

Urgently Needed: International Workers Action to Break the Energy Blockade!



Ernesto Mastrascusa/ EFE

Hundreds of thousands of protesters marched on May 1 against the suffocating energy blockade imposed by U.S. imperialism.

Return to the Program of Lenin and Trotsky

The following article is translated from *Revolución Permanente* No. 14, July 2026, the newspaper of the Grupo Internacionalista, Mexican section of the League for the Fourth International.

On June 17 and 18, moving at a breakneck pace, the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) introduced, voted on and had the National Assembly of People's Power (ANPP) approve a plan for "economic and social transformations" that, if implemented – even partially – could unleash a frenzy of privatizations that would threaten the foundations and historic gains of the Cuban Revolution. However, implementing these measures is a big question mark for a country under siege by the world's most powerful imperialist power, a country lacking hard currency, where there is no capital to invest, and above all where there is no fuel. The "176 measures" are clearly an offer to yield to the demands of the U.S. ad-

**The 176 Measures: Threat of Capitalist Restoration
Oppose Privatization! Workers Control, Now!**

**The Bureaucracy Is Bowing to Imperialist Pressure
What's Key: Build a Genuine Communist Opposition**

ministration of Donald Trump, but there is no indication that the recipient is interested in the offer. Quite the contrary.

The fact is that U.S. imperialism is doing everything in its power to subject the island to a crippling energy crisis while insisting on "regime change." It is continuing the policy that has been a constant across all administrations in Washington since 1960: to eliminate the "communist menace" on its doorstep. It is hard to imagine that the intended investments, including the purchase of state-owned enterprises, will take place with the Communist Party in power.

The counterrevolutionary *gusanos*¹ in Miami will never recognize the property rights of anyone who negotiated with the current leaders. On the other hand, it is easy to grasp the devastating impact that layoffs and the elimination of product subsidies outlined in the "transformations" would cause. However insufficient the provisions from the ration book (the *libreta*)² may be, they are vital.

¹ *Gusano*: literally "worm," referring to Cuban exile opponents of the Revolution.

² Starting in 1962, every Cuban household was issued a ration book to ensure equitable distribution of food. Originally covering most foodstuffs, particularly since the cutoff of Soviet oil supplies in 1992 the amount of food supplied has fallen. In principle providing rice, sugar, cooking oil, coffee, eggs, pasta, grains and chicken at greatly subsidized prices, in recent years, partly due to falling agricultural production but also to hoarding and speculation by private traders, deliveries have become erratic and most food consumed in Cuba is now purchased on the open market.

The Cuban people today find themselves caught between the sword of the U.S. Southern Command and the wall of suffocating electricity shortages. The measures approved by the government go far beyond a mere "reform": they are the negation of the socialized economy. They are the result of imperialist blackmail, not the inefficiency of state-owned industry deprived of inputs. The working people will pay the price for this privatization, whether it is creeping or galloping. That is precisely why it is crucial to organize opposition to it from within the labor movement. There will surely be a backlash from managers. A political crisis will then arise that urgently needs to be tackled now, before it is too late. Resolving it will depend on broadening the debate to include the working class as a whole, and all those committed to the Revolution.

Each of the 176 measures requires legislation or other action for its implementation. When cynically referring to layoffs ("workers who terminate their employment relationship"), it is specified that these must "follow an evaluation by the collegial management body,"³ in

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³ State enterprises in Cuba have management bodies consisting of departmental directors and worker representative(s) designated "in conjunction with the union at that level."

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For Workers Action Against Fascist Threat

Fascist “Patriot Front” Marches in D.C. on July 4

On July 4, on the morning of President Donald Trump’s “Great American State Fair” flop, supposedly celebrating 250 of American independence, several hundred Patriot Front (PF) fascists marched in uniform in Washington, D.C. in a publicity stunt recruiting for racist terror. These Hitler-lovers were all masked, in khaki pants and blue shirts, a number with full-body shields. They waved the 13-star U.S. flag, which has been adopted by various white supremacists, as well as the Confederate battle flag of the slaveholders’ rebellion and Ku Klux Klan terror. They also chanted “Reclaim the U.S.,” the slogan on a banner at the head of the march. While often referred to in the liberal media as “white nationalists,” Patriot Front is openly fascist, choosing as its symbol the fasces (a bundled ax) adopted by Benito Mussolini’s Fascist Party in Italy

Harking back to Mussolini’s Blackshirts and Hitler’s Nazi Brownshirts – paramilitary squads that attacked leftists, Jews and others branded as enemies – the PF blueshirts fit right in with the racist MAGA (Make America Great Again) crowd on the National Mall. As the Trump regime unleashes masked ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and Border Patrol thugs to carry out mass deportations, throwing immigrants into concentration camps, fascist action squads act as auxiliaries in targeting leftists, gay and transgender people and others deemed “the enemy within.” As capitalism falls deeper into decay, in the drive toward authoritarian police-state rule, the fascists have been held in reserve as shock troops to violently attack those fighting against the racist capitalist system. Now some are parading publicly to sow terror in the public.

Patriot Front came out of the 11 August 2017 “Unite the Right” march in Charlottesville, Virginia, in which racist and fascist groups banded together to “save” a statue of Confederate general Robert E. Lee. They carried torches and chanted “Jews will not replace us.” The next day, James Fields, Jr., a Nazi who had been marching with members of Vanguard America led by Thomas Rousseau, drove his car into a crowd of anti-racist counterprotesters, murdering Heather



Patriot Front brought hundreds of masked marchers to Washington, D.C. on July 4. The PF symbol (in the middle of the photo, inside a circle of stars), is a fasces, the bundled ax used by Mussolini’s fascists in Italy.

Hayer and injuring 31 others.¹ In the aftermath of that deadly provocation, Vanguard America split and Rousseau renamed his wing “Patriot Front” to be less overtly Nazi in its symbolism and to promote their fascist white-supremacist ideology as “All-American.” The next year it busted up an “Occupy ICE” encampment in San Antonio, Texas.

Patriot Front has focused on building its “brand” and recruiting with stickers and banner drops. During the 2020 summer of protests after the police murder of George Floyd, Patriot Front defaced and destroyed dozens of anti-racist murals. In Boston on July 4th weekend 2022, Rousseau and 100 PF members viciously beat a black musician and activist, Charles Murrell III, who had tried to film a march by the masked provocateurs. Earlier, on 12 June 2022, 31 PF members were arrested as they traveled in the back of a U-Haul truck to stage a provocation at a Pride event near Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. Although they were arrested before they could go into action,

¹ See 14 August 2017 Internationalist Group statement, “Solidarity with Charlottesville Anti-Fascist Protesters! Honor Heather Heyer!” (14 August 2017), in *The Internationalist* No. 49, September-October 2017.

a compliant judge dropped the charges. Over the last few years, Patriot Front has harassed and attacked many gay pride and trans rights events around the country, and marched in the anti-abortion “March for Life” rallies in D.C. and elsewhere.

While Patriot Front portrays its provocations as First Amendment-protected speech, in fact they are intended to intimidate and (as in Boston) have included violent attacks. These fascists are a threat to immigrants, women, gay, lesbian and trans people, to leftists and all defenders of democratic rights. They clearly have the backing of Trump (recall his remarks at the time of the 2017 Charlottesville fascist rally that “there were some very fine people” among the crowd of white supremacists). They must be stopped by workers action.

Two months earlier, on 4 June 2017, there was a mobilization of some 300 unionists and supporters to stop a fascist provocation in Portland, Oregon. The action was initiated by comrades of Class

Struggle Workers – Portland (CSWP), which works fraternally with the Internationalist Group. As we wrote at the time:

“It is urgently necessary to **mobilize labor/black/immigrant power**, in alliance with all those targeted by racist and fascist terror, to **smash the fascist provocations**. Crucial to this is the disciplined, organized preparation of **workers defense guards** based on the power of the labor movement and the multiracial working class that makes everything run and can bring everything to a stop in this country.” – “Portland Labor Mobilizes to Stop Fascist Provocation,” *Internationalist* No. 48, May-June 2017

The Portland anti-fascist mobilization was the result of CSWP activists’ work, starting immediately after Trump’s November 2017 election. This resulted in seven area unions passing coordinated resolutions calling for “mobilizing against the clear and present danger that the provocations of racist and fascist organizations pose to us all.”

Then, days after the Charlottesville racist/antisemitic murder rally, an attempt by the fascist Patriot Prayer outfit to stage a deadly provocation in the San Francisco Bay Area was thwarted by the action of International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 to shut down the port of Oakland and march to the rally site (see “Fascists Forced to Flee San Francisco – A Significant Victory,” *The Internationalist* No. 49, September-October 2017).

Now as the federal government ratchets up its attacks on immigrants and other vulnerable sectors, as well as against leftists and unions, it is going after the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), with criminal charges of fraud and conspiracy, for having paid some informants in fascist outfits to obtain information on threats by these paramilitary organizations. Calling the liberal SPLC “anti-Christian,” Trump ludicrously claimed in a *60 Minutes* (26 April) interview that the Charlottesville Nazi rally was “all funded” by the SPLC “to make me look bad” and get the Democrats elected in 2020. As the MAGA

gang whitewashes U.S. history, wiping out references to the oppression of black and other non-white people from textbooks, museums and parks, they promote fascists like Patriot Front and try to shut down those who oppose this murderous scam.

The Internationalist Group says: **Hands off the SPLC! Down with the witch hunts against leftists and other anti-fascists! Mobilize labor/black/immigrant power to stop fascist provocations!** ■

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Johanna Fernández 1970-2026



Johanna Fernández, powerful advocate for class-war prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, historian of the Young Lords and professor at Baruch College, died on July 30. Above: speaking at a 3 March 2021 rally in Philadelphia. A friend of the Internationalist Clubs, she brought Mumia’s voice to young revolutionaries at CUNY.

Labor: Use Your Power to Defend Immigrants and Trans Rights!

Anti-Trans Hysteria Fuels

Police-State Repression

Racist, Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Abortion, Anti-Gay – All-Round Bigots Want to Erase Transgender People

On June 30, the Supreme Court of the United States upheld laws in West Virginia and Idaho banning transgender women from participating in girls' and women's sports teams or events. This caps a drive that President of the United States Donald Trump announced in his February 2025 Executive Order 14201, demagogically titled "Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports." Five days earlier, on June 25, the Supreme Court ruled that Trump can strip Temporary Protected Status (TPS) from 350,000 Haitian and 6,000 Syrian refugees. So SCOTUS and POTUS are also in lockstep carrying out the mass deportations called for by the MAGA ("Make America Great Again") reactionaries. The vicious assault on immigrants' and transgender people's rights is a *battering ram of the drive for a racist police state that would shred the democratic rights of all.*

The hysteria whipped up over the participation of trans athletes in women's sports events is a transparent ploy by all-round bigots who are using this as a "wedge issue" to wage yet another "culture war" against liberals. Just look at the actual numbers involved. In 2024, the head of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) testified to the U.S. Senate that he was aware of only ten (10) transgender athletes competing in college sports in the U.S. (and that includes transgender men). Now there are none, since after Trump's Executive Order, the NCAA barred trans women from women's sports. Meanwhile, half the states have banned outright or made it impossible for trans girls to participate in girls' sports. Yet those high school trans athletes number "150 or fewer," according to a count by *Teen Vogue* (26 February 2025), which could only confirm 17 playing on girls' teams.

So this is a totally invented issue. Moreover, it not about biological sex, since the courageous plaintiffs against the discriminatory laws had both been taking hormone replacement therapy so it is absurd to label them biologically male. And as an endocrinologist from New York's Mount Sinai Hospital testified before the Court, transgender women who have undergone treatment with puberty blockers and hormone replacement, rendering testoster-

one receptors inactive, "have no athletic advantage."¹ Leaving aside the obsession with individual competitive achievement in high school and college sports, trans youth like teenager Becky Pepper-Jackson (who began challenging West Virginia's

¹ Cited in the dissent by Supreme Court justice Sonia Sotomayor in the June 30 *West Virginia v. Jackson/Idaho v. Hecox* decision.



These two young trans women were denied the right to run by the Supreme Court. Left: Becky Pepper-Jackson, who sued at age 11 against West Virginia law banning her from school sports. Right: Lindsay Hecox in 2021.

law excluding her from cross-country and track teams at age 11) and college student Lindsay Hecox (barred from track by Utah's HB 500, the first law in the U.S. to outright ban trans athletes) should be able to participate as the girls and young women that they are.

Now there is a bill in Congress, the "Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2025" (HR 28) that would write



Trump's Executive Order into federal law, and others that would deny Title IX funds (to promote women's sports) to institutions in any state that doesn't ban "men" as defined by sex assigned at birth. But the bigoted offensive against transgender women in sports is only the tip of the iceberg. In 2025, 1,022 anti-trans bills were introduced across the U.S., more than six times the number in 2021, and 126 passed; and already in the first half of 2026, there are 830 bills and 62 have already passed. Moreover, 145 anti-trans bills are before Congress, up from zero (0) in 2022 (see the tracker at translegislation.com). The dozens of measures that have already become state laws aim to make life as a transgender person not just intolerable but impossible.

There are over 200 bills banning gender transition medical care, mostly for minors but also (in Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee) if public funds are used for adults to get it. An Idaho bill would "prohibit classroom instruction ... on sexual orientation or gender identity from kindergarten through grade 12." In Tennessee, which has passed 19 anti-trans laws this year, a "Charlie Kirk Act," named after the founder of the fascist Turning Point U.S.A. youth group, would supposedly protect (i.e., promote) anti-trans and anti-gay organizing in schools. Particularly threatening are laws requiring that driver's licenses indicate sex as assigned at birth. In Kansas, Indiana and elsewhere, rabid anti-trans state officials are using such laws to track down anyone who has changed their sex designation. And how do they know who those people are? *The bigots with state power are making lists.*

The June 2025 Supreme Court ruling on *U.S. v. Skrametti* (permitting state laws banning puberty blockers and hormone treatment for minors) together with its June 2026 decision on *W.Va. v. Jackson/Idaho v. Hecox* and a dramatically accelerating wave of legislation and government actions seek to deny transgender people the right to exist. As we wrote in the wake of Trump's February 2025 Executive Order:

"With a stroke of the pen, Trump & Co. seek to erase transgender people.

MAGA Hatemongers Escalate, Democrats Capitulate – Build a Workers Party to Defend All the Oppressed



Donald Trump has issued a barrage of anti-trans executive orders since taking office in his second administration.

In a vile festival of anti-trans measures, the administration wants to purge trans people from public life as it sadistically displays its all-sided effort to make their daily life not just unbearable but impossible. As far as the bigots in power are concerned, transgender people should not exist at all.”

– “Against Trump’s Blitzkrieg of Bigotry, Labor Must Defend Trans Rights,” *The Internationalist* No. 75, January-May 2025

Since that time, the bigoted blitzkrieg has intensified still further, with the stakes getting increasingly dire. At present a majority of U.S. states (27) have enacted bans on trans athletes. (These are pretty much the same 27 states that have restricted gender-transition treatments for minors.) And it has had an effect on public opinion, with polls reporting that nearly 80% of Americans (including 67% of Democrats) say transgender women “should not be allowed to compete in women’s sports” (New York Times/Ipsos survey, January 2025).

Gone are the days when Joe Biden could declare (in the 2020 presidential election campaign) that “transgender equality is the civil rights issue of our time.” The Democrats may still be reluctant to hop on the bigotry express: out of the 145 anti-trans bills in Congress, we couldn’t find one Democratic sponsor. But they are increasingly remaining silent, or outright capitulating – like California governor Gavin Newsom’s vile declaration last year that he was “completely aligned” with Charlie Kirk on trans women in sports, in his chummy podcast with the gay- and trans-bashing ideologue – and effectively throwing trans people under the bus. The thundering silence about the crescendo of draconian anti-trans measures is also seen in the liberal capitalist media, followed by most of the left, which generally tails the Democrats.²

The manufactured hysteria about the

² The Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), in particular, are intent on making “affordability” their central issue, partly as a way of dodging “hot button” issues, following the lead of their mentor, the self-proclaimed “democratic socialist” senator Bernie Sanders. Biden’s 2020 remark was a jab at Sanders, who in running for the Democratic presidential nomination that year was cozying up to Joe Rogan, the podcaster notorious for vilifying transgender people.

supposed danger of trans athletes to women’s sports³ goes hand-in-hand with the racist smears against immigrants as supposedly endangering the nation, as with the lurid slanders about “Haitians eating people’s pets.” It is important to understand, and to underline, that the same reactionary forces leading the charge against transgender people are also pushing for the mass deportations, are the ones who engineered the cancellation of the right

to abortion, who opposed school desegregation, gay marriage and every other measure against social oppression. And they are fully backing the drive to a Bonapartist *police state* that Trump is preparing with his marauding fascistic immigration police. Both for transgender people and immigrants, looking to the Democrats to defend them is a ticket for defeat.

