendment was debated with impassioned speeches about the importance of building working-class capacity to shut down production with political strikes. UAW Local 2325 has already implemented a similar structure.

UAWD's amendment to Fight Layoffs with Work Sharing would require UAW negotiators to bargain work-sharing provisions, spreading available work across the entire bargaining unit instead of throwing some workers out of a job. The resolution notes that "thousands of UAW members have recently been laid off at John Deere, Stellantis, General Motors, Ultium, and numerous IPS facilities."

These amendments show rank-and-file initiative for political action. They challenge the traditional union leadership claims that political action by workers might disrupt labor-management agreements and disturb the illusion of labor peace. But that labor peace served the bosses.

These contracts allowed them to grow wealth while workers' living standards were driven down. That arrangement is now being challenged. The Pentagon wars are coming home at jet speed, and the union members appear to be responding faster than their leaders.

The workers' struggle on the floor of the convention occurred at the same time that the Trump administration, the Pentagon and the auto bosses are seeking to reframe Detroit's auto industry into a military manufacturing hub. Washington is pushing for a draconian \$1.5 trillion military budget to replenish its depleted arsenal of lethal weapons. They want to employ the productivity of Detroit to arm their military adventures and line their pockets with the lucrative contracts.

UAW workers see nothing to be gained in weapons production that ultimately destroys their work.

Convention details as reported by UAWD's Daily Struggle.

Trump wants to take LGBTQ+ Cubans' hard-won rights

Los Angeles LGBTQ Center, June 20 – the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice hosted a forum, “Why Queer People Should Stand with Cuba Against Trump’s Attacks.” Three queer and trans members of the Struggle for Socialism Party spoke (Onyinye Alheri, Melinda Butterfield, and Gregory E. Williams); all three traveled to Cuba after 2022 to learn about Cuba’s new Families Code, documented in the book “Love is the law: Cuba’s queer rights revolution.” The following is abridged from the talk by Williams, a public health worker from New Orleans and co-editor of Struggle-La Lucha news. The full version is on struggle-la-lucha.org.

By Gregory E. Williams

This Pride comes at a heavy moment. In the United States, the Trump administration is attacking LGBTQI+ people, with trans people taking the sharpest blows. These attacks are part of a wider assault on the working class and all oppressed people.

Trump and Elon Musk cut off more than 770,000 children from SNAP food aid while Musk became the world’s first trillionaire, fattened by government money and military contracts. The attacks on queer and trans people are part of the same capitalist decay.

Washington’s war on Cuba is not new. Since 1962, the U.S. blockade has strangled Cuba’s economy. Its purpose was never hidden. A 1960 State Department memorandum admitted that most Cubans supported the revolutionary government. Washington’s answer was to create “hunger, desperation and the overthrow of government.”

That remains the policy: break Cuba’s socialist system and return the island to U.S. corporate control, as it was under Batista.

Trump tightened the blockade in his first term. Biden kept the same genocidal policy in place. Trump put Cuba back on the bogus State Sponsors of Terrorism list. Cuba entered this year already facing its worst crisis since the Special Period of the 1990s. Then, beginning in December 2025, Washington imposed an almost total oil blockade. The electrical system collapsed. Ambulances could not run. Doctors performed surgery by cellphone light.

This is not “pressure.” It is mass murder.

Washington wants in Cuba what it is building in Venezuela: control without formal colonial rule. The U.S. Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control now supervises Venezuela’s oil policy, financial channels and access to revenue. That is neocolonial occupation.



Melinda Butterfield and Gregory E. Williams speak about LGBTQ+ solidarity with Cuba at Los Angeles Pride forum (left). An activist with Cuba’s Grupo Trans Masculinos de Cuba demonstrates the use of a trans masc chest binder (right).

If Cuba is broken, the result will not be democracy. It will be misery. U.S.-dominated banks and financial institutions would impose privatization and austerity. Cuba’s health care and education systems would be opened for plunder. The gains of women and LGBTQI+ people would be attacked first.

Cuba’s 2022 Families Code, approved by 66.85% of voters after mass debate across neighborhoods, workplaces and unions, expanded the rights of women, children, queer and trans people, and all kinds of families.

This was socialist democracy in action. Cuba’s 2025 sports law includes protections against discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation and gender identity. A small group of trans masculine activists, organized through Grupo Trans Masculinos de Cuba, helped press those changes into law. In the United States, where politics belongs to billionaires, such access is almost unimaginable.

But the blockade blocks even these victories from being fully carried out.

Verde Gil Jiménez, general coordinator of Grupo Trans Masculinos de Cuba and a contributor to “Love is the Law: Cuba’s Queer Rights Revolution,” sent a statement to this Pride gathering. He wrote that it is hard to speak of one oppressed group when an entire population is being pushed into hunger, poverty and collapse.

Verde reported that U.N. agencies have thousands of tons of food and supplies they cannot move because shipping lines fear U.S.

sanctions. The World Food Program has about 11,000 tons of food and nutritional supplements stuck at Cuban ports, while UNICEF and UNDP have containers waiting there too. The U.N. needs more than 5 million liters of diesel to carry out its work. Some 20,000 tons of food already in Cuba cannot be delivered normally.

The same crisis hits trans organizing directly. GTMC received binders, trans tape and other health supplies, but cannot get them out of Havana because mail service is down and interprovincial travel is severely limited. Rural people, already the hardest to reach, are more isolated.

Verde also explained that the crisis has slowed the implementation of public policies won through struggle, including training civil registry workers to carry out the law allowing trans people to change their legal sex without surgery or medical procedures. The blockade weakens institutions. Hard-won rights remain stuck on paper.

Yet Cuba keeps fighting for life. Verde pointed to a lesbian couple who gained access to assisted reproduction through the Families Code and Ministry of Public Health protocols. Cuba is also restarting production of 16 cancer drugs for oncology patients. Even under siege, the revolution keeps trying to defend human need.

Cuba has problems that Cubans must solve. But the answer is deeper revolution, not U.S.

Continued on page 7

A vibrant day and night of solidarity with Cuba

LOS ANGELES

By Struggle-La Lucha Los Angeles bureau

In Los Angeles, Saturday, June 20, was a vibrant day and night of solidarity with Cuba.

It started at the Los Angeles LGBT Center in Hollywood, with a panel discussion titled, “Why Queer People Should Stand with Cuba Against Trump’s Attacks.” Activists who visited Cuba spoke about the current U.S.-imposed fuel crisis and danger of Trump launching a war against the island.

The panel featured local artist and activist Onyinye Alheri; Gregory E. Williams, co-editor of Struggle-La Lucha from New Orleans; and Melinda Butterfield of Women In Struggle-Mujeres En Lucha from Brooklyn, New York. All three are contributors to the book “Love is the law: Cuba’s queer rights’ revolution.”

They talked about the significance of Cuba’s 2022 Families Code that expanded queer rights, children’s rights, and recognition of all kinds of families, and the lessons for LGBTQIA+ people living in the U.S.

A diverse group came out to hear the panel, including Sarah, a Black trans woman who recently moved to Southern California after being released from a Michigan men’s prison. Sarah shared that she is planning to take the state’s prison system to court to seek restitution for seven years of torture she endured, even after receiving gender-affirming surgery.

The afternoon event was sponsored by the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice and the Struggle for Socialism Party. The panel was livestreamed and the video can be viewed here.

As the first gathering ended, panelists and audience members were able to join the Trans Pride Festival on the lovely grounds of the Los Angeles LGBT Center.

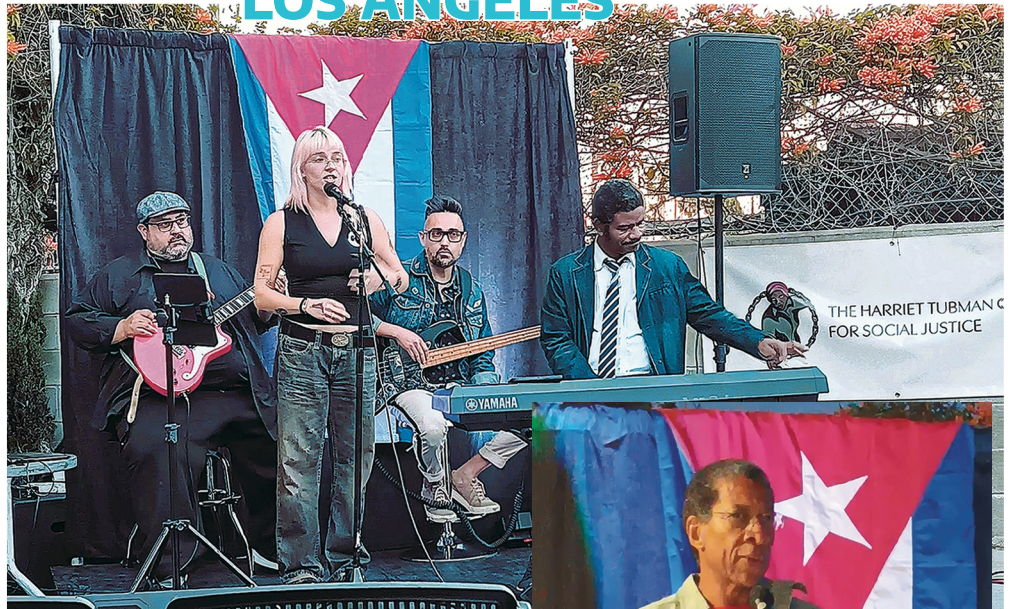
Trump wants to take LGBTQ+ Cubans’ rights

Continued from page 6

domination. Cuba needs more socialism, not less.