³ The newfound enthusiasm of rightist reactionaries for Title IX and women’s sports is pure cynicism. In the 1980s, after the Supreme Court narrowed the application of that 1970s law to a very few programs, and Congress passed a law reinstating its general prohibition of discrimination against women, Republican president Ronald Reagan vetoed it – only to be overridden by a bipartisan majority in Congress.

Trade unions, civil rights groups, gay rights advocates, immigrants’ rights defenders and other oppressed sectors have traditionally – and mistakenly – looked to the Democrats to champion their cause. This party of phony “friends of labor,” blacks, Latinos, etc., is a pillar of the racist capitalist system which is inherently oppressive to vulnerable populations. And while the situation of transgender people in “blue” states (i.e., those governed by Democrats) may not be as dire as in the “red states” that have enacted these laws, the turbocharged bigots have warned “blue states” allowing trans athletes, “you’re next” (Kristen Waggoner, president of far-right Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), after the Supreme Court decision).⁴ *To defend transgender people and all those in the hatemongers’ crosshairs requires breaking with the capitalist parties.*

From banning transgender medical care for youth (and setting precedents to ban this for many adults), to “conversion therapy” and forced “detransition” of inmates in prisons, to setting up trans people for detention by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) police and invalidating their driver’s licenses and other

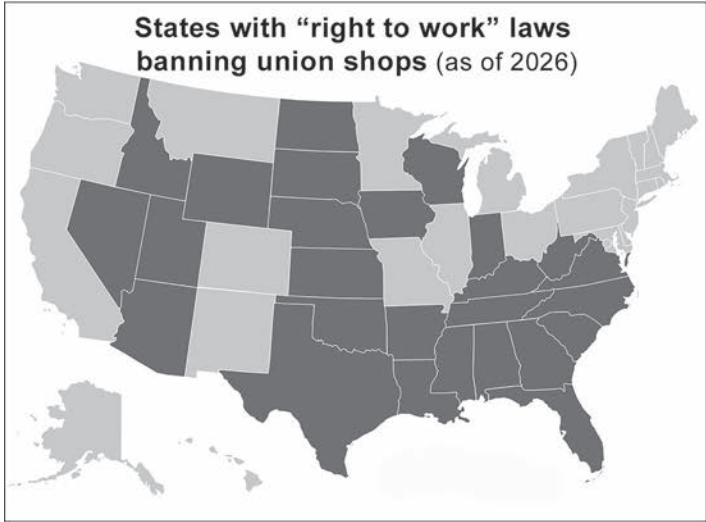
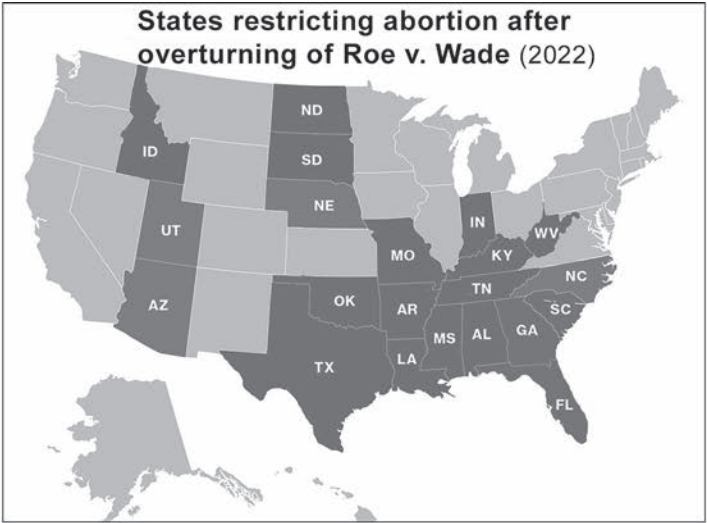
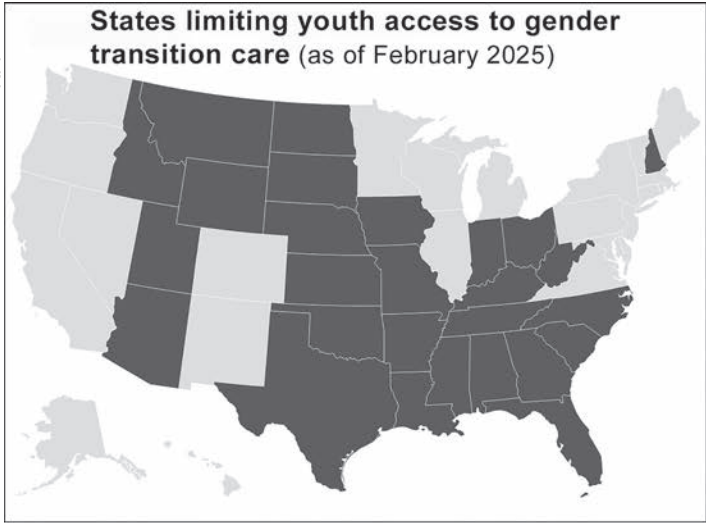
⁴ The ADF, of which House speaker Mike Johnson is a former attorney, is an ultra-rightist Christian nationalist outfit that defended the West Virginia and Idaho anti-trans laws before the Supreme Court. It also authored the Mississippi anti-abortion law in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* case that was used to overturn the right to abortion; litigated the case in which the Supreme Court found in favor of a Colorado “website designer” who didn’t want to provide services to a gay couple (although there was no gay couple and she wasn’t designing web sites at the time); and authored a Supreme Court filing by four state attorneys general trying to overturn the 2020 elections by using bogus claims of “rampant illegality” by Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

identification documents, the federal and more than two dozen state governments are seeking to stigmatize and turn trans people into non-persons. In the process they are compiling lists of trans individuals and de facto barring them from buying firearms. What’s next? Ordering transgender and intersex people to wear identifying symbols like the yellow stars for Jews and pink triangles for homosexuals in the Nazi Third Reich? Already unwanted immigrants are being thrown into concentration camps.

What is needed is a *class-struggle defense of immigrants’ rights, trans rights and the democratic rights of all*. We call on the *organized workers movement to use its power to defend trans people and immigrants against the bigoted crusade targeting them*. One only has to overlay the maps of the states that outlawed abortion following the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in June 2022; the states that have passed anti-trans laws since 2022; and the states that have anti-union “right-to-work” laws (which are mainly the states of the slaveholders’ Confederacy and of “Jim Crow” segregation), to see that the same reactionary forces are targeting us all. *The hate crusade against trans people and immigrants is a two-pronged spearhead of the push for police-state repression, as the “home front” of the escalating drive for an imperialist World War III.*

Kansas in the Forefront of the Anti-Trans, Anti-Immigrant Drive

Over the past period, the state of Kansas has been leading the way in this sinister and sadistic campaign. On January 28, both houses of the Kansas legislature passed SB 244, which bans transgender individuals from using bathrooms in government buildings that do not match their “biological sex at birth,” subjecting them to a \$1,000 fine for a second violation, while a third could



The states that have passed laws limiting youth access to gender transition care are largely the same ones that passed bans or extreme limitations on abortion after the Supreme Court overturned the *Roe v. Wade* ruling in 2022, and the same states that have had anti-union “right to work” laws for decades. The hard core is made up of the states of the slaveholders’ Confederacy (1861-64), and of Jim Crow segregation from 1878 to the mid-1960s.



Kris Kobach and Trump embracing in Topeka in 2018 during Kobach's unsuccessful campaign for governor.

land them in jail for six months. Even more outrageously, Kansans are encouraged to report and sue trans people they claim to have witnessed violating this grotesque law, for a reward of \$1,000. In other words, SB 244 **places a bounty on trans people**. And when Democratic governor Laura Kelly vetoed this “bathroom bounty” law, a two-thirds majority of the state legislature overturned her veto, with all Republicans voting to override and all Democrats against.

But SB 244 contains much more than that. Bathroom bans against trans people have been enacted by states at least since 2013. In 2023, Kansas passed a particularly creepy one, defining “female” as “an individual whose biological reproductive system is developed to produce ova.” To stymie demands for such bans, a number of states passed laws providing that public buildings have at least one gender-neutral or unisex bathroom, something that many schools around the country have done. The new Kansas law, which defines “gender” as “biological sex at birth,” now requires that any “multi-occupancy private space” in a public building be “for use by only one sex.” This puts trans people in an impossible situation, facing fines and jail for breaking the law, or the threat of harassment and violence if forced into the supposedly “biologically correct” bathroom.

And SB 244 is likely to be used for broader governmental repression. The Kansas law aligned with Trump’s Executive Order 14168, issued on 20 January 2025, calling for “intimate places” in federal facilities to be sex-designated. Now four school districts in Kansas have been found by the U.S. Department of Education to have violated Title IX by having gender-identity-based bathrooms. Washington is threatening to cut off up to \$137 million in federal funding if they continue to refuse to settle. And “once a new anti-trans legal strategy gains traction in one state, it rarely stays there,” as *Truthout* (17 February) put it. In 2026 alone, bathroom bans have been enacted in Idaho, Michigan and South Carolina, while three were vetoed in New Hampshire.

Again, these laws are not just about harassing trans people. The Idaho bill, which went into effect on June 16, stipulates that more than one “offense” means a felony charge bearing up to five years in

prison.⁵ A preliminary injunction blocked part of the law ... for now. To quote our 2025 article (“Against Trump’s Blitzkrieg of Bigotry...”), “As we have long said, opposing state regulation of consensual sexual relations, *Government out of the bedroom!* And now given decades of reactionary backlash, we must also insist *Government out of the bathroom! Let trans people use the toilets of their choice!*”

Lurking in the background is the sinister figure of Kansas attorney general Kris Kobach, a central proponent of SB 244. His role highlights the connection between the anti-trans offensive and anti-immigrant racism. In 2010, Kobach became notorious as an architect of Arizona’s 2010 “show me your papers” law (SB 1070), which paved the way for the introduction of similar bills in 36 other states, five of which passed them into law.⁶ He helped craft hardline anti-immigrant ordinances for towns from Pennsylvania to Nebraska, all of which were later abandoned. Kobach has also been a major figure in prosecuting supposed “voter fraud,” but after examining 84 million votes in 22 states, only referred 14 cases for prosecution. In failed bids for Congress (2004), governor (2018) and U.S. Senate (2020), he received funds from and employed white supremacists.

Like the role of the Christian nationalist “Alliance for Defense of Freedom” in designing anti-trans, anti-gay and anti-abortion laws, the role of Kris Kobach in Kansas underscores that the forces behind the assault on immigrants and transgender people are the same reactionaries targeting other oppressed sectors and working people in general. But Kansas also demonstrates that the politicians are often distorting popular sentiment. Kansas has been a prime target of anti-abortion bigots, including the 2009 murder of Dr. George Tiller in Wichita.⁷ Yet in August 2022, six weeks after the Supreme Court upheld the ADF’s Mississippi anti-abortion law, thus allowing states to ban abortion, an amendment to remove the right to abortion from the Kansas constitution, which had been passed by the legislature (and backed by Kobach), was rejected, by 60% of the state’s voters.

⁵ “Idaho governor signs bill to criminalize trans people using bathrooms that align with their identity,” *The Advocate*, 9 April; *Idaho Capital Sun*, 31 March.

⁶ American Immigration Council, February 2012.

⁷ See “Assassination of Courageous Doctor in Wichita: War on Abortion Rights Escalates,” *The Internationalist* No. 29, Summer 2009.

They’re Using Driver’s Licenses to Make Lists of Trans People

The Kansas law does not limit itself to bathroom bans. In a particularly ominous move, SB 244 also stipulates that any driver’s license that “identifies the gender of the individual named ... in a manner that is contrary” to their “biological sex at birth” is “invalid,” and that the state director of vehicles shall “correct” those licenses. On February 26, approximately 1,700 trans Kansans were informed by letter that their driver’s licenses or other IDs were invalid, and must be “surrendered” immediately. Why? Because like hundreds of thousands across the U.S., they have changed the sex designation on their IDs for gender identity reasons – in other words, because they are transgender! This affects their right to drive, to buy and own firearms, getting a job and innumerable other things, including the right to vote.⁸

If they then get a “corrected” identification document, which amounts to “outing” them, this brings the danger that their ID will be rejected or deemed fake if there is a mismatch between the sex listed on their ID and how they are perceived. Already in June, a trans woman in Kansas who had been “forced to change the gender marker on her license back to ‘M’ because of Senate Bill 244” was charged with operating a motor vehicle without a valid license because her appearance did not seem to the police officer to match the ID (*Transitics*, 23 June).⁹ On top of its other ramifications, this reactionary measure is a set-up that will increase the already drastically high incidence of violence against trans people, who are vastly more likely to be victims of violent attacks than others.¹⁰

⁸ On the day SB 244 became law, the ACLU of Kansas immediately filed a lawsuit with a district court, citing in particular the threat to voting rights and calling for it to declare that the law violates the state’s constitution protections for privacy, personal autonomy and reproductive freedom. The court rejected the request for a temporary restraining order to prevent the law from going into effect. A hearing for a preliminary injunction is scheduled.

⁹ An update to the original news story on the case reported that the county prosecutor wound up dismissing the charge.

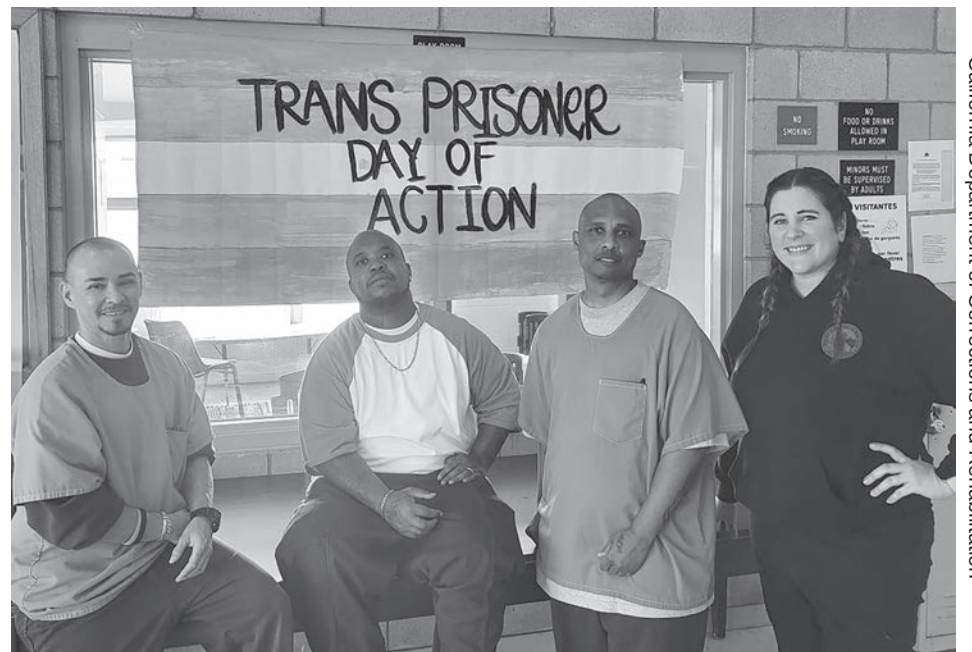
¹⁰ “Transgender people over four times more likely than cisgender people to be victims of violent crime,” Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law, 23 March 2021.

Even more threatening is the fact that Kansas could revoke 1,700 driver’s licenses literally *overnight*. In fact, the letters notifying individuals that they were no longer legally allowed to drive were sent out *even before* the state legislature overrode Governor Kelly’s veto on February 26. An investigation by Aleksandra Vaca in *Transitics* (26 February) revealed that after a lawsuit settlement in 2019 allowing transgender people to amend their birth certificates, the state Office of Vital Statistics (OVS) flagged those changes with a special marker. And since driver’s license updates were allowed in 2007, the Department of Vehicles (DOV) has had a special internal marker for “gender reclassification” enabling it to quickly generate a list of trans people, for repressive purposes. All this in a state whose Democratic governor controls the OVS and DOV.

Now that information has been made public, with devastating consequences. And Kansas is not the only state with such lists. Indiana’s rabidly transphobic attorney general has been intervening in closed and even *sealed* court cases, filing motions to undo gender marker changes on state IDs (*Indiana Lawyer*, 21 May). In Texas, going back to July 2022, the rabidly transphobic state attorney general Ken Paxton (who is also notoriously anti-immigrant and anti-abortion) ordered employees of the state Department of Public Safety to make a list of individuals who had changed their sex designation on their driver’s licenses (*Washington Post*, 14 December 2022). The AG’s order came a month after the state Supreme Court ruled that Paxton had overstepped his authority in ordering investigations of parents of trans youth on charges of “child abuse.”

The *Post* reported that 16,466 gender changes were compiled in Texas as DPS employees scoured not only driver’s licenses but also state IDs, election certificates and occupational licenses, and pulled records with names of specific individuals. Then, starting in August 2024, the agency “stopped accepting court orders or amended birth certificates as valid documentation for gender marker changes” (*Washington Blade*, 1 January 2026). Each time “a driver requested to change the sex listed on their license,” the DPS “scanned and saved the driver’s information and “sent it to an internal email account created for collecting these data” (*Texas Newsroom*, 19 March 2025). Texas officials refused to say why the information was being

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Trans Prisoner Day of Action at Central California Women’s Facility, January 2024. Under Trump, federal and many state prisons have been viciously cutting off medical treatment for transgender prisoners. They have also sought to transfer trans women to men’s prisons, where they would be subject to heightened danger of assault.

Federal Government Uses Case to “Investigate” Unions, Labor Activists Defeat “Conspiracy” Frame-Up Against the Minnesota 15

On January 23, upwards of 75,000 people jammed the streets of Minneapolis to demand that the marauding Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Border Patrol get the hell out of Minnesota. That’s 10% of the entire population of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Called by union and community leaders, while it wasn’t a general strike, as many on the left claimed (no unions shut down production), it was a massive outpouring of resistance by the general population against the murderous occupying force of masked federal agents terrorizing immigrants and their defenders. For weeks on end, across the Twin Cities, thousands participated in rapid response networks tracking the movements of the immigrant snatchers. Many more joined in underground networks to supply food and necessities to their neighbors afraid to leave home.

On June 16, the feds took their revenge. U.S. Attorney for Minnesota David Rosen released a 94-page indictment accusing 15 area activists of “conspiracy” to “forcibly challenge, block, or stop immigration raids, detentions, and deportations.” Good grief! The charges include “Solicitation to Commit a Crime of Violence,” “Interstate Threats,” “Interstate Stalking,” “Assault on a Federal Officer” and “Destruction of Government Property.” For “violence” it listed throwing “large ice blocks at law enforcement vehicles and into the road.” OMG, throwing ice at ICE! Were any vehicles damaged? No mention, so no. As for “assault on a federal officer,” it gave “brake-checking” while following (?) a government vehicle. Asked by reporters if any officer had been injured, “Mr. Rosen declined to say” (*New York Times*, 17 June). So again, no.

This is a phony “conspiracy” without any crimes committed. Which, of course, is why the capitalist rulers want conspiracy laws in the first place. In this case, the purpose was to tar opposition to Donald Trump’s mass deportations, carried out by the paramilitary thugs of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), with the brush of “antifa” (for antifascist) and to try to criminalize rapid response networks. But who they indicted are members of the Minnesota labor movement, immigrant defense groups and environmentalist organizations. As one of the defendants, Cameron Kennedy, said after being released, “It’s basically just alleging that we were conspiring to protest.... Essentially, if we’re guilty of [the charges], so is the entire city of Minneapolis” (*StarTribune*, 16 June). And that is why the Trumpers targeted the 15.

The feds’ legal assault is payback for Minnesotans’ massive resistance to Operation Metro Surge, an invasion of some 3,000 federal agents which was launched in December to target Somali immigrants in particular. Many of the 15 are union organizers indicted for their alleged activity on the January 23 “day of no work, no school, no shopping.” *This prosecution*



Minnesota 15 defendant Treasure Thoreson of the Minneapolis Federation of Educators speaks to the rally of hundreds who came out to support the targeted activists in Minneapolis at July 1 arraignment.

is a threat to the right to protest and the democratic rights of all. It must be actively opposed not only by the labor, immigrant and community groups targeted, but by all those who are concerned to stop the U.S.’ headlong rush toward authoritarian, police-state rule. And as we have stressed, the issue here is power. This case will not be decided just in the courts. The Internationalist Group calls to *defend the Minneapolis 15 with workers action!*

After Murdering Good and Pretti, the Feds Are Gunning for Activists in Court

After being grabbed at daybreak on June 16, the defendants were hauled to the federal court building in St. Paul. In the holding cells, the jailed unionists began singing freedom songs, led by carpenter and folk singer/writer Emmett Doyle. They included “Solidarity Forever,” the Italian anti-fascist resistance anthem “Bella Ciao” and the Irish Republican prisoner support song “The Ones Behind the Wire” (the anti-ICE version). Outside, supporters swarmed the courthouse as cops unleashed pepper spray and fired flash-bang grenades at the crowd. When the 15 were arraigned on July 1, hundreds protested in downtown Minneapolis, including speakers from a number of unions. Defendant Treasure Thoreson, a member of the Minneapolis Federation of Educators, told the crowd, “The federal government is terrified of our ability to organize.”

U.S. Attorney Rosen said the charges were directed against “organized, lawless behavior,” a description that better fits the rampaging federal agents. He linked the indictments to Trump’s National Security Presidential Memorandum 7 (NSPM-7), issued last September after the killing of Charlie Kirk, leader of the fascist Turning Point USA group. That directive targets “anti-fascism,” “anti-capitalism” and hostility to “traditional American views on family, religion, and morality” as mark-

ers for “terrorism.” NSPM-7 establishes a “national strategy to investigate and disrupt networks, entities, and organizations that foment political violence so that law enforcement can intervene in criminal conspiracies *before* [our emphasis] they result in violent political acts.”

That’s the key to *U.S. v. Sant*, the frame-up indictment against the Minnesota 15. The case was worked up by “Joint Task Force Vanguard,” set up “to investigate, prosecute, and disrupt those who engage in political violence and intimidation.” Federal prosecutors haven’t had much luck with their bogus charges of violence against federal agents. In Chicago, 29 of 33 cases of alleged assault on a federal officer resulted in dismissal, acquittal or pre-trial diversion; in Los Angeles, a third of similar cases were dismissed. In Minnesota as of early June, of 36 people facing federal assault or resistance charges, almost half (17) the cases were dismissed, and none have been convicted of felonies (*StarTribune*, 6 June).¹ So the feds wanted a “conspiracy” case in which they don’t have to prove that the accused actually *did* anything illegal.

The indictment has plenty of “committed to,” “advocate,” “promote,” “planning,” “dedicated to” and the like. But acts? Not so much. Mainly, it has defendants participating in rapid response groups, checking license plates and following the masked federal agents as they prowled the city in unmarked vehicles looking for prey. Federal judges have repeatedly upheld that observing and documenting the actions of “law enforcement” is constitutionally protected activity. What else? Well, there was a “hard blockade team” that dumped “debris (wood, leaf blowers, etc.)” as well

¹ A person originally facing four felony charges and possibly decades in prison pleaded guilty to one misdemeanor (throwing a softball at an agent during a raid, after agents had attacked her) with no jail time and a \$25 fine. This was rightly seen by anti-ICE protesters as a victory.

as “vehicles, trailers, Czech hedgehogs”² and other items on the road. Leaf blowers? Gotta watch out for those Czech hedgehogs, though. And who knows, could beavers be heading down from the Boundary Waters to build dams on the Mississippi and flood the Whipple federal building?

And about those “large ice blocks” allegedly heaved at federal agents. Have you ever tried to throw a block of ice? They’re heavy, and very slippery. If any of the alleged conspirators is so good at it, maybe they should be signed up to QB for the Vikings, or the U of M Gophers.

Get real: these absurd accusations are coming from the federal government whose agent *murdered* Renee Good on January 7, shooting the mother of three in the head as she sat in her car watching their actions; whose agents on January 24 *executed* Alex Pretti, the Veterans Administration ICU nurse who came to the aid of a woman the Border Patrol thugs had pushed to the ground. They fired at least ten bullets into Pretti with their Glock pistols as they pinned him on the ground. No one has been charged for those crimes, while protesters are charged with transporting leaf blowers!

The point of the charges is not to prosecute an allegedly criminal *act* but rather to convict people of “conspiring” to violate federal law. Ninety of the 94 pages of the indictment are devoted to the charge of impeding a federal officer (18 U.S.C. § 372), which all defendants are accused of. The other counts are potential throwaways if they can’t get a judge or jury to buy the flim-flam. Unlike the general conspiracy law (§ 371), under this provision no overt act is required to prove a conspiracy, only intent. In carrying out Trump’s NSPM-7 directive, prosecutors want to establish a precedent to make participation in a rapid response group or Signal chat focused on ICE into an illegal “conspiracy,” independent of what they do.

Moreover, the indictments came only a week before eight activists who protested outside the Prairieland, Texas ICE detention center were sentenced to a total of 450 years in prison on the bogus charge of “terrorism,” in the first NSPM-7 case to go to trial.

For Trump and the federal government, the mass resistance to their paramilitary police forces in Los Angeles, Chicago and particularly Minneapolis was a black eye. The case of the Minnesota 15 is precisely an attempt to outlaw the activities of tens of thousands of people, many not members of activist organizations, who blew whistles and used cellphone apps to warn their immigrant neighbors of imminent danger, it’s to go after teachers who patrolled schools and brought groceries to families in hiding, and to get back at community residents who went into the streets to oppose “Operation Metro Surge,” led

² Crossed steel beams used as a barrier against armored vehicles, of which the feds had at least 20 in the Twin Cities.

by fascistic Border Patrol “commander-at-large” Gregory Bovino. The feds couldn’t stop the protests with military occupation, terror and bullets. So now they’re trying to achieve that in the courts.

Labor in the Crosshairs

The June 16 arrests of the Minnesota 15 are a direct threat to the labor movement in particular, as many union leaders have recognized. “Trade unionists active in worker assemblies are among those who were arrested,” Kieran Knutson, president of CWA Local 7250 in Minneapolis, told the Minnesota-based *Workday Magazine* (16 June). “The trade unionists I’ve known for years are stand-up people who believe in solidarity. They believe an injury to one is an injury to all.” Chelsie Glaubitz Gabiou, president of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, told *Workday*:

“Working people from all walks of life across Minneapolis and its suburbs stepped up for their neighbors throughout Trump’s Operation Metro Surge. Tens of thousands of Minnesotans exercised their constitutional rights throughout this past winter.... Today’s federal indictments impacted several of our union members who used their voices alongside many other workers to call for an end to ICE’s so-far unaccountable violence.”

The St. Paul Federation of Educators, Local 28 of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), denounced the indictments and arrests, as did Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bernie Burnham:

“This past winter, the Trump administration tried to break Minnesotans’ solidarity and basic sense of decency by flooding our state with armed agents. They failed. Now they are trying to break us in the courtroom. They will fail again.”

Nationally as well, many unions have recognized the threat posed by prosecution of the Minnesota 15. A week before the indictments, the AFL-CIO held its quadrennial Constitutional Convention in Minneapolis, where it saluted the Minnesota labor movement for union members’ actions during Operation Metro Surge. The day after the indictments, on June 17, Local 10 of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades in Portland, Oregon, passed a resolution “Protesting Federal Targeting of Minneapolis and Community Activists.” The government’s legal assault is a threat, but could also be an opportunity to spark a long-overdue upsurge of working-class resistance to the bosses and their kept politicians. **“Defend the Minnesota 15” should be on banners in union locals and community centers across the country.**

Labor unionists should not forget how in the past, conspiracy laws were used to try to destroy the unions. The leaders of the 1895 Pullman strike, including socialist Eugene V. Debs, were charged under the 1890 Sherman Anti-Trust Act, which outlawed “every contract, combination or conspiracy, in restraint of trade.” In the 1909-10 “free speech fight” in Spokane, Washington, leaders of the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, or “Wobblies”), including William Z. Foster and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, were arrested on conspiracy charges. And, of course, the 1972 Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act has been used to go after unions, notably the Teamsters in 1988, with the connivance of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU). Unlike the TDU, class-struggle unionists oppose all government interference in the unions.

“Operation Puppet Master”

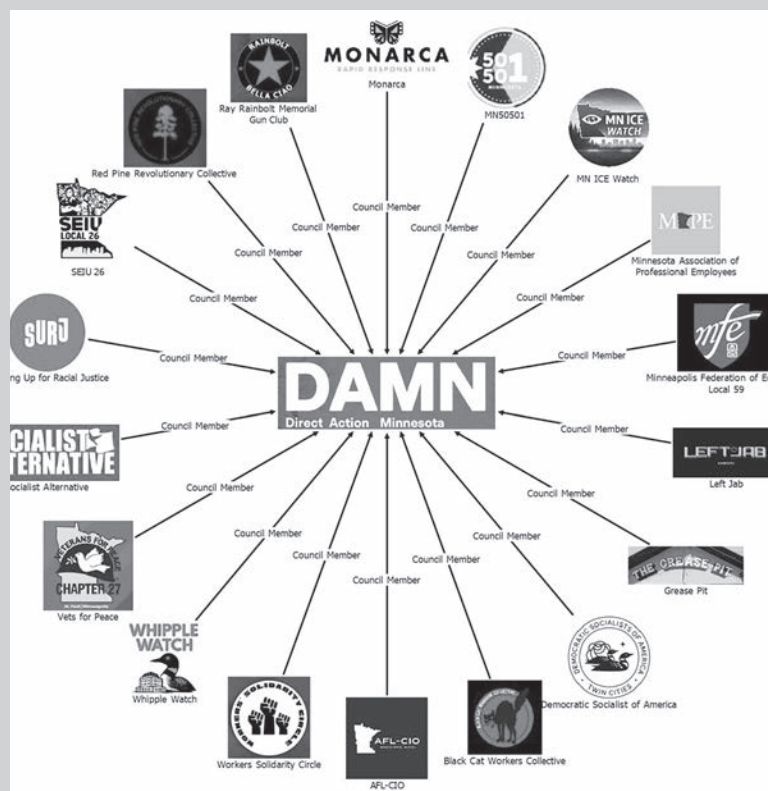
The alleged conspiracy ascribed to the Minnesota 15 was supposedly orchestrated by Direct Action Minnesota (DAMN) and “sub-groups, such as the Black Cat Worker’s Collective (‘BCWC’), Ray Rainbolt Memorial Shooting Club, and other organizations,” in the words of the indictment. The BCWC is an anarcho-syndicalist collective, with members in several unions. Ray Rainbolt was the Sioux Nation trucker and Trotskyist who led the Teamsters Local 574 Union Defense Guard, set up after the victorious 1934 Minneapolis Teamster strike, that drilled rifle-bearing Teamsters to fend off the fascist Silver Shirts brought in by the bosses. But who are the “other organizations” cited? This was revealed two months later, when the defendants’ lawyers released a diagram prepared by Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

It turns out that the organizations being investigated were unions, including the Minnesota AFL-CIO labor federation, Communications Workers of America (CWA), Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Minneapolis Federation of Educators (MFE) and Minnesota Association of Professional Employees (MAPE); political groups, such as the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and Socialist Alternative (SAlt); the Democratic Party front group 50501; the environmentalist Sunrise Movement; rapid response groups, like MN ICE Watch, Whipple Watch and the clergy-initiated community group Monarca; Voices for Racial Justice, and the mixed martial arts group Left Jab,¹ among others. This “investigation” was part of a DHS “Operation Puppet Master,” ordered by U.S. Assistant Deputy Attorney Gen-

¹ During a May 28 boxing/sparring practice in the basement gym of the University Baptist Church in Minneapolis, the hidden wire of an HSI undercover agent who was illegally spying on the group popped out and fell to the ground (*People* magazine, 18 August).