The role of movements inside the United States is clear: demand an end to the blockade of Cuba, an end to the genocide in Palestine, an end to ICE raids and deportations, and an end to U.S. interference in Latin America.

The same class that attacks trans youth here is starving Cuba. The answer is solidarity. Cuba deserves to live. #



SLL photos: Melinda Butterfield

‘No war on Cuba!’

In the evening, Cuba solidarity activists and community members, artists and vendors came out for a No War on Cuba Solidarity Night at the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice.

The event featured music, poetry, artwork and talks to raise funds to bring material aid to Cuba and help with local organizing. There were tables from the National Network on Cuba (NNOC) and the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Committee. Food and drink were provided by local community vendors.

Featured musicians Ash Jangda & Company presented a blend of jazz, Cuban rhythms, and South American guitar. Elizabeth Grimm, a Harriet Tubman Center activist who organized the solidarity night, was the emcee.

Speakers included John Parker, Harriet Tubman Center coordinator and socialist congressional candidate; Hope, an activist from the No War on Cuba campaign; Gregory E. Williams; and Melinda Butterfield.

Matt Sedillo and Cesar Flores closed out the evening with powerful poetry.

After the presentations, dancing and conversations continued well into the night. #



Elizabeth Grimm, Ash Jangda & Company and John Parker.

Trump’s courts sentence anti-ICE protesters

Continued from page 3

repression political cover, telling the country that “order must prevail.”

Trump is now taking that weapon and aiming it at anti-ICE organizers.

Eight more were set for sentencing July 1.

Seven had pleaded guilty before trial to a single terrorism count: “providing material support to terrorists.” The government’s own indictment listed the “material support” as “personnel (including themselves).” In plain terms, the crime was showing up. #

Generals over Congress

By Gary Wilson

The Pentagon and the Trump administration are making war without a vote of Congress.

Trump, War Secretary Pete Hegseth and Secretary of State Marco Rubio are carrying out that policy in the open – in Venezuela, Iran and Cuba.

U.S. forces kidnapped Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores on Jan. 3, 2026. Washington now holds them in New York while using Treasury licenses, frozen accounts, oil permits and military threats to control decisive parts of Venezuela's government and economy. That is occupation in modern imperialist form.

On Feb. 28, the U.S. opened its war on Iran. By June 17, Washington had been forced into a 60-day pause after the war began choking oil, shipping and the dollar system.

The U.S. blockade and Iran's response in the Strait of Hormuz bottled up oil inside the Gulf. Oil that cannot move cannot be sold. It cannot become profit. The crisis spread from tankers to freight rates, insurance, futures markets and stock prices. The war began to interrupt the circulation of capital itself.

It also weakened the dollar system. Washington was holding billions of dollars that belonged to Iran, locked away under sanctions. But every frozen account and blocked payment warns every country and central bank that money held in U.S.-controlled channels can be seized.

The war was priced out, not abandoned.

At the same time, the Pentagon has spent months placing warships, aircraft, drones and Marines around Cuba, putting the building blocks in place for an invasion if Trump gives the order.

Congress voted for none of it.

The war drive is not hidden. The USS Nimitz carrier strike group entered the Caribbean in May. Guided-missile destroyers and cruisers are in position. U.S. drones and surveillance aircraft have circled Cuba for months. Amphibious ships carrying Marines have been kept in the region or readied to replace ships coming home. Rubio has already called Cuba a "threat to the national security of the United States."

This is how imperialist war is made. The president orders it. The War Department prepares it. The State Department sells it. Congress trails behind, funds it, excuses it or looks away.

When Sen. Tim Kaine forced a vote in January to require congressional approval for further military action against Venezuela, Republican leaders killed the resolution with a procedural maneuver. Vice President J.D. Vance broke the tie.

Then the Justice Department issued a 22-page memo claiming Trump could use military force in Venezuela without asking Congress at all.

On paper, Congress declares war and controls

the purse. In practice, the military machine now reaches into the offices where those powers are supposed to be exercised. In congressional offices, Democratic and Republican alike, active-duty military officers — soldiers still in uniform, still drawing military pay — sit at the desks where bills and budgets are made.

They draft legislation. They write the questions members ask at hearings. They prepare the memos that decide which choices Congress will even consider.

Then they return to the Pentagon, to the same commands whose money and weapons programs they just helped set the rules for.

None of this is informal. These officers are fellows in the armed services' Legislative Fellows programs — the Army calls its version the Army Congressional Fellowship Program — administered through each service's Office of Legislative Affairs under a standing Defense Department instruction. The work is no secret either. The Navy spells out the duties for its applicants: a year-long, full-time assignment in the office of a House or Senate member who sits on a defense committee, where the fellow serves as a member of the staff and the listed tasks include drafting legislation, preparing the member for hearings, and advising on defense and national-security policy.

That is not civilian control of the military. It is the military moving inside the civilian offices that are supposed to control it.

Congress has two main levers over the armed forces. It votes the money. It writes the rules. Both run through legislation. And that legislation is what these officers write.

So Congress is pushed aside twice over: first when wars are launched without its vote, and again when the Pentagon drafts the defense bills Congress is supposed to use to check it.

Sam Marcy called his 1980 book "Generals Over the White House." This is generals over Congress.

A program built over decades

The arrangement did not appear overnight.

Assigning officers to Congress is a decades-old practice. The Pentagon turned it into a regular pipeline in the late 1990s. What once was a short tour has become a 44-month track: graduate study, a year on Capitol Hill, and then a return tour in the Army's own congressional liaison office.

The same machinery reaches well beyond Congress. The Defense Department sends officers into the think tanks, corporations and universities that help shape war policy. It uses the universities too, but on its own terms. In February 2026, War Secretary Pete Hegseth first moved against Harvard, cutting Defense Depart-



ment fellowships and training programs there, then widened the review to other Ivy League and civilian university programs he accused of anti-military bias.

War Secretary Pete Hegseth and Gen. Dan Caine testify before a House defense appropriations hearing. The Pentagon's power reaches into the congressional offices and committees that are supposed to control it.

ment fellowships and training programs there, then widened the review to other Ivy League and civilian university programs he accused of anti-military bias.

The officers rotate through the Congress that buys the weapons, the universities that study them and the corporations that build them. The military, corporations, universities and lawmakers are stitched together by the people who move among them.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower drew the blueprint for the postwar military-industrial state. As Army chief of staff in 1946, he drafted a memorandum to fuse the military with industry, science and the universities. In his farewell address as president in January 1961, he warned the country against the complex he had helped build.

This is how the military-industrial complex organizes itself. It does not need a general to shout orders in Congress. It only needs officers at the desks where the bills are written.

What Marcy saw

Writing in 1980, Marcy traced how the military kept pushing aside the civilian side of the government — the elected officials who are supposed to run it.

He looked first at the top. He told the story of President Lincoln firing General George McClellan during the Civil War. At that stage, U.S. capitalism was still young and rising. The elected government, not the generals, stayed in command.

Marcy set that against President Truman firing General Douglas MacArthur during the Korean War. Textbooks present that as a simple case of civilian control. Marcy showed what they leave out. Truman fired MacArthur only after he went to the other military chiefs and got their approval first.

A president who must ask the generals' permission before acting is no longer in command the way Lincoln was. That, Marcy wrote, showed the military taking over inside the government.

The fellows program carries that same process down to the level of daily lawmaking.

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U.S. sends war force under cover of Venezuela earthquake relief

By Gary Wilson

Twin earthquakes tore through Venezuela's northern coast the night of June 24, 2026, killing at least 920 people and injuring at least 3,360, according to figures released by Venezuelan officials June 26. More than 50,000 people were reported missing, though the number was expected to fall as duplicate filings were removed and families reconnected. In La Guaira, the hardest-hit state, residents dug through collapsed apartment towers with shovels, hammers and bare hands while waiting for heavy equipment that did not come.

The U.S. Southern Command dispatched the amphibious transport ship USS Fort Lauderdale and the littoral combat ship USS Billings to Venezuelan waters, along with C-17 Globemaster and C-130 Hercules transport aircraft.

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Kevin J. Jarrard, who previously commanded the 4th Marine Division, landed in Caracas the night of June 25 to direct Department of War operations on Venezuelan soil. A Marine general is not sent to run rescue work. He is trained to command troops — for war, invasion and occupation.

Both warships are already assigned to Operation Southern Spear, the same Pentagon buildup in the Caribbean that backed the January 2026 raid in which U.S. special forces kidnapped Venezuela's president, Nicolás Maduro, and Cilia Flores. Maduro remains president of Venezuela. He is held in a U.S. prison in New York.

There is no honest way to read a Marine general's arrival in Caracas without starting from that fact: Venezuela is a country under U.S. occupation.

This is occupation by Treasury license, frozen account, oil permit, blocked payment, kidnapped president and seized revenue.