Now with Trump in office, a prominent right-wing lawyer wants to revive the Sherman Act, saying “two unions effectively control the labor supply at 100% of domestic ports,” and “a single union has a stranglehold on package delivery.”³ The ILWU, ILA and Teamsters could be on the

³ Alexander T. MacDonald, “Union Monopolies and Section 2 of the Sherman Antitrust Act: Can Labor Unions Be Held Liable for Monopolizing Labor Markets?” *Federalist Society Blog*, 14 April 2025.



HSI list of organizations in supposed “conspiracy”: (clockwise, from top) Monarca, MN 50501, MN ICE Watch, Minnesota Association of Professional Employees, Minneapolis Federation of Educators Local 59, Left Jab, Grease Pit, Democratic Socialists of America, Black Cat Workers Collective, AFL-CIO, Workers Solidarity Circle, Whipple Watch, Vets for Peace, Socialist Alternative, Showing Up for Racial Justice, SEIU 26, Red Pine Revolutionary Collective, Ray Rainbolt Memorial Gun Club.

eral Aakash Singh.

The August 13 defense “discovery” motion in the Minneapolis 15 case, which demands that the government turn over all its “reports of investigations” (ROIs), revealed that the massive spying operation was opened four days after Alex Pretti was murdered. Material already released shows how federal undercover agents (“UCAs”) posing as protesters “surveilled community meetings at churches, parks, libraries, union halls, schools and restaurants,” including one as far afield as Hunter College in New York City. “UCAs actively participated in organizing and directing the groups they were surveilling, at times working to entice people into discussing or committing crimes,” it added, as for example when UCA 9833 said he was “in construction” and offered to build items for “more ‘direct action’ protests.”

Under “Operation Puppet Master,” the feds have used the “investigation” of the Minnesota 15 to comb through the financial records of the SEIU and CWA. The HSI’s “sneak peek into SEIU’s finances,” the defense motion said, found only “various types of debits and credits to include annuity payments, strike payments, strike supplies, investments, union member dues, retiree dues, medical expenses, and pen-

feds’ hit list. Revolutionary Marxists join many First Amendment lawyers in opposing conspiracy laws, and particularly their use against social movements. It should be noted that 18 U.S.C. §372, under which the Minnesota 15 are being charged, had its origin in the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871, used against the racist violence of the KKK after the Civil War. Today, Trump, backed by actual fascists, is using this law to try to jail anti-racist union and community activists, while his private militia of ICE and Border

sion fund expenses” (from a May 4 ROI). The HSI also dug into the CWA’s political donations and spending during 2023-26. In their surreptitious fishing expedition, the feds clearly violated the federal Right to Financial Privacy Act, which requires that account holders be informed of any investigation; and they ordered the financial institutions “not to disclose the existence of this summons for an indefinite period of time.”

The political motivation behind this political prosecution was given by Stephen Miller, the White House deputy chief of staff and Homeland Security advisor, at the July 16 United States Ministerial on the Resurgence of Political Terrorism, which brought together high-level government and police officials from 66 countries. In his remarks, quoted in the Minnesota 15 defense motion, the fascistic Trump advisor Miller said of “these Radical Leftists, these terrorists”

targeted by President Trump’s National Security Presidential Memorandum 7 that was the basis for the prosecution of the Minnesota 15:

“The leftist is fundamentally motivated by envy, by hatred, by jealousy. The leftist looks at what is beautiful and what is good and what is natural and is filled with envy and hatred. The leftist looks at a perfect family with a perfect life and a perfect job and perfect kids that goes to church every Sunday and is filled with a feeling of inadequacy and jealousy, and they covet. And they turn those emotions ultimately into a desire to subjugate, to oppress, and to inflict pain and suffering.”

This garbage reads like something straight out of Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*.

Miller adds that “our institutions have grown too soft and too cowardly to be able to defend themselves,” and more specifically, “Our legal systems don’t work. Our jury trials don’t work.” So if the MAGA regime is unable to obtain a conviction in the Minnesota 15 case, they will try other ways to silence opposition to their would-be police-state regime. This underscores the urgency of mobilizing **workers action to defend the Minnesota 15.** ■

Patrol agents sows terror as the KKK did a century and a half ago.

The accusations in the Minnesota 15 case are false to the core and constitute a deadly threat to immigrants and the entire labor movement, as well as to democratic rights overall. In the days leading up to January 23, supporters of the Internationalist Group were active in the Twin Cities, participating in protests and selling hundreds of copies of *The Internationalist* call-

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Health Care Workers: Organize Committees to Defend Immigrant Patients

ICE Out of the Hospitals – Free Chidozie Wilson Okeke!

For Workers Action to Stop the Deportations

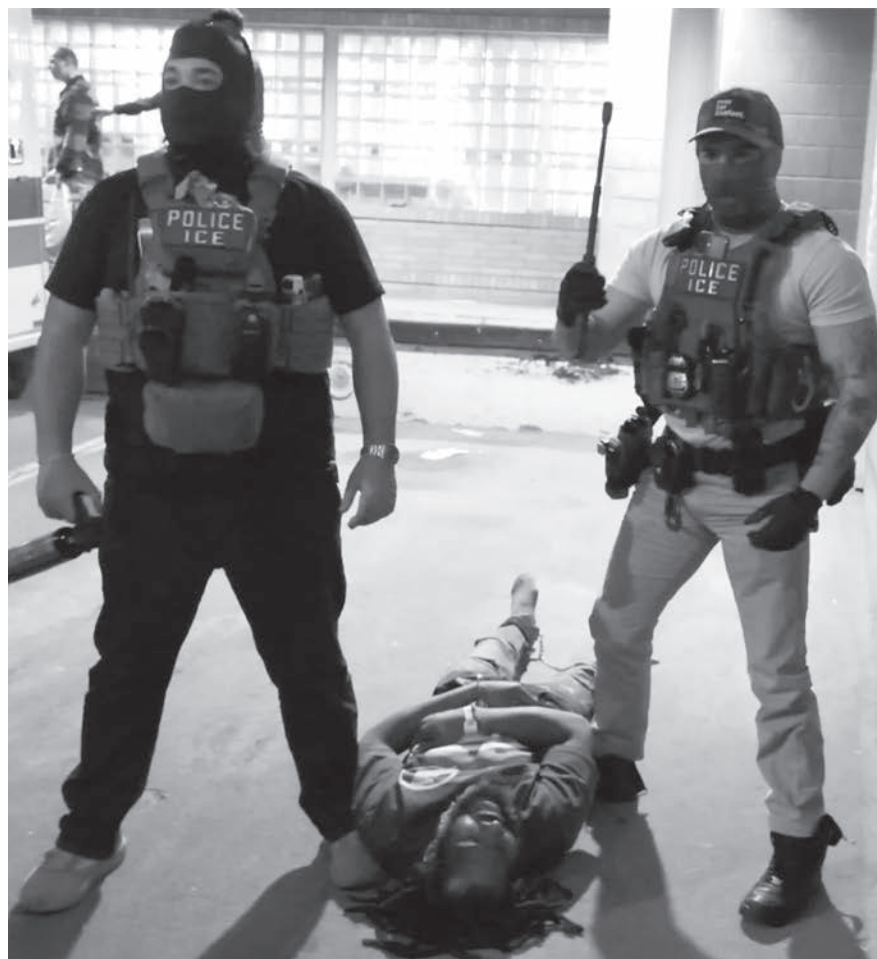
MAY 8 – On the evening of May 2, Chidozie Wilson Okeke, a Nigerian immigrant, was surrounded in his car by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in Brooklyn, New York. The agents broke his car window and cut his seatbelt while he kept calling out for a lawyer. Videos show the feds trying to drag Okeke out of the vehicle, punching him and choking him while he screamed in pain (*The City*, 4 May). They then brought him to Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, which serves low-income residents in the Bushwick area, to obtain medical clearance from his injuries before they could take him in for detention.

Quickly, news went out on rapid response Signal chats. By 10:30 p.m. a crowd that grew to some 200 protesters formed outside the hospital demanding that the detainee be freed (at that point people did not know his name). Soon the New York Police Department's notoriously brutal Strategic Response Group (SRG) arrived in force. The massive cop presence didn't deter the rapid responders, and activists were able to contact a *pro bono* immigration attorney. But due to health information privacy concerns, an Emergency Room charge nurse wouldn't let the lawyer in to see Okeke, even though she provided credentials and had a City Council member alongside her.

After a standoff of several hours, around 2:30 a.m. on May 3, a wall of NYPD cops acted as a shield for masked ICE agents as they hauled Mr. Okeke – who had shackles on his hands and ankles – out of the Emergency Room into the hospital's ambulance bay. The agents dropped Okeke on his back as the hundreds of protesters continued to demand he be released. The SRG thugs brutalized any who got too close. The feds then shoved their victim into an ICE vehicle and took off with an escort from the NYPD. Okeke is now imprisoned at Metropolitan Detention Center.

Many health care workers, members of NYC unions, students and community members throughout the city are indignant and alarmed by this racist attack. This is a wake-up call about the reality we are living in today, and must be a call to action by the entire labor movement.

This was no isolated incident. In Minneapolis during ICE's occupation this winter, many incidents resembling Okeke's arrest occurred. ICE brutalized patients and then brought them to the hospitals for medical clearance. A 31-year-old Mexican immigrant, Alberto Castañeda Mondragón was brought to a Minneapolis hospital by ICE with eight skull fractures and brain hemorrhages in five areas. Agents claimed he ran headfirst into a wall, but nurses and doctors didn't buy the bull. ICE officers attempted to shackle him to the bed, but health care workers intervened to push back.



Screenshot from Freedom TV

Masked ICE agents holding Nigerian immigrant Chidozie Wilson Okeke shackled on the ground and shoving him into car at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in Brooklyn, May 3. A wall of NYPD cops acted as a shield, aiding the feds and blocking protesters.

Similarly, when Los Angeles was invaded last summer, Milagro Solís Portillo suffered a medical emergency while being arrested by ICE. She was brought to a Glendale hospital where workers admitted her and refused to discharge her for several days, buying time to get her the support she needed. During her stay, ICE agents occupied the lobby of the hospital and tried to pressure her to leave against medical advice. Members of the community “called out Glendale Memorial Hospital for allowing detention officers on the property ... creating a hostile environment for staff and patients” (KABC, 19 July 2025).

Hospital Workers: Organize to Defend Patients and Staff Against ICE Terror

The recent threat by Donald Trump's “border czar” Tom Homan to “flood” New York City with a “surge” of ICE agents, ominously warning that “mass deportations are coming,” has defenders of immigrants citywide bracing for impact. Even before the renewed threats, health care workers have been discussing how to defend their patients and staff. Recently, several NYC health care unions – New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA), 1199 SEIU, CWA, Council of Interns and Residents, and Doctors Council — held a joint “Know Your Rights” (KYR) event, seeking to prepare hospital and clinic employees in case ICE shows up.

The brutal kidnapping of Chidozie Wilson Okeke underlines the urgent need for health care workers to organize and prepare for similar events, which *will come*. Every hospital should be home to a **committee to defend immigrants**, where workers, backed up by health care unions, can be educated as to patients' and employees' rights, share information and build resistance to ICE terror that endangers everyone. When in the 41-day NYSNA strike this winter union negotiators raised the issue of immigration agents barging into hospitals, the bosses claimed it wasn't “germane” to contract negotiations. But there's nothing more germane to health care workers than the safety and well-being of their patients.

Among the demands raised then, as a NYSNA delegate told a conference of the Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants (LCDI) in February, were: training for employees on how to handle ICE; protections for employees who stand up for patients; protection for employees who are immigrants or have Temporary Protected Status, and for extensive signage with Know Your Rights information. After Veterans Administration nurse Alex Pretti was murdered by Border Patrol agents in Minneapolis in January, the Health Care Workers Working Group of the LCDI put out a leaflet demanding: “No ICE/Border Patrol/DHS in hospitals or any health care facilities!”

In addition to demanding the immigration agents not be allowed into hospitals, health care workers should call for:

- Patients should be provided with KYR information, including that they have a right to consult an attorney.
 - Hospitals and clinics should instruct personnel on how to get legal assistance for patients, and have immigration lawyers on call.
 - Staff should be made aware that ICE detainees are not being held as criminals, but for a supposed *civil violation*. They have the right to privacy when on the phone or speaking with medical personnel or an attorney.
 - Coded overhead announcements could make workers aware of ICE presence at or near the hospital so that the necessary preparations can be made.
 - All hospital personnel should know that under HIPAA (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) they have a legal right and responsibility to protect private health information and must not provide patient information of any kind to ICE.
 - The unions should demand no reprisals for workers who protect their patients. That's their job.
- Health care workers – many of whom are immigrants themselves – must be prepared to defend their patients and fellow workers. This cannot just happen spontaneously. It must be an organized effort by workers and unions. Health care workers should demand, **“ICE: hands off our patients! ICE out of the hospitals!”**

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Aksyon ouvriye pou bat kampay rasis kont Ayisyen yo – kounye a !

TPS Canceled – Courts and Congress a Dead End

For Workers Action Now to Defeat Racist Drive Against Haitians!

JULY 31 – The Trump administration’s mass deportations drive has come to a head with the cancellation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for more than a third of a million people. The Supreme Court’s June 25 ruling in the case *Mullin v. Doe* gives the green light to the MAGA (Make America Great Again) racists in office to eliminate TPS for Haitians, something that has been in their sights since the start of Donald Trump’s second term in office. This decision affects over 350,000 Haitians and 6,000 Syrians whose work authorization and legal status are due to expire in the coming days. The Court’s ruling went into effect on July 27. Deportation flights to Cap-Haïtien have already resumed – *now is the decisive moment to act.*

Given Trump’s vicious racist lies last year about Haitians in Springfield, Ohio supposedly eating family pets, it’s no surprise that Haitian immigrants are the next focus of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids. Federal agents are gearing up to quickly hit Springfield, where Haitian immigration saved the former manufacturing hub from economic ruin. And with Trump’s “border czar” Tom Homan vowing to send in “more ICE agents than you’ve ever seen in New York City” – with the second-largest population of Haitian immigrants (after Miami, Florida) and by far the largest number of people of Haitian origin in the U.S. – we may soon see the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agents snatching people off the streets of Brooklyn.

The strategy of many “mainstream” Haitian community groups, elected officials and immigrants’ rights advo-



At August 1 protest in Brooklyn, NY against cancellation of Temporary Protected Status for Haitian (and Syrian) refugees.

cates has been to look to Congress and the Courts to preserve TPS, and to the Democratic Party for political support. But that has always been illusory, and now it has come to the end of the road. Many may seek refuge in Canada or elsewhere. But many more may not. The June 25 Supreme Court decision clears the way for ICE to target Haitian neighborhoods *en masse*. And judging by the treatment of Haitians at the U.S.-Mexico border in 2021 under Democrat Joe Biden, when Haitians were lashed by Border Patrol agents on horseback, and the recent murder spree by the ICE Gestapo in Texas, Maine and Florida, it may soon get bloody.

Against the power of the murderous paramilitary immigration police, it is necessary to bring to bear a superior power: that of the organized workers movement. New York City is a labor stronghold – a quarter of all workers in NYC are union members. Haitian workers are a key part of the workforce, particularly among health care workers, school bus drivers and other sectors. In the face of a new “surge,” with masked federal agents prowling the streets trying to terrorize immigrants and the entire population, the Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants is calling to **mobilize workers action to stop the deportations**, and for unions, together with students and communities, to lead **mass mobilization to run the modern-day slave catchers out of town.**

Imperialism’s Racist Targeting of Haitians

Ever since the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804 – the first successful slave revolt in history, which kicked out the French colonialists and established the first independent black nation in the West – the imperialists have never forgotten or forgiven this humiliation. News of the Haitian Revolution spread across the Americas inspiring slave revolts, including Denmark Vesey’s Rebellion in 1822 and Nat Turner’s Rebellion in 1831. The racist U.S. ruling class sought to destroy the Haitian economy and destabilize the black republic. In 1915, the U.S. occupied Haiti to collect debt owed to National City Bank of

New York (now Citibank), which took over the “indemnity” (ransom) Haiti was forced to pay to France to compensate the former slaveowners.