Acting President Delcy Rodríguez governs under conditions Washington imposed before the ground ever moved. The U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control already functions as a shadow finance ministry over Venezuela, deciding which oil contracts move, which companies operate and where the money goes. The earthquake did not create that arrangement. It gave the occupation a



Residents search through earthquake rubble in La Guaira, Venezuela, after the June 24 twin quakes. Years of U.S. blockade left hospitals, public works and rescue capacity weakened before the disaster struck.

humanitarian script to operate in plain sight.

Workers in La Guaira and Caracas are saving lives with what they have. Neighbors pulled a man from the rubble with their hands. Residents in Catia La Mar stopped trucks to demand they unload bread and water in their streets. Volunteers from Valencia drove through the night with supplies the state could not deliver, while grassroots organizations collected food, clothing and medicine across the country for displaced families and set up makeshift shelters.

The Venezuelan armed forces moved mobile surgical units into the coastal disaster zone, and emergency teams from Mexico, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador arrived within 24 hours, with brigades from Colombia and Brazil following. Acting President Rodríguez has named Maj. Gen. Juan Ernesto Sulbarán Quintero, commander of the Bolivarian National Guard, sole authority over the emergency and placed La Guaira under military administration. This is the organized base of the Bolivarian Revolution: communes, communal councils, workers' organizations, the armed forces and the state apparatus itself. It is doing what it can with what the U.S. occupation has left.

What the blockade has left Venezuela is a country forced to meet catastrophe with its hands tied. U.S. sanctions escalated under Trump in 2017. Biden kept and deepened them.

Over a decade, Venezuela's economy was driven down by roughly 80%. More than 8 million people were pushed out of the country. Hospitals were stripped of supplies. Construction and maintenance budgets collapsed.

The government's capacity to enforce building codes or stockpile heavy rescue equipment had already been hollowed out by the blockade.

The occupation did not pause for the earthquake.

On June 25, the Treasury Department issued General License 60, allowing transactions tied to relief. But Venezuela's assets abroad remain frozen. Aid can move only by Washington's permission.

Caracas still cannot touch its gold in the Bank of England. It still cannot freely use nearly \$5 billion in IMF Special Drawing Rights. Its oil revenue still moves through channels controlled by the U.S. government.

This is occupation in banking language.

Solidarity with Venezuela starts from that fact. It means demanding the gold, the frozen accounts and the seized export revenue be returned to Caracas without conditions. It means refusing to let a Marine general's arrival in a disaster zone be read as anything other than what it is: occupation deepening its hold under cover of rescue. #

Harlem says 'No war on Cuba!'

SLL photo: Stephen Millies

By Stephen Millies

Defenders of socialist Cuba marched through Harlem June 20 to answer threats from the Trump regime. The action was called by the Blacks 4 Cuba Coalition, initiated by the December 12th Movement.

As the coalition's palm card explained, "the Trump administration is now threatening to attack Cuba. But Cuba continues to defend its sovereignty and its government. We must stand in solidarity to defend Cuba."

People gathered at the site of the former Hotel Theresa, where Fidel Castro met with Malcolm X in 1960. People carried Cuban flags as well as the African liberation flags designed by the Honorable Marcus Garvey. Members of the People's Organization for Progress carried a banner supporting Cuba.

A Juneteenth Parade was marching down Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. (125th Street). Defenders of Cuba marched along the same route.

As they were going by the Adam Clayton Powell Jr. State Office Building plaza, a speaker at a Juneteenth rally there welcomed them. People on the street showed their support. Cuba has many friends in Harlem.

A concluding rally was at Malcolm X Blvd. and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., which was chaired by the December 12th Movement Chairperson Omowale Clay. Dr. James McIntosh of the Committee to Eliminate Media Offensive to African People (CEMOTAP) reminded people how thousands of Cuban soldiers died for



Marchers carry a banner reading "Africans called, Cuba answered!" at Malcolm X Blvd. and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Harlem, June 20, with Cuban, Pan-African and Haitian flags held aloft behind it.

African freedom.

Raymond Dugue, the 1st Assistant President General of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), founded by Marcus Garvey, also pointed out Cuba's role in defending Angola. Just as Trump supplies bombs to his fellow war criminal, Netanyahu, so did the U.S. government support the former South African

apartheid regime's invasion of Angola.

A speaker from Struggle-La Lucha newspaper spoke about how Cuba has trained thousands of doctors from around the world at no charge, including 200 medical students from the United States. They now heal poor people coast-to-coast.

Cuba has helped people around the world. The power of the people will defend Cuba. #

Generals over Congress

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There is no MacArthur this time. There is no public showdown. There is no headline ultimatum from the brass.

There is only the quiet handoff. The writing of the law passes from Congress, which is supposed to make the laws, to the military, which Congress is supposed to control.

Marcy described how the military often moves quietly at first, while the officials who are supposed to keep it in check either miss the move or look the other way. A soldier writing the fine print of a bill at 9 at night is exactly that kind of move.

Marcy was blunt about where this leads. The more the military takes over, the more power passes to the part of the state furthest from any vote and least answerable to the people. It rules by command. Wherever it reaches, it spreads repression and hollows out what little democracy capitalism still allows.

Already in military hands

Marcy quoted a witness from inside the ruling class itself: Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana.

Ellender was an old-line segregationist Democrat. He was no leftist and no dove. Yet in 1967, he said Congress and the country were, in many ways, already in the hands of the military. The generals and admirals, backed by the State Department, got just about whatever they wanted, even when it ran against the country's real needs.

The fellows program turns that warning into daily routine. In 1967, the military got what it wanted by pressing Congress for funds, weapons and authority. In 2026, it has moved deeper into the process. It helps write the bills that feed the war machine.

When Congress votes, the military's demands are already built in.

Some critics answer with rules: disclose the placements, restrict what officers can draft, hire more civilian staff, make them wait before

returning to Pentagon offices.

Those measures may expose part of the arrangement. They do not touch its source.

Marcy's answer was that militarism does not come from one bad official, one missing rule or one abuse of procedure. It comes from the drive of finance capital — the banks, monopolies and war corporations that dominate the economy and require a permanent war machine.

The same officers serve in Democratic and Republican offices because both parties administer the same war state. That is why the staff shortage in Congress is itself political. Congress can always find money for the Pentagon. It cannot find money for the aides who might question Pentagon spending.

It votes a trillion dollars for war and then claims it needs uniformed officers to help write the bills.

A few more civilian staffers would not change the power behind the process. The issue is not only who holds the pen. It is who the pen serves.

The war economy

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U.S.-backed Paz sends army against Bolivia's general strike

By Gary Wilson

On June 20, Bolivian President Rodrigo Paz ordered the army into the streets.

A 90-day state of emergency, signed that day, authorizes soldiers to clear the road blockades that workers, campesino organizations and Indigenous communities have held for nearly seven weeks. The decree claims to “restore order” in a country shut down by a revolt against austerity.

That day, military and police units began tearing down barricades on the highways around El Alto and La Paz.

A deal at the top, troops on the roads

The order came less than a day after Paz signed a “pacification” agreement with the leadership of the Central Obrera Boliviana, the country’s main labor federation.

Its executive secretary, Mario Argollo, had already been charged with terrorism. Arrest warrants on terrorism charges had been issued against 25 union leaders. Under that threat, the COB leadership called for the mobilizations to end after the government promised not to criminalize protest, to review the cases of detained protesters and to stop political or judicial persecution of mobilized leaders.

But the agreement did not include all the forces holding the blockades.

Campesino federations in La Paz and the cocalero unions of the Cochabamba tropics, historically aligned with Evo Morales, were not part of the deal. They rejected the call to lift the blockades.

By the morning of June 20, about 42 blockade points remained active across five departments, concentrated in La Paz and Cochabamba. That same day, Paz sent the army and police to clear them.

Shock therapy from Washington

The emergency decree did not come out of nowhere. It is part of the austerity program Paz has imposed since taking office: fuel subsidy cuts, IMF negotiations, foreign borrowing and a push to open Bolivia’s resources to Western capital.

Paz took office in November 2025 promising stability. Within weeks he delivered shock therapy.

Supreme Decree 5503, issued in December, ended decades-old fuel subsidies and roughly doubled the price of gasoline overnight. Food and transport costs rose with it.

In May, Law 1720 opened small landholdings

Indigenous women hold a highway blockade leading into La Paz in late May.

to use as loan collateral. Campesino and Indigenous organizations saw it as a step toward stripping them of communal land. Paz annulled the law on May 13, but by then the struggle had widened.

It was no longer only about fuel and land. It was about wages, imported “junk gasoline” wrecking people’s vehicles and Paz’s resignation.

Bolivia is being pushed toward a new IMF loan worth roughly \$2.6 billion to \$3.3 billion. The price is floating the currency and ending the dollar peg that has held for more than 15 years. That would raise prices and cut real wages.

The IMF push follows a \$4.5 billion support package from the Inter-American Development Bank announced in January and a \$1 billion bond sale in May, Bolivia’s first international borrowing in years.

Bolivia’s lithium is part of the same fight over who controls the country’s wealth.

The country holds close to a quarter of the world’s lithium outside the United States. About \$2 billion in development contracts with Russian and Chinese state companies are stalled by court action and political disputes. Paz questioned those contracts before taking office and has pledged to review them as his government seeks IMF money, borrows abroad and promises to open the “new Bolivia” to Western capital.

Washington has backed Paz directly.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio told Paz the United States was “ramping up emergency assistance and logistics operations support.” War Secretary Pete Hegseth called the protests “attempts to overthrow the legitimate government” and warned that “the United States is watching.”

The blockades hold

Paz is not facing a few isolated roadblocks. He is facing forces rooted deep in Bolivian society: miners, rural teachers, transport



workers, campesino federations, cocalero unions and Indigenous communities of the Altiplano.

These organizations have their own structures and long histories of struggle against the state.

The COB agreement put on paper a pledge that public firms would not be privatized and that natural resources would not be handed to private interests. The movement had forced that promise from the government even as Paz sat at the table with the IMF.

But the agreement did not end the revolt. It gave the government political cover to send the army against the blockades.

The government blames Evo Morales and says forces tied to him are trying to destabilize the country. Morales denies directing the uprising. He calls it an Indigenous rebellion driven by economic hardship and has called for early elections.

Whatever Morales’ role, the shortages are real. The wage pressure is real. The land threats, arrests and anger in the rural communities are real.

No state of emergency resolves this

Bolivia’s gas income has fallen. Dollars are scarce. Paz is using that crisis to bring in the IMF.

But IMF money does not come as relief for workers. It comes with orders: cut subsidies, float the currency, squeeze wages and open more of the country to foreign capital.

The army was sent to open the roads for the bankers, the IMF and the foreign corporations.

But the roads were blocked because workers and rural communities are facing higher fuel prices, higher food prices, wages squeezed by inflation, threats to communal land and a new grab for Bolivia’s lithium.

No state of emergency can hide that. #

IRAN: The story of a nation that

By Michel Shehadeh

Iran is not merely another nation-state on the map. It is one of history's great civilizations, a country whose identity cannot be confined by geography or measured within the lifespan of a modern political order. Its roots stretch back more than two and a half millennia to the Achaemenid Empire of the sixth century BCE, when Cyrus the Great established one of the ancient world's most sophisticated systems of governance, built upon administrative efficiency, cultural pluralism, and respect for diversity. Through the successive Persian empires, particularly the Sassanids, and later as a leading center of Islamic scholarship, philosophy, poetry, science, and literature, Iran cultivated a civilizational legacy that has endured across centuries.

For Iranians, this heritage is not simply a source of historical pride; it remains a living component of national identity. It shapes how they perceive themselves, not as a peripheral nation dependent upon outside powers, but as the heirs to an ancient civilization with a deep sense of sovereignty, continuity, and historical purpose.

Yet that civilizational confidence was profoundly shaken during the 20th century, particularly under the reign of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (1941–1979), whose rule became emblematic of a state closely aligned with Western strategic interests.

In 1951, Iran experienced one of the Middle East's rare democratic moments when Mohammad Mossadegh was elected Prime Minister. His government embarked on a bold nationalist project by nationalizing Iran's oil industry, seeking to reclaim control over the country's natural wealth after decades of foreign domination. Nationalization was more than an economic policy — it was a declaration of national dignity and political independence.

The response from the great powers was swift. In 1953, the United States Central Intelligence Agency, working alongside British intelligence, orchestrated the coup that overthrew Mossadegh and restored the Shah to power. That intervention would alter Iran's modern history for decades, firmly anchoring the country within the Western security architecture while severely limiting its political sovereignty.

Under the Shah, Iran evolved into one of Washington's closest strategic allies in the Middle East and developed extensive military, intelligence, and economic cooperation with Israel. At home, this external alliance was sustained by an increasingly authoritarian political system. The notorious SAVAK intelligence service became synonymous with surveillance, imprisonment, torture, and the systematic suppression of political dissent.

Although the Shah promoted what became known as the "White Revolution" as a modernization project, its benefits were distributed unevenly. Economic growth enriched elites closely connected to the monarchy while leaving broad segments of society trapped in poverty and marginalization. By the mid-1970s, despite annual oil revenues exceeding \$20 billion, more than 40% of Iranians still lived below the poverty line, while illiteracy approached 60% in many rural regions.

The country's rapid Westernization also produced profound social tensions. Cultural models imported from abroad were imposed from above with little regard for Iran's religious traditions or social fabric. Political parties were dismantled, meaningful public participation disappeared, and political life became increasingly closed.

Beneath the appearance of stability, frustration accumulated for years. That accumulated pressure finally erupted in 1979.

The Iranian Revolution swept away the monarchy and established the Islamic Republic under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, marking not merely the collapse of a regime but one of the most consequential geopolitical transformations of the 20th century. The revolution fundamentally altered Iran's internal political order while reshaping the strategic landscape of the Middle East.

The new republic's transformation extended beyond domestic politics. It also introduced an entirely different regional vision, nowhere more evident than in its approach to Palestine.

One of the new government's earliest symbolic acts was closing the Israeli Embassy in Tehran and transferring the building to the Palestine Liberation Organization as the Embassy of Palestine. The decision represented far more than diplomatic symbolism; it announced a strategic realignment that would become central to Iran's regional identity.

Soon afterward, Iran established International Quds (Jerusalem) Day, observed annually on the last Friday of Ramadan (fasting month), transforming the Palestinian cause into a permanent component of its political discourse and projecting it onto the international stage.

This unequivocal positioning against Israel became one of the principal drivers of the escalating confrontation between Iran and the United States and its regional allies. Iran not only rejected diplomatic recognition of Israel but also adopted a long-term political, strategic, and rhetorical commitment to supporting the Palestinian cause.

From Tehran's perspective, this reflected both ideological conviction and regional strategy. From Washington's perspective, it challenged a regional order built around U.S. influence and Israeli military supremacy.

Viewed through this broader historical lens, the decades of sanctions, diplomatic isolation,

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Generals over Congress

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Every one of these wars and war buildups runs through budgets Congress is supposed to weigh and approve. The occupation of Venezuela, the war on Iran, the military buildup surrounding Cuba, the buildup against Russia in Europe, the bases, fleets and missiles aimed at China across the Pacific, and the permanent war economy itself — all of it passes through legislation Congress writes.

When the officers who carry out the programs also draft the bills that fund them, the military's demands are built into the law before

Congress votes.

Marcy warned that war spending works like a drug. For a while, it can stimulate capitalist production. Kept up year after year, it turns into its opposite. It drains the economy and feeds inflation. It builds up the banks, the weapons corporations and the contractors whose profits depend on the war budget.

This is how monopoly capitalism works in its imperialist stage. The capitalist state carries the risk. The corporations take the profit. Government research, military orders and guaranteed contracts build whole industries, from rockets and satellites to drones, ships, missiles and

artificial intelligence. Then Wall Street turns those future contracts into paper wealth — stock prices, loans and market power today.

The permanent war economy does not stand apart from capitalism. It is one of the main ways U.S. capitalism now organizes production, finance and the state.

The fellows program is one small gear in that machine. The same officers who help write the defense bills write the fine print inside them — the billions in guaranteed contracts handed to the weapons and tech monopolies, the firms whose drones, satellites and artificial intelli-

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refuses to break

covert operations, military pressure, and direct confrontations directed against Iran cannot be understood solely through the lenses of nuclear enrichment, missile development, or regional politics. Those issues are significant, but they exist within a much larger struggle over Iran's independent geopolitical orientation and its refusal to accept the regional balance envisioned by the United States and its allies.

From its earliest days, the Islamic Republic faced relentless international hostility, particularly from the United States. Successive administrations imposed sweeping economic sanctions, pursued diplomatic isolation, and sought to contain Iran's regional influence. Barely a year after the revolution, Iraq invaded Iran in September 1980, triggering one of the bloodiest conflicts of the 20th century.

The Iran-Iraq War lasted eight years, claiming well over one million casualties on both sides and inflicting economic losses estimated at more than half a trillion dollars on Iran alone. Throughout much of the conflict, Iraq enjoyed extensive military, financial, and political backing from Western governments and several Gulf states, which viewed the newly established Islamic Republic as a strategic threat to the regional order.

History, however, would reveal a striking paradox.

The Iran-Contra affair exposed that the Reagan administration had secretly sold weapons to Iran even while publicly supporting Iraq. The episode illustrated the complexity, and, many would argue, the cynicism, of great-power politics. Rather than seeking a decisive victory for either side, the conflict increasingly appeared to serve a broader strategy: exhausting both regional powers while preserving an external balance of influence.

Yet Iran did not emerge from those years broken. Instead, it embarked upon an ambitious project of national reconstruction built around self-reliance.

Despite decades of sanctions and international isolation, Iran has built one of the largest economies in the Middle East. In nominal dollars, the World Bank put its 2024 GDP at about \$475 billion. Measured by purchasing power parity, Iran ranks among the world's larger economies — a better measure of the industrial, scientific and technical capacity the country has developed under siege. Possessing some of the planet's largest proven reserves of oil and natural gas, Iran has sought to turn that natural wealth into industrial capacity rather than remain dependent on energy exports alone.

Today, the country manufactures more than one million automobiles annually, has established a diversified industrial base, and has achieved varying degrees of self-sufficiency



Tehran, Iran, with the Milad Tower and the Alborz Mountains in the background. Decades of sanctions, coups, and war have failed to break Iran's sovereignty or stop its social and scientific development.

across numerous sectors, including defense production. Long denied access to many Western technologies, Iran invested heavily in domestic scientific research, engineering, and higher education.