The Marines’ occupation, begun by segregationist Democrat Woodrow Wilson, didn’t end until 1934. Ever since, the U.S. has effectively run Haiti as a neocolony. In the 1990s, Democrat president Bill Clinton destroyed the Haitian rice industry by subsidizing imports of rice from Arkansas (where he had been governor). After the 2010 earthquake, which killed over 300,000 people and left many more homeless, Democratic president Barack Obama sent U.S. troops to put down unrest by the poor and working people of Haiti. Ex-president Clinton became the effective colonial *gouverneur*, and secretary of state Hillary Clinton set up sweatshop garment factories where workers were (and still are) paid starvation wages of \$5 a day.

If Haiti today is labeled a “failed state” by U.S. politicians, it is the result of unending imperialist domination. Haiti’s unelected “acting prime minister” Fils-Aimé is in office because of backing from a “Core Group” of imperialist countries, kept there to fight the gangs that reportedly control 40% of the capital, Port-au-Prince. Troops from Africa in the (U.S.-financed) Gang Suppression Force act as one more gang. And at least 1,243 people have been killed in drone strikes by a “security contractor” (Vectus Global) run by notorious mercenary Erik Prince of Blackwater infamy. But while violence in Haiti is such that it is on the State Department’s “Do Not Travel” list, the Trump regime is deporting Haitian immigrants there.

The Trump administration is not uniquely cruel in this regard. After Hurricane Matthew destroyed southern Haiti in 2016, Obama’s DHS head Jeh Johnson announced that the U.S. would “resume removal flights” as soon as possible. In response, the League for the Fourth International (of which the Internationalist Group is the U.S. section) held coordinated united-front protests in the U.S., Mexico and Brazil demanding “Stop Exclusion of Haitians! Stop All Deportations! Occupation Troops Out of Haiti!” But the Trump drive to push out Haitians is driven by blatant racism. The dissent by liberal Supreme Court justices reprinted a whole string of the Trump statements (including his Nazi-like rant about “poisoning the blood” of the U.S.) that the conservative majority ruled were supposedly “not overtly racial.”



U.S. Border Patrol on horseback attacks Haitians in Del Rio, Texas in September 2021, during the Biden administration.

Trump and Democrats: Enemies of Immigrants



(In Kreyòl Ayisyen) “For Workers Action to Defeat the Racist Drive Against Haitians, Now!” Sign in center reads, “In the Spirit of Toussaint Louverture, Only Revolution Can Bring Justice!”

In the face of this virulent racist onslaught, it is crucial that the labor movement mobilize to defend our immigrant fellow workers and community members. In 1990, in protest against federal authorities’ racist prohibition against Haitian immigrants giving blood (reflected in Trump’s ravings above), tens of thousands of Haitian protesters marched, closing down the Brooklyn Bridge and parts of lower Manhattan. The power of Haitian immigrant workers as part of the multiracial and largely immigrant working class of this union town was shown again in the 2013 NYC school bus strike. **Today, our Haitian brothers and sisters must not be left to stand alone in the face of fascist ICE thugs whose attack on basic rights threatens the entire working class.**

Already there are reports of employers, including hospitals, preemptively firing workers with TPS even before their work authorizations have run out. Medical workers should act to stop the firings. The day before the cancellation of TPS went into effect, Teamsters Local 804 passed a resolution (see below) calling to stop the deportations of Haitians and Syrians and opposing firing or layoffs of workers at UPS and Amazon as a result of changes in immigration status. Against the white supremacist in the White House and the “deport better” Democrats whose cops (as in Zohran

Mamdani’s NYC) protect ICE, we must look to the multiracial labor movement to wield its enormous potential power now to stop the racist deportation machine in its tracks.

Defend Haitians! Stop the deportations and firings! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Resolution to Stop Deportation of Haitian and Syrian Workers

The following resolution was passed by International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 804 on July 26.

Whereas, on June 25 the Supreme Court ruled that the Department of Homeland Security may arbitrarily terminate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitians and Syrians; and

Whereas, the Department of Homeland Security set the deadline to end TPS for Haitians and Syrians for July 24, subsequently extended to July 27, ordering employers to fire them and making them targets in the ongoing campaign of “mass deportations”; and

Whereas, many Haitian workers in particular have lived and worked in the U.S. for decades, and to deport Haitians or Syrians would place them in grave danger; and

Whereas, Haitian workers are a vital part of New York City’s labor movement, and central to the health care system in New York, where their removal

would endanger many hospitals and senior care facilities; and

Whereas, attacks on TPS are part of a war on immigrants that grievously undermines the fight to organize the unorganized especially at Amazon where our local is engaged in a unionization campaign, and where, in 2025, Haitian workers whose Humanitarian Parole status had been revoked were laid off en masse; and

Whereas, attacks on immigrant rights are an attack on the rights of the working class as a whole and must be opposed in line with the labor motto that “an injury to one is an injury to all”; and

Therefore, be it resolved, that Teamsters Local 804 calls to stop the deportations of Haitians and Syrians, and opposes any firing or layoff of our immigrant fellow workers by UPS or Amazon due to termination of TPS or other change in immigration status.

Okeke...

continued from page 8

To contact the Health Care Working Group of the Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants, and to get a copy of the LCDI Immigrant Rights Defense Packet for Health Care Workers, write to: Laborconference@gmail.com.

Democrats No Friends of Immigrants – Build a Revolutionary Workers Party

So far New York hasn’t seen many incidents of immigration enforcement in health care settings since the start of Trump’s mass deportations drive. The Department of Homeland Security has targeted one city at a time to unleash rampaging ICE and Border Patrol agents. Some liberals chalk this up to NYC mayor Zohran Mamdani’s charm offensive to cuddle up to the white supremacist in the White House. While the mayor has called the president a “fascist” and Trump refers to Mamdani as a “communist,” so far the city hasn’t been occupied by thousands of paramilitary agents as occurred in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Chicago and Minneapolis.

But the floodgates may be opening, and the action of nearly 100 NYPD cops in aiding the brutal kidnapping of Chidozie Okeke on May 2 is a striking illustration of how the mayor, a member of Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), will respond: he will claim to have nothing to do with ICE raids, while his SRG riot police attack protesters and shield the masked federal agents. Mamdani said the video of an NYPD officer slamming a demonstrator to the ground outside Wyckoff hospital is “deeply disturbing,” but like Democratic city and state officials across the country, *the reality is that the DSA Democrat mayor is aiding the immigrant-snatching ICE Gestapo.*

A May 9 rally called by the New York City DSA and rights groups calls for “Justice for Mr. Okeke” and demands “legal support for Mr. Okeke,” but it pointedly does not call to *free Chidozie Wilson Okeke*. Democrats are loath to call to free the detainees being held in ICE concentration camps or to demand an end to the deportations. Why? Because Democrats Obama and Biden built up the whole deportation machine and expelled far more immigrants from the U.S. than Trump has done. The

rally calls to “abolish ICE,” but what about the Border Patrol? And if ICE is eliminated, the capitalist rulers will just set up another immigrant-snatching agency.

The fact is that Democrats, even supposedly “progressive” Democrats, are no friends of immigrants, or of working people overall. On May Day, Mayor Mamdani bragged that he “stood there alongside NYSNA nurses” during their recent strike. Yet at the same time he endorsed Governor Kathy Hochul, who helped the bosses herd scabs by issuing executive orders allowing nurses without New York state licenses to work during the bitter six-week strike. Now Hochul is taking credit for a package of “sanctuary” provisions in the state budget to ban ICE agents wearing masks and ban formal measures deputizing local police, *but refusing to prohibit all cooperation with ICE.*

Whether under Democratic or Republican governments, decaying American capitalism requires the persecution of immigrants, exploiting low-wage workers without rights and then deporting them when they are no longer needed. The Internationalist Group calls to *smash the ICE Gestapo with workers revolution*. We demand *full citizenship rights for all immigrants* and call for *mass workers action to stop the deportations*. And while the pseudo-socialist DSA is embedded in the Democratic Party of imperialist war abroad and racist repression at home, the Internationalists call to break with the parties of capital and build a revolutionary workers party. ■

Minnesota 15...

continued from page 7

ing to “Abort Trump’s Police State,” and of the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth newspaper, *Revolution*, headlined, “For Mass Worker/Student Action to Stop Raids and Deportations.” We distributed nearly 1,000 copies of a four-page leaflet with a program for action, “Twin Cities: For a Real General Strike to Drive Out ICE Gestapo!” The Democratic Party and courts won’t stop mass deportations, we stressed, we must “Bring Out Workers Power!”

The IG and Class Struggle Education Workers, as well as Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants activists, also participated in the Workers Assemblies in Minneapolis that the federal government wants to criminalize. Today we urge class-conscious workers everywhere to take up the defense of the Minnesota 15. Solidarity messages, even from arch-conservative business unionists, are important, but much more is needed. Defending the Minneapolis 15 against the federal government will be expensive and a legal defense fund has been established. As of this writing, more than \$390,000 has been raised, including \$50,000 from National Nurses United. The Internationalist Group contributed \$1,000 and urges all supporters of immigrants and the labor movement to donate. Contributions for legal defense should be sent to: <https://chuffed.org/project/186570-minnesota-15-legal-defense-fund>.

The defense of immigrants, leftists, transgender people and all those being targeted today depends, not on any law or court, but rather on the independent mobilization of the working class and oppressed people to stop escalating police-state repression, **Drop the charges against the Minneapolis 15! Free the Prairieland 22! ■**



Teamster, teacher and health care worker LCDI activists against the racist deportations and firings of Haitians.

CLASS STRUGGLE EDUCATION WORKERS

No to Mayoral Control – For Teacher-Parent-Student-Worker Control of the Schools!

Mamdani Betrays Class Size Mandate, UFT Tops OK Delay

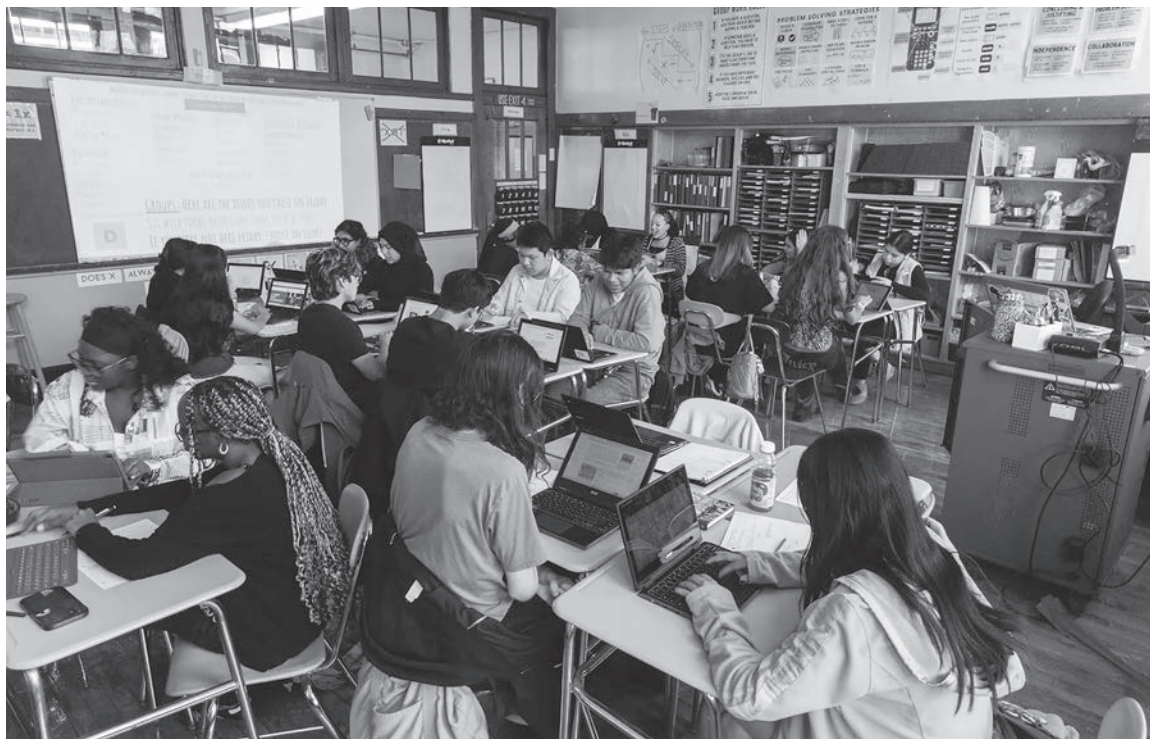
Use Union Power to Enforce Smaller Class Sizes!

By Class Struggle Education Workers/UFT

JUNE 10 – On June 1, as part of the backroom deals in Albany to finalize the New York State budget, legislators in agreement with NY governor Kathy Hochul gave New York City mayor Zohran Mamdani an additional \$500 million to close a budget gap by delaying, by two years, the deadline to lower class sizes in NYC public schools. The 2022 law capped maximum class sizes at 20 students for kindergarten to third grade, 23 for grades 4-8 and 25 for high schools, to be implemented in 20% increments over four years, with full compliance by 2028. Now that has been extended to 2030. When he was a state senator, Mamdani voted for the law, and on the campaign trail last year he declared that reducing class size was “critical,” slamming Mayor Eric Adams for slow-walking compliance and turning it into a “negotiation.” Now the supposed “democratic socialist” mayor has done just that, betraying his campaign promise – and the hundreds of thousands of students who will face four more years of overcrowded classes.

What’s more, the leadership of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) is going along with this gross betrayal. When the law was passed by the state legislature in 2022, UFT president Michael Mulgrew greeted it at as “a milestone in the years-long struggle to bring the benefits of smaller classes to the city.” When NY governor Kathy Hochul signed it into law that September, he hailed it as “groundbreaking.” But now Mulgrew signs off on the budget deal, arguing that exemptions were only for a school’s lack of physical space (with a plan to overcome this); if a school had been given money for more teachers but was unable to hire enough; or overenrolled schools. And he got a side deal of up to \$8,500 differential pay for teachers with stuffed classes in schools with exemptions. Typical Unity Caucus: in exchange for giving up a hard-won union gain, they ask for more money. That’s what happened when they sacrificed seniority transfers in 2005, resulting in several thousand teachers being put into limbo in the Absent Teacher Reserve.

So why is Mamdani backing off from reducing class sizes now? Answer: because his capitalist masters ordered it. The mayor, a member of Democratic Socialists of America



Students at New Design HS in Manhattan, October 2024. State law said high school classes in NYC schools should have no more than 25 students by 2028. DSA Democrat mayor Zohran Mamdani extended deadline, consigning students to two more years of overcrowded classes.

(DSA), campaigned on a platform calling for free childcare from age 2 (2K) and free buses, to be paid for by a 2% tax surcharge on salaries over \$1 million. But the DSA Democrat is a member of the capitalist party that runs both the state and city. Governor Hochul nixed Mamdani’s minimal “tax the rich” scheme and bus plan, agreeing only to the 2K program (that extends existing 4K and 3K programs). The Citizens Budget Commission, the voice of Wall Street on municipal finance, has been saying since last December that the mayor-elect would have to cut back on the class size mandates to fill the gaping budget deficit hole. And so, on May 12, Democratic mayor Mamdani and Democratic governor Hochul issued a joint press release calling for the Democrat majority legislature to delay the class size law mandates, which it is now doing.

It was not the first time Mamdani abandoned a campaign promise on education. On the day before his inauguration, he reversed his call for an end to mayoral control of the public schools, a position he strongly defended throughout the election campaign, arguing (correctly) that it shut out teachers, parents and students from crucial decisions. Again, the powers-that-be explained to the chief executive officer of the city that is “the capital of international finance capital” that he needed to be in control to push through “hard decisions,” like hobbling the class size law. In short, it is the “responsibility” of the

pseudo-socialist Democrat to do the dirty work for capital. And if today there is hardly a peep of protest from teachers, not only from the bureaucracy’s Unity Caucus, but also from opposition groups like the Movement of Rank-and-file Educators (M.O.R.E.), New Action Caucus, it is in good part because the UFT endorsed Mamdani and most doubtless voted for him. Not us. We oppose voting for any capitalist party or politician.

Reducing Class Size: The Single Most Effective Way to Improve Education

Lowering class sizes is widely – and among working educators, almost universally – recognized as a main way to improve education, and doubly so for students from poor, black and Latino neighborhoods who make up the large majority of those in NYC public schools. As Leonie Haimson of Class Size Matters put it, “The research is crystal clear that smaller classes lead to better student outcomes in every single way that can be measured” (*US News & World Report*, 29 August 2022).¹ Class Struggle Education Work-

¹ “Project STAR, a large-scale experiment carried out in Tennessee in the 1980’s, showed that those students who were randomly placed in smaller classes in K-3 did better in every single way that could be measured.” <https://classsize-matters.org/testimony-on-the-importance-of-lowering-class-size-in-nyc-schools/>

ers has been calling to lower class sizes since our inception. In a December 2009 leaflet, “Beat Back the Attack on Union Gains and Public Education,” our No. 1 demand was “Reduce Class Sizes, Now!” We added, “Despite the court ruling on the Campaign for Fiscal Equality’s suit, class sizes are rising throughout the system. Reducing class size is the single most effective way to improve education, helping teachers teach, and students to receive more individual attention. Set up a union monitoring system to ensure court guidelines and present contractual class sizes are enforced.”

Various pundits and education “experts” have called lowering class size into question. Liberal publications like Chalkbeat and the *New York Times* peddle propaganda about studies suggesting greater benefits from experienced educators; that the

benefits of smaller classes being offset by less effective new teachers; that the most overcrowded classes are in elite schools, so lowering class size will disproportionately benefit white, middle-class students; that declining enrollment in education courses means not enough teachers could be hired; that smaller classes would require impossible, budget-busting school construction, etc., etc. What is the conclusion? Never hire new teachers, don’t build new schools? The same outfits pushing this garbage also call for semi-privatized charter schools as more “cost-effective,” want to drive out many educators with punitive teacher “evaluations,” want to weaken teachers unions by introducing “merit pay” and the like. They are enemies of public education.

The objections to limiting class sizes are cynical sucker bait. The fight is not about pedagogy – large classes of 30+ students make it almost impossible to give individual attention to every one. The fight is about \$\$\$ – and smaller classes in New York schools will cost hundreds of millions to hire more teachers and several billion to finance new buildings. So? The current budget of the NYC Department of Education (D.O.E.) is running at \$45 billion a year. How many additional teachers are needed? Estimates vary. In 2024, New York City Comptroller Brad Landers estimated 14,000. Also that year, the D.O.E. put the figure at 10,000-12,000. Mamdani’s

Thalia Juarez for Chalkbeat



In 2020 the CSEW and the Internationalist Group called for measures to reopen the schools safely, including for thousands of teachers and staff to be hired for smaller class sizes.

2006 budget called for hiring 6,000 more teachers, but after the deal with Hochul, he slashed that to 1,000. This is nothing, especially as the city typically hires 4,000-5,000 new teachers annually for normal turnover. Any way you cut it, Mamdani just sold educators and students out.

Lowering class sizes is a basic measure that parents and teachers are everywhere in favor of, since it greatly enables both teaching and learning. And just like any improvement to public education, black and Latino kids stand to gain the most. The battle over class sizes has been going on for decades. In the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) lawsuit in the early 1990s, the NY State Supreme Court ruled that reasonable class sizes are essential to a “sound basic education.” In 2001 courts ruled that NYC schools were unconstitutionally underfunded, and the state was ordered to send billions to improve city schools. A 2003 CFE ruling declared New York City class sizes excessive, and the state legislature mandated the city “develop and implement a class size reduction plan for all grade levels.” Yet after that, class sizes rose.² The 2022 law with specific dates and numbers was a major victory, which must be defended. And it will take a major effort to bring the country’s largest public school system into compliance.

The UFT Must Use Its Power to Enforce Lower Class Sizes

The UFT can force the city to lower class sizes by putting its foot down and insisting that the caps be met. In fact, the 2022 law stipulates any exceptions be agreed to by the D.O.E.’s collective bargaining units, the UFT and CSA (Council of School Supervisors and Administrators). The union long ago insisted on limiting the number of students per class: the current levels (32 to 34) were written into the UFT contract in the early 1960s. But in recent decades the Unity bureaucracy has opposed calls to lower class sizes in contractual bargaining, arguing that the money for that would come out of the same pot as raises. And

after the Adams administration did nothing at all in the first two years to implement the law, already last year Mulgrew & Co. signed off on thousands of exemptions to enable the fiction that the city had met the 60% compliance requirement. Now, just to meet the 70% level (down from 80%) under the amended law next school year will require thousands more exemptions.

As Leonie Haimson of Class Size Matters noted, the “DOE appears to be counting on receiving permanent exemptions

from the state, as well as from their union partners, the UFT and CSA, so that these schools will never have to lower class size.”³ No doubt the school bosses are hoping that declining student enrollment (now down to 800,000, down from over 1 million in 2018-19) due to falling birth rates and immigrants disappearing under Trump’s mass deportation drive, will do the job. At a June 3 UFT “town hall,” Mulgrew claimed that issuing exemptions and allowing the two-year extension was necessary to “protect” the law. Two days earlier, he argued, “If giving this new administration two more years gets us a partner committed to building the necessary seats,” then it’s a good deal.⁴ But DSA Democrat Mamdani, contrary to his phony “socialist” credentials, is no “partner” of working people; as head of the capitalist government he defends the interests of the bosses – like right now over the class size law.

And by the way, about that “differential pay” deal: pay attention to the fine print. According to what UFT president Mulgrew said at the town hall and in an email to the members, that will be available only to teachers of overcrowded classes *in schools that have received exemptions*. But most overenrolled school have not. In school year 2025-26, 10,500 out of a total of 150,000 classes in the city’s 1,800 schools got exemptions, but the teachers of the 43,500 other classes that were not in compliance with the class size limits would *not* have been eligible for the additional pay. So if you’ve got a supersized class, chances are you won’t see the fabled extra dollars on your pay stub. Mulgrew also claimed that demanding this would be an “incentive” for the city to comply with the law, since it would have to pay extra not to. But the amount of this chump change is so piddling it won’t incentivize anything.

A couple of final points about class siz-

³ See “Our detailed critique of DOE draft class size plan for 2025-2026 school year” (9 July 2025), at classsizematters.org

⁴ See “NY lawmakers to give Mamdani 2-year extension to comply with NYC class size mandate,” *Chalkbeat*, 1 June.

es. First, Mamdani himself went to the Bank Street School for Children, one of the top private schools in the city, from grades two to eight, where class sizes average 16 students per class. (He then matriculated at the elite Bronx High School of Science, one of the top city “specialized” schools.) But then, as we pointed out in a box on “Their Class Sizes and Ours” in a December 2010 CSEW leaflet, “We Can Stop the School Closings!” city rulers and schools chiefs are not like us: their kids have smaller class sizes. At the time, we noted, Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s children attended Spence, a private school with average class sizes of 14. His chancellor, Joel Klein, sent his stepdaughter to Miss Porter’s School in Connecticut, average class size 11. The following chancellor, socialite Cathleen Black, who admitted she had never stepped foot in a public school, sent her children to a different private boarding school in Connecticut, Kent, average class size 12. Just sayin’.

Also, much lower class sizes are very possible for regular public schools. Even with the caps of 23 to 25 students per class, classes in New York City schools would be much bigger than in the rest of the state, which for high school average 17-19 students per class (and since NYC is included in those averages, accounting for over one-third of the total, this means that elsewhere classes of around 15 students are the norm).

To fight the Mamdani’s administration’s two-faced austerity program – proclaiming he will “fight to lower class sizes” while sabotaging the plan to get there – educators need a fighting program. Class Struggle Education Workers calls to replace mayoral control with **teacher-student-parent-worker control of the schools**. While it will ultimately take a revolution to fully achieve this, it can be made concrete in crisis situations. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, by August 2020 the CSEW put forward a “Class Struggle Program to Reopen New York City Schools Safely.” This included demands: “Make Schools Safe: Class size, 10-15 tops, HEPA air filters, rebuild bathrooms, hire thousands of teachers, staff, custodial.” We

called for “union-led safety committees at every school” and to “Use union power to keep schools open safely.” But instead, many teachers unions (and union oppositions) were insisting on keeping schools closed – with disastrous results, politically and educationally for the students.

As loyal “labor lieutenants of capital,” the UFT tops (also Democrats) take responsibility for the city budget, while Mamdani puts education to the chopping block as did Adams, de Blasio and Bloomberg. It is important for class-conscious trade unionists to understand that the bureaucracy that sits atop the unions is not just a bunch of sell-

outs but a privileged, petty-bourgeois layer (Randi Weingarten as head of the UFT’s parent body, the American Federation of Teachers, rakes in a cool half million dollars a year between salary and allowances), which seeks to mediate between the bosses and the workers by clamping down on militant labor struggle. And while they can sometimes be forced to defend the interests of the workers organizations they (mis)lead, their fundamental loyalty is to the capitalist system. Hence their support to the bosses’ Democratic Party. The CSEW calls instead to build a class-struggle workers party.

At the July 2025 UFT Delegate Assembly that endorsed Zohran Mamdani for mayor, Yari Milo Michel, a supporter of the CSEW, said:

“I don’t think we should endorse any capitalist politician – whether it be the Democrats, Republicans, or independents for that matter.... Both parties represent the interests of capital and both are the enemies of public education. Both are also the parties of the genocidal war in Gaza, the war in Iran, the attacks on immigrants, and of police brutality. We should be clear, we are being asked today to endorse the next boss of the NYPD, the murderers of Eric Garner, Sean Bell, and Amadou Diallo, as if racist police murder is a question of picking the right Democrat and not systemic.

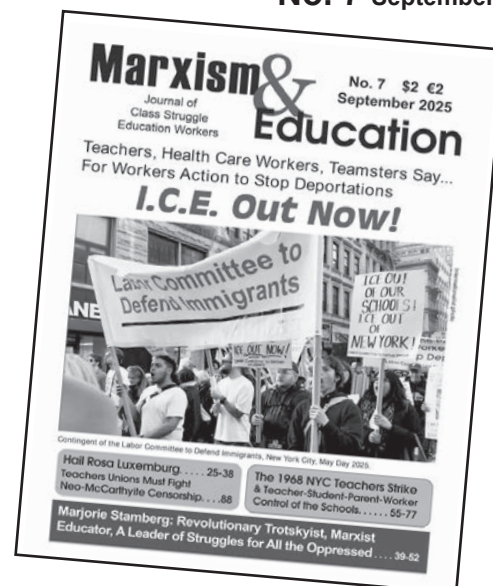
“Now, Mamdani is the talk of the town. While we need to fully reject the false racist and Islamophobic accusations of antisemitism against Mamdani for expressing opinions in defense of Palestinians, this does not mean we should throw political support behind his campaign. He is a Democratic Party capitalist politician through and through.

“In my opinion, the unions across this city, including us, need to take independent action in defense of all those under attack, including the retirees. And we need to struggle for a real workers party and government to accomplish this.”

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Solidarity with ILWU Warehouse Workers!

For 42 days starting on June 15, warehouse workers of International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 6 struck the C&H Sugar refinery in Crockett, California, refusing to accept a “take-it-or-leave-it” contract ultimatum from the company. The mobilization of hundreds of ILWU Local 10 members, shutting down all Northern California ports, along with strike supporters from around the region on June 21, organizing mass picket lines that blocked trucks and scabs, sent a powerful message to the union-busting bosses. The arrest of ten picketers was headlined across local media. The stage was set to escalate the strike into a major battle that could mobilize labor and union supporters all across the San Francisco Bay Area. (See the Internationalist Group leaflet, reprinted on page 14, putting forward a program for just that.)

Instead, both the company (the American Sugar Refining [ASR] conglomerate that bought up C&H in 2005 in its effort to get a monopoly lock on the U.S. cane sugar industry) and the ILWU International leadership decided to pull back, seemingly worried by the tough stance of the angry picketers. So as picketers arrived on Monday, July 27, they were met with a joint press release from the ILWU and C&H Sugar announcing that they had agreed to a 60-day period of contract negotiations, that the company would withdraw its declaration of impasse in bargaining (that is, their refusal to bargain) and the Local 6 members would return



Pickers outside of C&H Sugar refinery on July 21, as workers chanted “No one in, no one out!” shutting down entrances to the plant.

to work. Some union supporters have portrayed this as a win, saying that “the ILWU forced C&H back to the bargaining table” (*Struggle/La Lucha*, 31 July). From the standpoint of class-struggle unionism, we in the Internationalist Group disagree.

In the first place, four C&H warehouse workers were fired during the strike. A bottom-line condition for returning to work,

even if only to resume bargaining, must be *no reprisals*. The ILWU should demand that those workers be reinstated *immediately* as a condition for moving forward. Moreover, such “cooling-off periods” usually serve to head off militant labor action (for example in the looming rail strike in late 2022, which Democrats in the White House and Congress ultimately squelched by pushing

through no-strike legislation), calling off the strike gives up the union’s ability to put economic pressure on the bosses. And they will still be bargaining over company demands to give back past union gains. Also, the membership must be allowed to vote on any contract, including to reject it if it has give-backs or otherwise doesn’t meet their needs. That is in the ILWU Constitution.

Although returning to work was, in our opinion, a mistake and set back the struggle, the struggle is not over and ILWU supporters have continued to push for labor solidarity with the Local 6 warehouse workers at C&H. This has included working to get declarations of solidarity from port workers unions around the world. A roster of the most militant waterfront, transport and metal workers unions have clocked in, including the Dockers union of the port of Le Havre, France; the Coordinamento Porti of the USB dockworkers in Italy; La Coordinadora, the Spanish dockworkers union; the ENEDEP port workers union of Piraeus, Greece; the Doro-Chiba rail workers union in Japan; and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), the largest union on the African continent.

These statements should alert the owners of C&H Sugar that behind the representatives of ILWU Local 6 whom they face across the bargaining table stand some of the most powerful and militant labor organizations in the world. This list includes some of the main unions that have stopped arms shipments to Israel in protest against the genocide in Gaza, as ILWU Local 10 called for in 2025 (although the resolution was later sunk by the bureaucracy at the union’s convention in Vancouver, British Columbia). They are some of the same unions represented at the European Port Workers meeting in September 2025, to which Jack Heyman, a longtime maritime/longshore militant and supporter of the Internationalist Group, brought

greetings from ILWU Local 10, of which he is a retired member. It is in response to his appeal that they have expressed their support for the Bay Area longshore and warehouse workers in this important battle.

These unions pack a punch, and in the past have made labor solidarity with U.S. unions real (for example, over the 2000 Charleston, South Carolina longshore struggle¹ referred to in the letter from La Coordinadora). The owners of ASR, the Fanjul brothers, who are thirsting to get back their former sugar cane estates that were expropriated by the Cuban Revolution in 1959, should know that if they continue on their union-busting course, they are in for a fight. The ILWU itself shut down all U.S. and Canadian Pacific Coast ports on May Day 2008 to demand an end to the U.S. wars on Afghanistan and Iraq, and it could certainly do so to stop union-busting at home. The key is having a program for militant class struggle, and against class collaboration.

C&H bosses got a small taste of that struggle on July 21. What follows is the text of the Internationalist leaflet, issued just before the strike was called off, drawing the lessons of that mobilization. Let’s make sure the lessons sink in. Labor has the power — we must use it.

¹ See “Defend the Charleston Five!” *The Internationalist* No. 5, June 2001

Letters from NUMSA (South Africa), ENEDEP (Greece), CGT (France), La Coordinadora (Spain) and USB (Italy) dockworkers and metalworkers unions in solidarity with ILWU strike at C&H sugar refinery.

NUMSA Press Statement 31 July 2026 NUMSA Stands in Solidarity with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union— An Injury to One is an Injury to All!