These investments have produced measurable results. Iran now ranks among the world's leading countries in scientific publications across several technical and engineering fields. Literacy has risen to well above 90%, while universities have expanded dramatically, producing generations of engineers, physicians, scientists, and researchers.

Equally significant has been the transformation of Iranian society.

Women today account for more than half of all university students, and their presence has expanded steadily across medicine, engineering, academia, scientific research, entrepreneurship, and public administration. Despite ongoing debates over legal and political restrictions, the educational advancement of Iranian women has become one of the country's most notable social developments.

Health care and infrastructure have likewise undergone substantial expansion. Electricity reaches virtually the entire population. More than 95% of pharmaceutical needs are produced domestically. Life expectancy has risen to nearly 78 years, above the world average and roughly equal to that of the U.S.

These achievements do not erase the country's economic challenges or political controversies. Rather, they demonstrate a society that has continued to build institutions, expand technical capacity, and invest in human capital despite sustained external pressure.

Perhaps even more significant has been Iran's determination to preserve its political independence.

Unlike many states in the region, Iran chose not to integrate itself into the U.S.-led regional security architecture. Instead, it cultivated strategic partnerships with emerging global powers such as Russia and China while simultaneously investing in indigenous military capabilities, particularly its missile program and domestic defense industries.

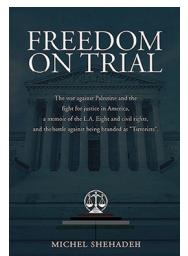
Those capabilities have increasingly shaped regional strategic calculations. Recent military confrontations have highlighted an asymmetric balance: on one side stands a coalition possessing overwhelming technological superiority and advanced weaponry; on the other stands a nation that, despite decades of sanctions, isolation, and repeated military pressure, has developed sufficient deterrent capacity to complicate any effort to impose a decisive military defeat.

Whether viewed with admiration or criticism, Iran has demonstrated an undeniable ability to adapt, endure, and preserve its strategic autonomy under conditions that many observers believed would eventually force its collapse.

Michel Shehadeh is a Palestinian American writer and activist. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1975 and was a defendant in the landmark "Los Angeles Eight" case, a 20-year deportation battle that ended in a major civil rights victory.

A former director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee

(ADC) and the Arab Film Festival, his latest book is "Freedom on Trial: The war against Palestine and the fight for justice in America a memoir of the L.A. Eight and civil rights, and the battle against being branded as 'Terrorists!'"



U.S. bombs Iran again because it is losing

By Gary Wilson

U.S. warplanes struck Iran again June 28, the second round of bombing in two days near the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran answered with missile and drone attacks on U.S. military sites in Kuwait and Bahrain. Tehran said Washington had broken the ceasefire. Washington blamed Iran.

Washington cannot hide the basic fact. The U.S. opened this war on Feb. 28, with Israel acting as its military outpost in West Asia. By June 17, Washington had been forced into a pause. On June 19, it signed an agreement with Tehran to stop the fighting and reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Then it bombed Iran again.

These were the strikes of an empire that cannot impose its will but cannot stop trying.

The more Washington fails to win, the more it widens the war. The U.S. military could not break Iran in four months of war. It could not keep the Strait of Hormuz open by command. It could not make Iran surrender. It could not protect its own bases from retaliation across West Asia.

Now it is bombing again, even as its own war machine is under strain. U.S. missile stocks have been drawn down. The White House is pressing weapons makers to speed production and move onto a war footing. The war that was supposed to show U.S. strength has exposed U.S. limits.

The fuel crisis exposes the same thing. The U.S. economy runs on diesel. Trucks, trains, tractors and ships depend on it. Military aircraft depend on the same refining system for jet fuel. When distillate stocks are thin, war demand cuts into the fuel needed to move commodities, food and raw materials. The war runs through the heart of the capitalist economy. It disrupts the circulation on which profit depends. The ruling class then tries to force every disruption



U.S. warships escort tankers through waters near the Strait of Hormuz. Washington calls this “freedom of navigation,” but it means military command over routes thousands of miles from U.S. shores.

onto workers through layoffs, wage pressure, speedup and repression. The war command knows this. It bombed anyway.

That is what the imperialist state is built to do. It is the state of finance capital, the oil monopolies and the dollar system. It protects their command over trade routes, credit, energy and world markets. It will risk fuel shortages, disrupted transport, higher commodity prices and wider war to defend that command.

Nowhere is this clearer than the Strait of Hormuz. Iran sits on one side of the strait. Oman sits on the other. The U.S. sits on neither. Yet the U.S. Navy claims the right to escort tankers through a waterway thousands of miles from any U.S. shore.

Washington calls this “freedom of navigation.” What it means is U.S. military control of the oil routes. It means the Pentagon claims the right to police every chokepoint on earth.

The tankers are not just ships carrying oil. The U.S. naval escort around them is a show of force. The Pentagon is trying to prove that oil can still move under its guns and that Iran has no right to defend the waters at its own door.

But the display cuts both ways. If the U.S. needs a major military operation to move a

limited number of ships, then its control is not solid. It is thin. It is contested. It has to be enforced shot by shot.

Oil that moves under U.S. naval command is oil Washington is trying to keep inside the dollar system.

Lebanon shows the same command structure.

Israel has continued to bomb southern Lebanon and keep troops on Lebanese land despite ceasefire agreements. Washington has not restrained it. Instead, the U.S. used the ceasefire talks to accept Israel’s continued occupation of Lebanese land and to describe that occupation as a security arrangement.

This settles a question the U.S. ruling class works hard to confuse. Israel does not drag the U.S. into wars Washington does not want. Israel is a U.S.-armed client state in West Asia, supplied and protected to do Washington’s work.

When Israel bombs Lebanon, Washington writes the framework around the bombing. When Israel holds Lebanese land, Washington calls the occupation a security arrangement. The “tail wags the dog” story gets the order of command backward.

Washington commands. Israel carries out.

No worker has an interest in this war. It is a war for oil, chokepoints and the dollar. It is waged against the people of Iran and Lebanon under the bombs. It is also waged inside the U.S., where the same ruling class drives down living standards and militarizes the government.

The U.S. can still destroy. That makes it dangerous. But destruction is not victory. Washington keeps bombing Iran because the war has already shown what it cannot do.

It cannot dictate terms in the Strait of Hormuz. It cannot make Iran submit. It cannot make Lebanon disappear from the battlefield. It cannot hide the strain inside its own economy and military machine.

This is what declining imperialism looks like up close: armed to the teeth, still murderous, still dangerous — and driven to wider war because it is losing its grip. #

Generals over Congress

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gence the war budget pays for. The money becomes law before the public hears a word of debate. The whole arrangement comes dressed as sober, expert, bipartisan policy.

The real check

The answer is not to make Congress look more independent while the same class remains in command.

The civilian officials and the military are two arms of one ruling class. Workers have no stake in which arm holds the pen. What the fellows program shows is the whole government being pulled deeper under military control — the

civilian offices as much as the uniformed ones — all in the service of capital.

No list of placements will reverse that. No waiting period will. No ethics rule will stop a war machine built into monopoly capitalism.

The only force that has ever pushed the military back is the one Marcy pointed to: workers and oppressed people in motion, refusing to bleed and pay for wars made over their heads.

The officer writing the fine print is a symptom. The disease is a system that needs endless war and writes its own permission slips to wage it. #

85 years after Hitler's invasion, Germany rearms for war on Russia

By Gary Wilson

On June 22, 1941, more than three million soldiers of Nazi Germany and its allies crossed the Soviet border in Operation Barbarossa. What followed was a colonial war of annihilation that killed some 27 million Soviet citizens over four years, most of them civilians.

Eighty-five years later, the German ruling class is building for war in the East again.

In 2025, Germany raised its military spending 24% — the third straight year of double-digit increases — to \$114 billion, making it the fourth-largest military spender on earth. Across the continent, NATO members in Europe spent \$559 billion on their armed forces that year, a rate of increase the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute called the fastest since 1953. The Pistorius plan, named for the German defense minister, sets out to build the strongest conventional military force in Europe by 2039.

The U.S. is restructuring the alliance to fit this drive. At a meeting of NATO ministers, U.S. Secretary of War Peter Hegseth presented what he called "NATO 3.0," demanding the alliance move "quickly and irreversibly" toward a Europe that takes primary responsibility for its own defense. Washington has begun cutting forces and capabilities earmarked for NATO and is reviewing its troop deployments in Europe, while shifting its global posture toward confrontation with China.

A Europe-led alliance means above all a Germany-led one. Only Germany can pay for it — and in March 2025 it rewrote its constitution to exempt military spending from the "debt brake" that had capped its borrowing.

The aims are stated openly. Kaja Kallas, then Estonia's prime minister and now the European Union's foreign policy chief, said Russia's defeat could mean a breakup into "small nations," replacing a "big power," adding that this would be "not a bad thing." Roderich Kiesewetter, a Christian Democratic Union politician and former Bundeswehr general staff officer, wrote that Europe's strategic goal must be Russia's "unconditional capitulation." This is the language of 1941 in the mouths of 2026.