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), representing over 300,000 metalworkers, stands shoulder-to-shoulder in solidarity with our comrades of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU)—specifically Warehouse Local 6 and Longshore Local 10—in their heroic battle against C&H Sugar Refinery in California.

NUMSA recognises this fight for what it is and we resolutely stand with our comrades in defence of the ILWU’s right to strike in order to win this battle. This is an attack by the world’s largest sugar refinery to force a poverty-wage contract onto its workforce. By stripping healthcare benefits, slashing overtime, and demolishing the seniority system, C&H Sugar has declared an open war on workers. In South Africa, we are all too familiar with greedy bosses who prioritise profit over human lives.

Capital knows no borders in its pursuit of profit, and neither does our international working-class solidarity. C&H Sugar’s attempt to unload the vessel *Tai Herakl*—carrying sugar extracted from Negros Island in the Philippines—is a profound outrage. In April this year, state armed forces slaughtered 19 people on Negros Island, including sugarcane workers. That sugar is drenched in the blood of our fallen Filipino comrades.

in the union-
s at private
calling

ENEDEP Stands in Solidarity with the Strike of ILWU Local 6 and the Dockworkers of ILWU Local 10

ENEDEP, the Dockworker’s union of Piraeus Port, expresses its class-based and internationalist solidarity with the workers of ILWU Local 6, who have been on strike for several weeks at the C&H Sugar facilities in Crockett, California, as well as with the dockworkers of ILWU Local 10, who are standing firmly by their side.

The workers of Local 6 are striking against the company’s attempt to impose a poverty-level collective bargaining agreement, with cuts to healthcare coverage, overtime, leave and seniority rights. The company is seeking to crush the organised strength of the workers, undermine the union and put its profits above the lives and needs of the workers.

The dockworkers of Local 10 refused to unload the *Tai Herakl*, proving in practice that solidarity is the workers’ most powerful weapon. Faced with this determination, the company attempted to bypass the strike by moving the vessel to another terminal and employing a strikebreaking operation.

We condemn employer intimidation, the use of strikebreakers and police repression against workers defending their right to organise collectively, to fight for better wages and working conditions, and to strike.

The strike at C&H Sugar concerns all dockworkers and all workers who are confronted with the same profit-driven policy: work intensification, cuts, attacks on collective bargaining agreements, the undermining of trade unions and the repression of workers’ struggles.

From Piraeus to the ports of California, workers share common interests and face a

USB stands in solidarity with the Strike of ILWU Local 6 and the dockworkers of ILWU Local 10



USB and its Coordinamento Porti, representing dockworkers in several ports in Italy, expresses the full solidarity to the workers of ILWU Local 6, who have been on strike for several weeks at the C&H Sugar facilities in Crockett, California, as well as with the dockworkers of ILWU Local 10, who are standing firmly by their side.

The requests of C&H Sugar company to impose a poverty-level collective bargaining agreement, with cuts to healthcare coverage, overtime, leave and seniority rights to fuel their profit are unacceptable and absolutely right the workers’ most powerful weapon.

The news of the police raid in support of the strike-breakers and the subsequent arrest of 10 workers and trade union representatives must be met with a strong and concrete show of solidarity from all dockers’ unions around the world.

From Italy to the ports of California, the states and the governments, the United States and the European Union must workers divided and afraid, forced to bow their heads for the profits and wars of a handful of exploiters.

We respond to these attacks standing together, with solidarity, organization and class unity. Free all unionist and protester and hands off the strikers and the trade unionist! All our support to the struggles of ILWU 6 and ILWU 10!

USB esprime la propria solidarietà allo sciopero dei lavoratori portuali di ILWU 6 e quelli dell’ILWU 10 in California.

L’USB e il suo Coordinamento Porti, rappresentante i lavoratori portuali di diversi porti italiani, esprimono la loro piena solidarietà ai lavoratori della sezione 6 dell’ILWU, in sciopero da diverse settimane presso gli stabilimenti della C&H Sugar a Crockett, in California, nonché ai lavoratori portuali della Sezione 10 dell’ILWU, che sono fermamente al loro fianco.

Le richieste della società C&H Sugar di imporre un contratto collettivo da fame, con tagli alla copertura sanitaria, alla formazione e al diritto di anzianità per alimentare i propri profitti, sono inaccettabili e lo sciopero della Sezione 6 dell’ILWU è stato assolutamente giustificato.

Di fronte a questa determinazione, l’azienda ha tentato di aggirare lo sciopero spostando la nave “Tai Herakl” in un altro terminal e ricorrendo a un’operazione di sbarco della nave carica di zucchero pieno di sangue dei lavoratori, importato dalla C&H dalle isole di Negros, dimostrando nella pratica che la solidarietà è l’arma più potente dei lavoratori.

La notizia del raid della polizia a sostegno dei crumiri e del successivo arresto di 10 lavoratori e rappresentanti sindacali deve essere accolta con una forte e concreta dimostrazione di solidarietà da parte di tutti i sindacati del mondo.

Dall’Italia ai porti della California, gli Stati e i governi, gli Stati Uniti e l’Unione Europea vogliono lavoratori divisi e scontenti, costretti a chinare il capo per i profitti e le guerre di una manciata di sfruttatori.

Rispondiamo a questi attacchi restando uniti, con solidarietà, organizzazione e unità di classe.

Liberate tutti i sindacalisti e i manifestanti e giù le mani dagli scioperanti e dai sindacati!

Tutto il nostro sostegno alle lotte dell’ILWU 6 e dell’ILWU 10!

Roma, 3 agosto 2026

Sede: Via dell’Aeroporto, 129 - 00175 Roma Tel. 06/5940004 - Fax 06/5940004 - Mail: info@usb.it - sito web: www.usb.it



STATEMENT OF SUPPORT AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY FROM CO ILWU

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Coordinadora Estatal de Estibadores Portuarios (the Spanish Dockworkers) following with great concern and close attention the labor dispute you Sugar. We want to express our full support for your defense of fundamental retiree healthcare, seniority rights, and decent working conditions.

demands that have the full solidarity of dockworkers throughout Spain.

Our solidarity is far more than a symbolic gesture. It is part of a long mutual support among dockworkers around the world. In 2000, during Charleston Five, dockworkers across Spain stood with the ILWU. In past the ports of Valencia, Algeciras, and Barcelona refused to handle cargo Charleston that had been moved outside the work of the dockwork.

remember that moment because it reminds us that what happens in local issue: an attack on one port is an attack on all of us.

We know that unity and solidarity are our greatest strength in time to know that you have the full support of Coordinadora and Spain continue to follow developments closely and stand ready to support initiatives that contribute to a fair and just resolution of this dispute.

solidarity,

In Goya González

Coordinador general de Coordinadora Estatal de Estibadores

SYNDICAT GENERAL
DES
OUVRIERS DOCKERS
DU HAVRE



Le Havre, le 24 juillet 2026

Dear comrades,

We are outraged to learn of the discrimination you have faced—and continue to face—due to your trade union activities aimed at defending your legitimate rights at the C&S Sugar refinery.

The criminalization of trade union action is a weapon used by the powerful to silence workers like us—in one of the few remaining sectors still capable of fighting to improve working conditions. We all observe that this type of repression is becoming increasingly common across the globe.

The authorities’ conduct toward the protesters is unacceptable. Dear comrades, in light of this situation, we wish to offer you the full support of all the dockworkers at the Port of Le Havre whom we represent.

We also wish to extend our full support to the comrades who were injured or subjected to repression, as well as to their families.

Dear comrades, please accept the fraternal greetings of all the dockworkers at the Port of Le Havre.

Le secrétaire général,
Johann FORTIER



SYNDICAT GENERAL
DES
OUVRIERS DOCKERS
DU HAVRE

ILWU Strikers Show the Way – For Mass Pickets to Shut It Down!

Bay Area Labor:

All Out to Win C&H Strike!

The following was published in the Bay Area as an Internationalist Group leaflet.

JULY 26 – Finally! For the first time in a long time, in a key labor struggle in the United States, a mass picket line was organized to actually stop people and cargo from going in and out during a strike. And it is no accident that strikers are members of the powerful International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) in the San Francisco Bay Area.

On July 21, the union acted against the unloading of a shipload of raw sugar at the C&H Sugar Refinery in Crockett, California, as hundreds of determined picketers blocked trucks trying to enter and exit the facility to transport the refined product. They also picketed the entrance for refinery workers, members of a separate union whose leaders had them cross the lines, which means scabbing on the strike and undermining the interests of all the workers. ***The hundreds-strong picket of July 21st must not be a one-shot deal. Mass pickets to shut the plant down are needed daily.***

For the past six weeks (since June 15), C&H warehouse workers, members of ILWU Local 6, have been on strike after rejecting the company's insulting contract "offer" that would cut sick days in half, eliminate retiree health benefits altogether, drastically slash overtime hours and attack seniority protections, with wage "increases" that would barely cover the current (4%) rate of inflation. ILWU Local 10, whose longshoremen handle the unloading of ship cargo, took up Local 6's struggle when the longshore workers refused to handle a ship, the *Tai Herald*, carrying sugar from the Philippines bound for the refinery.

The fight came to a head on the 21st,



Internationalist photo

Picketers outside of the C&H sugar refinery on the July 21. At least 400 people showed up on the picket lines that day, blocking trucks from unloading a shipment of raw sugar (above).

when company bosses started to have the ship unloaded. Local 10 shut down the port of Oakland along with all the other Northern California ports, from Stockton to Eureka, and brought members to Crockett to beef up the lines. By 10 a.m., some 400 ILWU members and supporters fanned out, picketing at every entrance to the plant. At the truck entrance, closest to where the ship was docked, picketers chanted "Close the hatch" and "You ain't gonna get no sugar today, go on and turn that truck away!" Sure enough, no sugar got through their line. Trucks were backed up for half a

mile, up to the freeway offramp.

Picketers were full of energy. At the employee entrance used by scabbing refinery workers, picketers formed a line to keep anyone from going into or leaving the refinery, chanting "No one in, no one out!" Even after two picketers were struck by scabs' cars ramming their way through the line, they were undeterred. Several expressed the sentiment, "This is what we have been waiting for." It was only when police arrived in force that the company regained the upper hand. Acting as armed enforcers for the bosses, cops herded scabs to and from C&H. It was made crystal clear that the picket line is the literal class line between labor and capital.

After the police issued a dispersal order, union leaders called on picketers to leave. Initially, many weren't having it, but numbers dwindled gradually from around 100 on the line. As the last dozen or so exited, the police surrounded them after they had left the picket site. Cops charged into the group targeting a black worker, breaking a plate glass window in tackling him, and pinning him to the ground with a knee in the back. Another's legs were kicked out from under him. Two picketers were injured and ten arrested, five

Local 10 members and five from the Internationalist Group and students from the Internationalist Club. ***We demand charges against all ten be dropped, now!***

The labor battle at the Crockett refinery is not just a local fight. With over 500 workers, the Californian and Hawaiian Sugar Company refinery produces 15% of the U.S.' cane sugar and is part of the American Sugar Refining (ASR) conglomerate that dominates the industry. The ASR Group is owned by the Fanjul brothers, Cuban exiles who are big donors to both Democratic and Republican parties, are credited with launching Marco Rubio's Senate tenure and are deeply embedded in the Trump administration. The Fanjul operations in the Dominican Republic have been denounced for using forced labor, and they have declared their intent to recover their properties that were expropriated in the Cuban Revolution.

Meanwhile, the sugar being unloaded at the C&H refinery from the *Tai Herald* comes from Negros Island, known as the "sugar bowl" and also the "massacre capital" of the Philippines, where numerous mass killings of sugar cane workers and activists have taken place from 2018 on. Most recently, the Philippine Army commanded by U.S. ally Ferdinand Marcos Jr., as part of its decades-long war of extermination against the Maoist New People's Army, killed 19 people in April. Among the civilians murdered were Filipino American activist and San Francisco State University graduate Lyle Prijoles. ***C&H is bringing in sugar drenched with the victims' blood.***

The ILWU has taken up the fight in a major class battle against a union-busting employer, C&H, one of the oldest industrial companies in the region. Messages



June 2026, strikers and supporters outside the refinery, including a number from Filipino groups protesting the murder of 19 people by the Philippine military on Negros Island, where the sugar for C&H is imported from. ILWU Local 10 passed a motion of solidarity with the Filipino community against the repression.



On July 21, police ordered the picket line to disperse, and after the last picketers left, the cops surrounded them, tackling and injuring two ILWU members (top photo), and arresting ten, including five from ILWU Local 10 and five supporters of the Internationalist Group, Revolutionary Internationalist Youth and the Internationalist Club. This is a clear example of how the police are the enforcers for the capitalist bosses.

of solidarity are coming in from dock workers around the world, including CGT port workers in Le Havre, France. ILWU Local 500 in Canada sent support to the picket line. Local 6 and Local 10 members showed the way on July 21. It's high time for the longshore and warehouse workers to **wage a joint struggle and elect strike committees**,¹ and for all of Bay Area labor to answer a call to action and mobilize militant picket lines until the strike is won.

To start, there should be a **Bay Area-wide labor day of action to shut C&H down tight!**

¹ An elected strike committee representing the membership can play a big role in mobilizing for and holding the line in a major battle. This is very different from situations where some unionists and others just proclaim one without serious backing from or participation by the strikers themselves.

For Class-Struggle Unionism!

The battle over the C&H refinery underlines at every turn the need for union policies of militant class struggle. In the first place, there is the urgent need to overcome divisions to present a solid front against the owner, the ASR Group, which is out to break the unions. When ILWU Local 6 warehouse workers walked out on June 15, the refinery workers were told by the leaders of Sugar Workers Union (SWU) Local 1 to keep working. Local 1's leadership passed down threats from C&H management that workers refusing to cross the picket lines, which any self-respecting union member is duty-bound to respect, would lose their jobs. In effect, the SWU misleaders acted as a transmission belt for the union-busting bosses.

The Sugar Workers are an affiliate of the Seafarers International Union (SIU),

which at its founding in 1938 acted as a racist attack dog against the integrated CIO² maritime unions (ILWU and National Maritime Union). SIU president Harry Lundeberg pushed anti-Communism as the U.S. government tried for years to deport ILWU founder Harry Bridges on the grounds of Communist sympathies. This reached a fever pitch during the post-World War II Cold War "red purge" in fights over the predominantly black and gay Marine Cooks union, that was destroyed in the McCarthyite witch-hunting. The Inland-boatmen's Union broke away from the SIU and joined the ILWU in 1980 as its Marine Division. At C&H, although SWU tops told workers to cross the lines, their contract explicitly says they have the right to respect pickets.

On July 16, a month into the warehouse strike, the SWU membership met and discussed what to do about it. Although the union bureaucrats managed to convince a majority to continue working – that is, to keep on scabbing on the strike of their fellow workers – some 78 reportedly voted to respect the picket lines. If the refinery workers refuse to cross, it would effectively shut down the plant, a key step to win the strike, and there is talk of a possible revote. In any case, an outpouring of support from Bay Area labor must drive home the basic union principle that **"Picket lines mean don't cross, period!"** The fact that this basic principle has been watered down more and more over the years is a big part of why so many strikes have been lost. **This one must be won!**

Then there is the matter of Levin Richmond Terminal, where C&H had the ship from the Philippines moved when the ILWU refused to cross the lines to unload it. The port of Richmond is ILWU jurisdiction, but that industrial pier is organized by the International Operating Engineers (IUOE), which is notorious for poaching and raiding other unions. In the early 1980s, the ILWU campaigned to bring Levin under its jurisdiction, but called it off when the company proposed to pay ILWU workers while the IUOE did the work. This deal expired in 1990, but while the ILWU defeated National Labor Relations Board cases over the "ghost rider" deal, the IUOE still runs the pier.

So both in Crockett and Richmond, there are what the bosses pretend are inter-union disputes when in fact the ILWU is facing a union-busting offensive using divisions in the labor movement fostered by the capitalists and their government. What's needed to fight this treacherous class collaboration is a program of militant class struggle extending to the whole of the working class. This goes for ILWU Locals 6 and 10 as well, which instead of picketing separately should be waging a joint strike. Playing by the bosses' rules, under which the capitalist courts presume to regulate labor's struggles, only weakens the union.