The Nazi war on the Soviet Union was a capitalist war for raw materials, land and labor. As Sevim Dagdelen recently recalled in the Morning Star, the Nazi leadership spoke of the East as a colony: "Russia is our India." Behind the armies came an Economic Staff East of roughly 20,000 officials, seizing factories,



German Leopard tanks roll under German and NATO flags in Vilnius, Lithuania. Eighty-five years after Operation Barbarossa, German imperialism is again being organized for war in the East.

mines, farms and food supplies for German capital.

Goering's Hunger Plan aimed to starve as many as 30 million Soviet citizens so Germany and its army could be fed. German forces, with Finland holding the northern ring of the blockade, starved roughly one million people to death in Leningrad. The plan was not only military conquest. It was colonial seizure — land without its people, industry without its workers, grain without those who grew it.

In 1942, in Berlin's Lustgarten, the regime mounted a propaganda exhibition called "The Soviet Paradise" to sell the eastern war. The Jewish-communist Herbert Baum group attacked it with firebombs. They were workers and young people who understood what the rest of Germany was instructed to ignore.

Berlin has never officially recognized the Nazi war against the peoples of the Soviet Union as genocide. It prefers narrower language about war crimes and Nazi crimes. The issue was never memory alone. German capital has long looked east for markets, raw materials, energy and industrial advantage. For decades, cheap Russian gas fed German

factories and profits. Today, German imperialism is being reorganized for war.

German and European workers will pay for this, in money now and in blood later. The buildup runs on credit and on austerity. The same governments that find no money for pensions, wages, and housing find unlimited funds for weapons. In April 2026, the Belgian chief of defense, General Frederik Vansina, told the Brussels daily *Le Soir* that Europe has a few years yet, bought with the blood of Ukrainians, and that "this is why we support them." It was the proxy war stated plainly: Ukraine fed into the war on Russia to buy the imperialists time to arm. The rulers of Europe count the dead of one country as the price of preparing the slaughter in others.

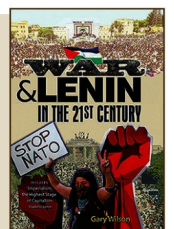
Lord Ismay, NATO's first secretary-general, once said the alliance existed to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down. NATO 3.0 turns the last part on its head. It puts German imperialism back at the head of a war on Russia — in its own interest, and in the interest of the U.S. ruling class that has dominated the imperialist bloc since 1945. #

'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



Leonard Peltier: nothing to celebrate on July 4

Continued from page 1

Peltier, 81, is the longest-held Native political prisoner in the United States. He spent nearly 50 years in federal prison for the deaths of two FBI agents in a 1975 fire at Pine Ridge — a case the government fabricated with coerced testimony, suppressed evidence and a claim it later admitted it could not prove.

President Joe Biden commuted his sentence on Jan. 20, 2025, his last day in office. Peltier walked out of the penitentiary in Coleman, Florida, on Feb. 18, 2025, and was flown home. He did not walk free. He serves the rest of his life sentence under home confinement.

He calls the officer who supervises him his "handler." He needs a written pass to travel 100 miles off the reservation, whether for medical care or a ceremony. Diabetes and cataracts have taken most of his eyesight. Visitors keep him fed with salmon, elk, moose and buffalo. "I was taken out of one prison cell and put into another," he told Democracy Now in an interview aired Sept. 19, 2025.

A \$103 million party for Trump's friends

July 4, 2026, marks 250 years since the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence. The Trump administration has turned the anniversary into a political brand and a cash register.

Trump put himself at the head of Task Force 250 by executive order on Jan. 29, 2025.

Alongside the congressionally chartered America250 commission, the White House promoted Freedom 250, a Trump-aligned fundraising arm. Watchdogs say government money and private sponsorships have been pushed into Trump-aligned hands.

Since October 2025, roughly \$103 million in federal contracts and grants has flowed to outfits run by Trump officials and allies, according to a report released in June 2026 by Public Citizen and the Revolving Door Project. The corporate sponsors are a roll call of the arms industry, Big Oil, tech, transport and agribusiness: Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Palantir, ExxonMobil, Oracle, United Airlines, John Deere. Most have business pending before the same government staging the celebration. Palantir builds the data systems Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) uses to track and target immigrants.

Access is for sale. A half-million dollars buys VIP seating. One million buys a private reception and a photograph with the president. Two and a half million buys a speaking slot on July 4.

Since November 2025 the Interior Department has drained roughly \$98 million from national park entry fees to refit the Reflecting Pool and the monuments around the National

Mall. From December 2025 to April 2026 it moved another \$68 million into the National Park Foundation, the nonprofit that houses Freedom 250.

The festivities opened with a tank parade through Washington on June 14, 2025 — Trump's birthday. Since then came a cage fight on the White House lawn. In August comes a car race on the National Mall. The fireworks over the stolen Black Hills are the centerpiece.

They are also trying to stamp Trump himself onto the anniversary. In February 2025, Rep. Joe Wilson of South Carolina introduced the "Donald J. Trump \$250 Bill Act," directing the Treasury to print a \$250 bill bearing Trump's face and to scrap the 1866 law that keeps living people off U.S. currency. The measure stalled in committee, but Treasury moved anyway. In March 2026 it announced that Trump's signature will appear on newly issued paper money — the first time a sitting president's name has gone on U.S. currency. When the career official running the engraving bureau refused to authorize the \$250 work as illegal, she was reassigned. A 24-year Army veteran, the first woman to hold the job, she signed off with a note that reportedly read, "The buck stopped here."

This party belongs to the ruling class — the state, the war firms, the oil companies and the banks, saluting themselves on land they stole.

Selling seats and sponsorships is only part of it. The deeper aim is to make the ruling class's version of history look sacred.

'A false government'

Peltier has refused to bless the celebration with his silence. Speaking on Native News Online's "Native Bidaské," published March 2, 2026, he said Native people have nothing to celebrate.

He pointed to the Declaration itself. Its final grievance against the king complained that Britain had brought "the merciless Indian Savages" against the colonists. In the same breath, it denounced "domestic insurrections" — the revolt of enslaved people who sought freedom by fleeing to British lines and taking up arms.

That was the founders' fear. Native nations stood in the way of land seizure. Enslaved Africans threatened the slave system. Britain had also blocked settlement west of the Appalachians, where its own royal proclamation had recognized Indigenous land claims.

The men behind the Declaration were slaveholders, merchants, landlords and land speculators. Their independence meant the freedom to keep enslaved people in chains and take Native land.

The Revolution was also a war for continental expansion. In 1779, Washington ordered the Sullivan campaign, which burned Haudenosaunee towns, cornfields, orchards and food stores. The new U.S. government was built for that work. Its army, treaties, courts and executive power were shaped in the wars to seize Indigenous land and open it to settlement, speculation and profit.

The same class that took the land and defended slavery still holds power. The U.S. is ruled by the billionaires, bankers, landlords, oil companies and war profiteers.

Peltier said Native people should use America 250 to tell the truth. "We're no longer going to celebrate a false government until the truth comes out and they apologize to everybody for what they did," he said. "Maybe we can start all over and build a real government of freedom and equal justice for everybody."

The underside of 'freedom'

Peltier knows what the U.S. government does to people. He joined the American Indian Movement in 1972, when AIM was fighting police violence and the theft of what little land remained. The FBI's COINTELPRO program targeted Native resistance as a movement to be broken.

On Pine Ridge, in the same corner of South Dakota where the fireworks will burn, the FBI, federal authorities and tribal chair Dick Wilson's GOON squad waged what survivors call the Reign of Terror against AIM members, traditionalists and their supporters. More than 60 were killed between 1973 and 1976.

When two FBI agents died in the 1975 firefight, the bureau needed a conviction. It extradited Peltier from Canada on affidavits from a Lakota woman named Myrtle Poor Bear, who swore that she was his girlfriend and had watched him shoot the agents. In truth, she had never met him and was not on the reservation that day. She later said FBI agents threatened her and her children until she signed. At trial, the judge refused to let the jury hear her take it back. In 1978, a federal appeals court called the government's use of her affidavits "a clear abuse of the investigative process," then let the conviction stand.

The government told the jury that Peltier executed the two agents at point-blank range. Its proof was a single shell casing the government tied to a rifle it claimed was in Peltier's hands. After the trial, a Freedom of Information Act request turned up an FBI lab report, withheld from the defense, that contradicted the government's claim. A federal appeals court agreed the report had been

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24-hour vigil declares July 3 Mumia Liberation Day

By Andrew Matatag

A coalition of community organizations, advocates, scholars, authors, health care professionals, and residents, all united to struggle for Mumia Abu-Jamal's freedom, called for an emergency 24-hour vigil in front of Philadelphia's City Hall.

In a letter dated April 24, 2026 — Mumia's birthday — the coalition demanded that Philadelphia Mayor Chelle L. Parker proclaim July 3 Mumia Liberation Day.

Representatives of the many organizations united for Mumia's freedom were invited to speak and to draw connections between his struggle and those of others.

Suzanne Ross, a longtime fighter for Mumia's freedom and author of "Born Jewish in Nazi Europe — My Journey to Become Anti-Zionist," highlighted Mumia's solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela and how readily he made a statement when President Nicolás Maduro and First Combatant Cilia Flores were kidnapped by the United States. "Mumia called it a stick-up. What could be a better description?"

This author, representing the Struggle for Socialism Party and Baltimore's People's Power



Assembly, asserted that Mumia's freedom is an issue for every working and oppressed person everywhere. The ruling class and their representatives in the White House hope to make an example out of Mumia for the same reason they want to make an example out of Cuba — to

show that daring to challenge the capitalist system will be met with extreme repression.

Whether Philadelphia's city officials declare a holiday matters little. The people's movement will celebrate July 3 as Mumia Liberation Day. #

Leonard Peltier: nothing to celebrate on July 4

Continued from page 16

concealed and refused him a new trial anyway, ruling it would not have changed the verdict. The government that had convicted Peltier of pulling the trigger then admitted it could not say who did. At a 1985 hearing, its own lawyer told the court, "we can't prove who shot those agents."

Peltier served half a century because the government needed to break AIM and warn every Native fighter who came after it.

The fight that has not stopped

The same state that hunted AIM now sends ICE, FBI and federal agents against immigrants, Native people, Black communities, anti-war organizers and everyone else who stands in the way. Tribal governments have warned their members about ICE stops. Some have told ICE to stay off Native land.

At Fort Snelling in Minnesota, the U.S. Army

held some 1,600 Dakota people — most of them women, children and elders — in a concentration camp over the winter of 1862-63. Many died. Survivors were deported west to reservations. The Minnesota Historical Society calls the stockade a concentration camp and the policy genocide. ICE now runs its operation from that same ground. In January 2026 its agents seized Native people there; one, a U.S. citizen and Red Lake Nation descendant, was held for hours until his mother brought his birth certificate. The old machinery of removal has a new badge.

Peltier tied today's immigration raids to a 500-year campaign to drive Native people off their own land. He has watched ICE agents stop Native people on Native ground and demand

papers. He praised the young people who refuse: "Who are you people to come into our country and tell us that we got to show ID?" He warned that the government in Washington is reaching for "full dictatorship."

His message to the next generation was plain. Hold onto language, ceremonies and history. Then study the enemy. "We need to learn that so we know our enemy, and we know how to fight our enemy."

The rulers will spend the summer celebrating 250 years of a system built on stolen land and slave labor. Leonard Peltier, locked inside his own home, keeps telling the truth about it. "The struggle still goes on for me," he said. "I'm not going to give up."

The award-winning documentary "Free Leonard Peltier," directed by Jesse Short Bull and David France, is scheduled to begin streaming on Netflix on Oct. 12, 2026. The film traces Peltier's life from boarding school and legal harassment to AIM, Pine Ridge, the FBI siege, the frame-up and the long campaign to free him. #



10,000 ICE arrests in five days to fill private prisons

By Gary Wilson

Outside Delaney Hall in Newark, New Jersey, protesters demanding the immigration jail's shutdown have been met with tear gas and pepper spray. Inside, during the late-June 2026 heat wave, temperatures hit 102 degrees with at least one unit running no air conditioning. People held there report rotten food and medical neglect.

The GEO Group, the private prison corporation that runs Delaney Hall, holds a \$1 billion contract for 1,000 beds over 15 years. That is about \$180 per bed, per day — collected whether or not the air conditioning runs.

In the last five days of June, Immigration and Customs Enforcement seized more than 10,000 people to fill cages like these.

Internal documents obtained by the New York Times, reported July 1, show the White House ordered the surge. ICE made 2,000 arrests a day the new standard, assigned 80% of officers to arrest operations. Arrests peaked June 27 at more than 2,400 in a single day. By June 30, the population in ICE jails had jumped nearly 4,000 in a week, to more than 63,000.

Who was taken? Sister Letty Ugboaja, a Nigerian nun and nurse, arrested June 28 on her way to church in McAllen, Texas. A Nicaraguan father of two in Miami, taken June 29 when he showed for a government-scheduled check-in — his court date wasn't until 2027. All to meet a quota.

Deportation chief Marcos Charles called it "remarkable operational results."

The White House set the quota. Wall Street set the demand.

On Feb. 12, the bosses of GEO Group and CoreCivic, the two largest private prison corporations, got on the phone with their investors, who wanted more — ICE wasn't jailing people fast enough. "I think people thought we'd be at that 100,000 level," one said of the detention population, then near 70,000. Four and a half months later, the state delivered.

GEO made a record \$254 million profit in 2025 — about eight times the year before — and signed the most new government business in its history. About half its income now comes from ICE, and GEO holds one of every three people in ICE detention. CoreCivic made \$116.5 million, up nearly 70%.

The money follows each body. ICE pays about \$187 per detainee per day, and contracts guarantee payment for empty beds — GEO gets



Police assault a protester outside Delaney Hall in Newark, New Jersey, where demonstrators have demanded the shutdown of the GEO-run ICE jail.

paid whether an immigrant is in the cage, on an ankle monitor or a guaranteed count on paper.

Inside, detained people run the jails themselves. They cook, wash the laundry and scrub the floors for \$1 a day under a "Voluntary Work Program" written into ICE contracts. At Delaney Hall they answered in June the way workers answer: they struck. GEO lobbied ICE to declare that the people who run its jails are not employees. In June, ICE published standards saying exactly that.

The man running ICE is a GEO man. David Venturella took command June 1. He left ICE in 2012 for GEO, spent 12 years selling its detention contracts, then took more than \$6 million as a consultant. In February 2025 he returned to ICE — to run the division that awards those contracts. GEO's salesman became GEO's buyer. Border czar Tom Homan, who pushed the appointment, was also on GEO's payroll. A former ICE official told NPR that when GEO executives visit, "it feels like a fraternity reunion."

The commodity is human beings. The cost is paid in their bodies. A Human Rights Watch report released June 25 counted 52 deaths in ICE custody in the administration's first 500 days — a death rate more than double what it was when Trump took office. Emmanuel Damas, a 56-year-old Haitian man held by CoreCivic in Florence, Arizona, sought treatment for a tooth infection for a week and was given ibuprofen. The infection became septic shock, and he died March 2. While the toll climbed, ICE shut down the office tasked with investigating detention abuse.

The prisons are already overflowing. In South Florida, the Miramar check-in center became a

makeshift jail, people locked in offices for days. The administration's answer is more capacity — a plan to buy warehouses to hold 96,000. Congress has locked in the money: \$170 billion for anti-immigrant enforcement, guaranteed through 2029. ICE is now the highest-funded police agency in the country.

This is the police-prison-industrial complex, building concentration camps for immigrants. Imperialist war, blockades and plunder abroad uproot masses and drive them across borders. Then the same government guarantees contracts for monopoly capital at home and feeds the displaced into cages as raw material.

Every arrest — at a check-in, a traffic stop, at work — carries a message: keep quiet, skip the union meeting, let the boss steal your wages. In Utah, attorney Ysabel Lonazco says her clients are now afraid to drive to the grocery store. Terror in immigrant communities is meant to keep the whole working class fearful and easier to exploit.

The surge was kept quiet because public raids had already brought resistance. The offensives of 2025 and early 2026 — Los Angeles, Chicago and the Minneapolis operation in which agents killed Renee Good and Alex Pretti — met protests, legal defeats and outrage. They helped force out Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem and Border Patrol commander Greg Bovino. Her successor, Markwayne Mullin, promised a "less public-facing" campaign.

The movement outside Delaney Hall, in Minneapolis and Los Angeles forced the machine into stealth once. A machine that has to hide from the working class can be stopped.

#

Ramiro Valdés, builder of the Cuban Revolution's defenses, dies at 94

By Gary Wilson

Ramiro Valdés Menéndez, one of the last surviving commanders of the Cuban Revolution and a principal builder of the institutions that defended it against six decades of U.S. war, blockade and subversion, died the morning of June 21, 2026, in Havana. He was 94. The Communist Party of Cuba and the Cuban government announced his death. President Miguel Díaz-Canel wrote that the loss of the Comandante de la Revolución “hurts deeply, like that of a father.”

His death removes one of the last living links to the generation that took power in 1959. Of the men who passed through Moncada, the Granma expedition and the Sierra Maestra, only a few remain. Among the surviving figures of the historic generation are Raúl Castro, 95, and Guillermo García Frías, 98, the first campesino incorporated into the Rebel Army after the Granma landing.

Valdés was born April 28, 1932, in Artemisa, west of Havana, into a poor family. At 21, he joined the July 26, 1953, assault on the Moncada barracks, the action that opened the armed struggle against the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. Three years later, he landed with Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, Che Guevara and the Granma expeditionaries, then fought in the Sierra Maestra as the Rebel Army took shape. He became a comandante, served as Che’s second-in-command and fought beside him in the decisive Battle of Santa Clara in December 1958. From the war he emerged as one of the few leaders to hold the title Comandante de la Revolución. Cuba later named him Hero of the Republic and Hero of Labor. After the Communist Party of Cuba was founded in 1965, he served on its Central Committee and Political Bureau.

The institutions Valdés helped build gave the Cuban people the means to defend their revolution against an adversary 90 miles away that was determined to destroy it. He founded and led the Ministry of the Interior and helped organize Cuba’s state security and intelligence services. They were built in the years of the Bay of Pigs invasion, Operation Mongoose, sabotage, assassination plots against Fidel Castro, bombings and paramilitary raids launched from U.S. soil. These institutions were the Cuban people’s answer to that war — and a decisive reason Washington failed to strangle the revolution in its first decade.

In later years he held a series of state posts, including minister of informatics and communications and, under the 2019 constitution, vice prime minister. In 2010 he went to Venezuela to advise the government of Hugo Chávez during an electricity crisis, part of the deep cooperation between Havana and Caracas that Washington has spent the years since working to dismantle.

Valdés died in the middle of the gravest energy crisis Cuba has faced. On the day of his death, the state electric utility, Unión Eléctrica, reported that the largest simultaneous outage left roughly 64% of the country without power. Blackouts in parts of Havana have run more than 30 hours at a stretch. The crisis, which began in mid-2024, has sharpened dramatically since January 2026, when the Trump administration declared an energy emergency and moved to choke off the island’s oil supply — threatening tariffs against any country that ships petroleum to Cuba and interdicting tankers bound for its ports. United Nations human rights experts have condemned the fuel blockade as unlawful and warned that it has subjected Cuba to “energy starvation.” The target is not only the Cuban state. It is the fuel

that keeps hospitals open, water systems running and basic services alive. This is a criminal siege — an attempt to starve a people into submission.

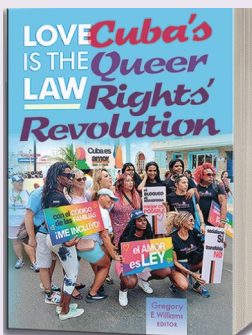
The damage has been devastating. Cuba has been driven into its deepest economic crisis in decades. That is the purpose of the blockade: to empty shelves, darken homes, break public services and wear down the people who have defended the revolution. Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla has called the U.S. measures collective punishment of a genocidal character.

On June 4, 2026, Washington added Díaz-Canel, Lis Cuesta and Alejandro Castro Espín to its sanctions list — the first time a sitting Cuban president has been personally targeted. Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio have gone further, openly and repeatedly threatening Cuba with direct U.S. attack. In an Axios interview published June 19, Trump pointed to the January 2026 U.S. kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro as the model, saying a Cuba operation was “possible.” He placed Cuba and Venezuela within easy reach of U.S. forces — “Venezuela is relatively close and Cuba is a hopscotch” — and reduced the difference to plunder: “Venezuela has oil. Cuba doesn’t.” Rubio, the administration’s chief operator on Cuba and Venezuela, has driven the same campaign of blockade, pressure and regime change.

This is the Cuba Valdés leaves behind: an island under siege, strangled through hunger and darkness, and threatened again with direct U.S. assault. The defense of the revolution — the work to which he gave his life — is once more the question on which Cuba’s survival turns. His death closes a chapter of the generation that made the revolution. The war against that revolution has not ended. #*

LOVE
IS THE
LAW

Book by
Gregory E.
Williams



CUBA's Queer Rights Revolution

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

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



Fallece a los 94 años Ramiro Valdés, artífice de las defensas de la Revolución CUBANA

Por Gary Wilson

Ramiro Valdés Menéndez, uno de los últimos comandantes supervivientes de la Revolución Cubana y uno de los principales artífices de las instituciones que la defendieron frente a seis décadas de guerra, bloqueo y subversión por parte de Estados Unidos, falleció en la mañana del 21 de junio de 2026 en La Habana. Tenía 94 años. El Partido Comunista de Cuba y el Gobierno cubano anunciaron su fallecimiento. El presidente Miguel Díaz-Canel escribió que la pérdida del Comandante de la Revolución «duele profundamente, como la de un padre».

Su muerte supone la desaparición de uno de los últimos vínculos vivos con la generación que tomó el poder en 1959. De los hombres que lucharon en Moncada, en la expedición del Granma y en la Sierra Maestra, solo quedan unos pocos. Entre las figuras supervivientes de esa generación histórica se encuentran Raúl Castro, de 95 años, y Guillermo García Frías, de 98, el primer campesino en unirse al Ejército Rebelde tras el desembarco del Granma.

Valdés nació el 28 de abril de 1932 en Artemisa, al oeste de La Habana, en el seno de una familia pobre. A los 21 años, participó en el asalto del 26 de julio de 1953 al cuartel de Moncada, la acción que dio inicio a la lucha armada contra la dictadura de Batista, respaldada por Estados Unidos. Tres años más tarde, desembarcó junto a Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, el Che Guevara y los expedicionarios del Granma, y luego luchó en la Sierra Maestra mientras el Ejército Rebelde tomaba forma. Se convirtió en comandante, ejerció como segundo al mando del Che y luchó a su lado en la decisiva batalla de Santa Clara, en diciembre de 1958. Salió de la guerra como uno de los pocos líderes en ostentar el título de Comandante de la Revolución. Posteriormente, Cuba lo nombró Héroe de la República y Héroe del Trabajo. Tras la fundación del Partido Comunista de Cuba en 1965, formó parte de su Comité Central y de su Buró Político.

Las instituciones que Valdés ayudó a construir proporcionaron al pueblo cubano los medios para defender su revolución frente a un adversario situado a 90 millas de distancia que estaba decidido a destruirla. Fundó y dirigió el Ministerio del Interior y ayudó a organizar los servicios de seguridad del Estado y de inteligencia de Cuba. Estos se crearon durante los años de la invasión de Bahía de Cochinos, la



Ramiro Valdés y Fidel Castro.

Operación Mangosta, los sabotajes, los complots de asesinato contra Fidel Castro, los atentados con bombas y las incursiones paramilitares lanzadas desde territorio estadounidense. Estas instituciones fueron la respuesta del pueblo cubano a esa guerra —y una razón decisiva por la que Washington no logró estrangular la revolución en su primera década—.

En años posteriores, ocupó una serie de cargos gubernamentales, entre ellos el de ministro de Informática y Comunicaciones y, en virtud de la Constitución de 2019, el de viceprimer ministro. En 2010, viajó a Venezuela para asesorar al Gobierno de Hugo Chávez durante una crisis eléctrica, en el marco de la profunda cooperación entre La Habana y Caracas que Washington lleva años intentando dismantlar.

Valdés falleció en plena crisis energética más grave a la que se ha enfrentado Cuba jamás. El día de su muerte, la empresa eléctrica estatal, Unión Eléctrica, informó de que el mayor apagón simultáneo había dejado sin electricidad a aproximadamente el 64 % del país. Los apagones en algunas zonas de La Habana han durado más de 30 horas seguidas. La crisis, que comenzó a mediados de 2024, se ha intensificado drásticamente desde enero de 2026, cuando la Administración Trump declaró una emergencia energética y tomó medidas para cortar el suministro de petróleo a la isla —amenazando con imponer aranceles a cualquier país que enviara petróleo a Cuba e interceptando petroleros con destino a sus puertos—. Los expertos en derechos humanos de las Naciones Unidas han condenado el bloqueo de combustible por considerarlo ilegal y han advertido de que ha sometido a Cuba a una «hambruna energética».

El objetivo no es solo el Estado cubano. Es el combustible el que mantiene abiertos los hospitales, en funcionamiento los sistemas de abastecimiento de agua y los servicios básicos. Se trata de un asedio criminal: un intento de someter a un

pueblo mediante el hambre.

Los daños han sido devastadores. Cuba se ha visto sumida en su crisis económica más grave en décadas. Ese es el propósito del bloqueo: vaciar las estanterías de las tiendas, sumir los hogares en la oscuridad, paralizar los

servicios públicos y desgastar al pueblo que ha defendido la revolución. El ministro de Asuntos Exteriores cubano, Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, ha calificado las medidas estadounidenses de «castigo colectivo de carácter genocida».

El 4 de junio de 2026, Washington añadió a Díaz-Canel, Lis Cuesta y Alejandro Castro Espín a su lista de sanciones —la primera vez que un presidente cubano en ejercicio ha sido objeto de sanciones personales—. Trump y el secretario de Estado Marco Rubio han ido aún más lejos, amenazando abierta y repetidamente a Cuba con un ataque directo de EE. UU. En una entrevista con Axios publicada el 19 de junio, Trump citó como modelo el secuestro del presidente venezolano Nicolás Maduro por parte de EE. UU. en enero de 2026, afirmando que una operación en Cuba era «posible». Describió a Cuba y Venezuela como países al alcance de las fuerzas estadounidenses —«Venezuela está relativamente cerca y Cuba está a un tiro de piedra»— y redujo la diferencia a una cuestión de saqueo: «Venezuela tiene petróleo. Cuba no». Rubio, principal artífice de la política de la Administración respecto a Cuba y Venezuela, ha impulsado la misma campaña de bloqueo, presión y cambio de régimen.

Esta es la Cuba que Valdés deja atrás: una isla sitiada, estrangulada por el hambre y la oscuridad, y amenazada una vez más con un ataque directo de EE. UU. La defensa de la revolución —la causa a la que dedicó su vida— es, una vez más, la cuestión de la que depende la supervivencia de Cuba. Su muerte cierra un capítulo en la historia de la generación que hizo la revolución. La guerra contra esa revolución no ha terminado.

Translation Resumen Latinoamericano – English

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