A class-struggle policy also requires an international perspective. The sugar processed at C&H originally came from Hawaii, where the ILWU organized the cane field workers and dock workers. The last Hawaiian sugar came in 2017, and since then the refinery uses

² Congress of Industrial Organizations, consisting of industry-wide unions rather than the craft unions of the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

Philippine sugar. The killings in Negros go back to the 1985 Escalante massacre of 20 cane workers on a picket line under Ferdinand Marcos Sr., the dictator who served U.S. imperialism (much as did Fulgencio Batista, the dictator overthrown in Cuba in the Revolution of 1959). And as a recent Local 10 motion of solidarity with the Filipino community noted, Marcos sent agents to murder Filipino American ILWU Local 37 labor leaders Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo at their union hall in Seattle in 1981.

Local 10's solidarity has brought scores of Filipino activists to the picket lines and points to the potential for the battle over C&H Sugar to cohere wide support. Sentiment in Crockett, once a company town, is running heavily against cold-hearted privately held multinational now running C&H. Working people are already "hot summer mad" about budget-busting \$6.50 per gallon gasoline due to Donald Trump's criminal war on Iran. Sympathy with Cuba against the Trump regime's attempt to strangle the island with a total oil boycott is widespread, and a fight against the *gusano* Fanjul slave-labor exploiters could awaken wide sympathy.

With the ILWU, the most powerful union on the coast, in the lead, there is clear potential for a Bay Area labor offensive against union-busting that can win the strike. The Longshore and Warehouse Union showed its power by shutting down all ports on the U.S. and Canadian West Coast against the U.S. war on Iraq and Afghanistan on May Day 2008. It stopped work to protest the racist police murder of George Floyd and so many others in 2020. Local 10 shut the port of Oakland demanding freedom for former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal, and over the police murder of Oscar Grant. And on July 21, the Bay Area ILWU locals gave a taste of what real class struggle looks like.

What is needed is to mobilize picket lines so massive and militant that no one will cross, shutting the struck plant down. By linking the struggles of all workers, ILWU Locals 6 and 10 can beat back the union-busters and point the way forward for the labor movement in organizing the unorganized. This highlights the need to break with both the Democratic and Republican parties, the pillars of U.S. imperialism, and taking up the fight to build a class-struggle workers party, a party that can lead all the oppressed in the fight to replace capitalist rule with a workers government. **Bay Area labor must mobilize now to win the C&H strike! ■**

For a Class-Struggle Workers Party

Picket Lines Mean Don't Cross!



The Internationalist

To order this Internationalist button on the internet, go to www.internationalist.org and click on the "Order Now" link. Cost: US\$2 per button, including mailing.

Defend the Crockett Ten – Drop All Charges!

On August 19, the first court hearings were scheduled for the ten picketers who were arrested outside the C&H Sugar refinery in Crockett, California during a day of action called by International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 on July 21. Coming on day 37 of a strike by the refinery's warehouse workers in ILWU Local 6, the union shut down all ports in northern California and more than 400 unionists rushed to Crockett (see article, page 15). After the last pickets left, Contra Costa County sheriffs arrested ten of them, including five ILWU members and five Internationalist supporters.

In the morning, those facing felony charges appeared, but they were informed that no charges had been filed yet. Local 10 president Mike Villeggiante spoke to the crowd of supporters saying that the arrestees had done nothing wrong, that the arrests reflected injustices against the working class leading to strikes all over the country, that there must be no concessionary contracts and if Local 6 didn't get justice after 60 days of negotiating, "we might be back on the picket line."

A united-front solidarity rally at noon to "Defend the Crockett Ten – Drop All the Charges!" was called by the Internationalist Group (see leaflet at right), and drew some 90 people. The rally chair, Will, one of those arrested, noted that the ILWU strike had re-

ceived solidarity from some of the most powerful port and metal workers unions in the world (see letters on page 14), and that the arrests were in revenge for the powerful pickets on July 21. Solidarity statements were read from IUPAT (Painters) Local 10 in Portland, Oregon; AFSCME Retiree Local 57; ATU (Transit workers) Local 1555; the Oakland Education Association and Contra Costa Adult Education Teachers Union.

Yohannes, one of the ILWU Local 10 workers arrested, thanked people for their support. Other speakers included an Amazon worker, a representative of the United Front Committee for a Labor Party, a Local 10 retiree, who said it was a mistake to call off the strike, especially without amnesty for several fired workers; a spokesman for the Partisan Defense Committee, the legal defense group associated with the Spartacist League; a Local 10 retiree; a speaker from the Freedom Socialist Party; two members of the Stanford Eleven, who spoke about their upcoming court case growing out of the 2023-24 Gaza solidarity encampments; and Terry Lovett, whose son Jalani was mur-



Some of the defendants and supporters of the Crockett Ten at August 19 solidarity rally outside the court in Richmond, California.

dered in 2021 in a jail controlled by the notorious Los Angeles sheriffs' deputies gangs. The rally chair led the crowd in chanting "We remember Jalani Lovett," and ending with "Only revolution can bring justice."

A speaker for the Internationalist Group talked about how July 21 was the embodiment of the principle that "picket lines mean don't cross," emphasizing how police protect capital. He cited some of the history of militant ILWU actions, including the May Day 2008 port shutdown against the imperialist wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the 2020 shutdown against racist police terror. Noting that the owners of C&H Sugar, the Cuban exile Fanjul family, support both Democrats and Repub-



Upwards of 125 people came out on August 19 to show solidarity with the Crockett Ten and with the ILWU strike and picket at C&H Sugar.

Arrested at ILWU Strike Picket

Defend the Crockett Ten Drop All Charges!

12 p.m., Wednesday, August 19
Outside Richmond Superior Court,
100 37th Street, Richmond

On July 21, on Day 37 of the strike by International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 6/ILWU warehouse workers at the C&H Sugar refinery in Crockett, CA, the company started to unload a ship with new sugar using scab labor. ILWU Local 10, which has jurisdiction on the dock, has refused to cross the warehouse workers' picket lines, shut down every port in Northern California and mobilized 400 workers for a mass picket at the refinery. At the end of the day, Contra Costa sheriffs arrested ten picketers, brutally manhandling three Local 10 members, slamming one on the hood of a car and throwing two to the ground, breaking a plate glass window.

Show Solidarity – Come to the Hearings
8:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.

Endorsed by: Internationalist Group, East Bay International Club, Freedom Socialist Party, Jack Hayman, ILWU Local 10 (retired), Boots Riley, Socialist Alternative (Revolutionary), Spartacist League, Emily Tumilak, S&RA Local 10 (retired), United Front Committee for a Labor Party

For more information write to: internationalistgroup.bayarea@gmail.com

licans, he said what's needed is not a labor party, which are pro-imperialist parties, but a class-struggle workers party.

In the afternoon court date, for those facing misdemeanor charges, the defendants were again informed that no charges had yet been filed, but that the district attorney has up to a year to present charges. So it appears likely that county authorities will continue to hold this over the defendants' heads and run out the clock, or activate charges if picketing at C&H does in fact resume.

Filing out of the court house the Crockett Ten supporters held an impromptu gathering where filmmaker Boots Riley (who was the main spokesman of Occupy Oakland in 2011) said that the strike at C&H was important because, "a lot of people don't know the difference between a protest and a strike." This is partly because "sometimes you have a strike that just lets the scabs in." On July 21, the ILWU made it clear to people that "they were keeping scabs out. That shows how class struggle can work." He added that what he was seeing among those supporting the strike was "a radical vision of a world ... where workers own the means of production."

The fight to defend the Crockett Ten, and for victory to the ILWU Local 6 warehouse workers continues. ■

Cleo Silvers 1946-2025



Cleo Silvers, a member of the Black Panther Party and then of the Young Lords in New York City, died on 11 August 2025. Cleo was a leader of the occupation of Lincoln Hospital in the Bronx in July 1970. Above (at left): at press conference calling for community-worker control of the hospital.

Chris Silvera 1956-2026



Chris Silvera, long-time Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 808 and prominent black labor leader, died on 12 June 2026. Chris was a founder of the NYC Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants. Above: addressing a September 2025 student-labor immigrant solidarity speak-out at Hunter College.

Trump Orders Oil Blockade to Strangle the Rebel Island

For International Workers Mobilization to Defend the Cuban Revolution!

The following article is translated from an April 2026 supplement to *Revolución Permanente*, the newspaper of the Grupo Intercontinentalista, Mexican section of the League for the Fourth International.

In the early hours of January 3, helicopters from the U.S. armed forces flew low over Caracas. Their mission: to “extract” – that is, to kidnap – the president of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, along with his wife, Cilia Flores. During the attack, 32 officers of the Cuban armed forces and security services who were part of the Venezuelan president’s security detail were killed in combat, after putting up fierce resistance, according to a statement from the Cuban government. It was clear that the U.S. imperialist onslaught was “intended to seize control of the enormous oil reserves of the Bolivarian Republic, the largest in the world, and to prepare the way for a counterrevolutionary assault on Cuba,” as we stated in a declaration by the League for the Fourth International issued that same day. “Defense of Cuba begins in Venezuela,” proclaimed LFI placards in protests.

Asked by reporters the following day whether the Cuban government would be the United States’ next target, U.S. secretary of state Marco Rubio – who grew up



On April 16 Havana celebrated the 65th anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion, when Cuban forces crushed the invasion by counterrevolutionary exiles (*gusanos*) organized by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). That was when Fidel Castro declared the Cuban Revolution “socialist.”

in the Miami community of counterrevolutionary Cuban exiles – responded that every Cuban official should be worried. For years, Venezuela under Maduro and his predecessor Hugo Chávez has been Cuba’s main supplier of oil, sending some 35,000 barrels per day to the island. But on January 11, President Donald Trump railed on his Truth Social network, “THERE WILL BE NO MORE OIL OR MONEY GOING TO CUBA – ZERO!” And then on January 29, Trump signed Executive Order 14380, in which he pronounced that “Cuba constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat ... to the national security and foreign policy of the United States,” and he therefore

declared a “national emergency” to impose tariffs on “imports of goods that are products of a foreign country that directly or indirectly sells or otherwise provides any oil to Cuba.”

Latin American governments, starting with the Mexican government of President Claudia Sheinbaum, immediately complied with the imperialist order. In 2025, Mexico supplied 44 percent of Cuba’s oil imports. On January 9 of this year, the tanker Ocean Mariner docked in Havana with a cargo of 85,000 barrels of light crude from the PEMEX¹ complex in Pajaritos, Veracruz. But after that, nothing. When the same ship set sail from Barranquilla, Colombia, on January 29 with a new cargo of fuel oil, it was prevented from reaching Cuba by U.S. warships. Not even the shadow fleet² has functioned. The website Razones de Cuba (run by the Ministry of the Interior) revealed that between December 2025 and February 2026, U.S. naval forces seized “at least ten tankers linked to the Cuban supply network,” carrying nearly 9 million barrels. For nearly three months, not a single oil tanker reached the island.

The impact has been drastic. Diesel fuel, essential for trucking, is in such

short supply that it is often impossible to find even at high prices on the black market. The fuel shortage has been a factor behind an escalation of blackouts, with a total grid collapse on March 16 and another on March 21, leaving Cuba’s 11 million residents in the dark for many hours. Another factor is equipment breakdowns resulting from a lack of foreign currency to modernize facilities due to the “normal” blockade of Cuba by U.S. imperialism, which has now lasted 62 years, since the first years of the Cuban Revolution. In addition to the longstanding attempt to economically paralyze the island, now

there is “energy suffocation.” The empire of the North always seeks to “make the economy scream” in the countries targeted by its anti-communist fury, as Richard Nixon’s infamous secretary of state Henry Kissinger said of Salvador Allende’s Chile in the run-up to the bloody coup d’état of 11 September 1973.

The current energy blockade against Cuba is an act of war intended to destroy the socialized economy of this bureaucratically deformed workers state in order to provoke a counterrevolution. With his January 3 attack on Venezuela, turning it into a U.S. client state, Trump paved the way for a full-scale offensive against Cuba. “I think I’ll have the honor of taking Cuba,” he boasted on March 17, the day after the massive blackout. The restoration of capitalism in Cuba would mean the dismantling of the impressive achievements in the fields of education and health care, as well as a resurgence of racism against black people, the elimination of key social rights such as free access to abortion within a high-quality socialized health care system, endangering the massive participation of women in social life, and threatening democratic and social rights for gay, lesbian and trans people, among others.

The Cuban Revolution is in danger. In this hour of extreme need, Cuba must not be left to stand alone. It is incumbent upon the workers movement – from Mexico and Brazil to the very heart of U.S. imperialism – to **mobilize its class power in defense of Cuba!** This includes taking to the streets to **demand an end to**



A street in Havana during the March 16 blackout that cut off power across the island.

Yamil Lage / AFP



On January 16, tens of thousands of people took part in a memorial march in Havana honoring the 32 Cuban officers who fell in combat against the U.S. imperialist attack on Venezuela.

the economic, commercial and financial “embargo” against Cuba and to *break the oil blockade* that is suffocating the island. Defying the capitalist governments complicit with Trump, the workers of PEMEX in Mexico and Petrobras in Brazil³ should *use union power to send oil to Cuba*. This should include *union fundraising to finance the shipments* and *sending expert technical assistance* to help repair the island’s deteriorating electricity production infrastructure. In the face of military action, working people and youth in the U.S. should *flood Wall Street to shut down the center of capitalist high finance*.

This urgent need for *proletarian mobilization in defense of the Cuban Revolution* demands that the exploited and oppressed break with all capitalist politicians and parties. However, the sellout labor leaders, instead of mobilizing the power of the working class, limit themselves to begging the bourgeois governments of Claudia Sheinbaum in Mexico, Lula da Silva in Brazil, and Delcy Rodríguez in Venezuela (!) – the very same governments that have bowed to Trump’s diktat and are no longer sending a single drop of oil to the besieged island. In Mexico, some toothless “anti-imperialist fronts” have been formed, whose main aim is to put pressure on and whitewash the bourgeois populist government of MORENA (Sheinbaum’s National Regeneration Movement). Instead, it’s necessary to *forge a class-struggle workers leadership*, independent of all wings of the bourgeoisie, and to *build Leninist-Trotskyist revolutionary workers parties*.

Imperialism, Economic Blockade and Energy Strangulation

On the same day of the U.S. attack on Venezuela, in demonstrations in Mexico City, Puebla, and Oaxaca, along with our comrades of the Internationalist Group in the United States, we *emphasized the urgent need to mobilize the power of the working class on a continental scale to defeat the U.S. imperialists and defend Cuba against counterrevolution*. A spokesperson for the Grupo Internacionalista, speaking from the podium at the demonstration in front of the U.S. Embassy in the Mexican capital, said:

“The ultimate goal of this imperialist onslaught is not merely to get rid

of the Chavista regime in Venezuela.⁴ It is, essentially, to destroy the Cuban Revolution, which more than 60 years ago expropriated the bourgeoisie on the Caribbean island, just 90 miles from the imperialist beast. It must be clear that defense of the Cuban Revolution and its gains begins in Venezuela. It must also be clear that this is about defending socialized property, the planned economy, etc., which can only be achieved by extending those gains throughout the hemisphere, fighting for international socialist revolution.”

Meanwhile, in several cities across Cuba, thousands of people took to the streets to protest the attack on Venezuela. Days later, tens of thousands gathered in front of the Armed Forces Ministry headquarters to pay tribute to the 32 slain officers, the largest number of Cubans killed in combat against the Yankee imperialists since the *gusano*⁵ Bay of Pigs invasion, defeated by the forces led by Fidel Castro, including workers militias, in April 1961. The following day, on January 16, tens of thousands once again gathered in José Martí Anti-Imperialist Square in front of the U.S. Embassy to condemn the U.S. imperialist assault and stand up to the threats by would-be emperor Trump to cut off oil supplies to Cuba. “No one is surrendering here,” declared Cuban president and first secretary of the Communist Party (PCC) Miguel Díaz-Canel, repeating the iconic phrase shouted by Commander Juan Almeida Bosque in December 1956 when the few survivors of the *Granma* yacht landing were surrounded by troops of the bloody dictator Batista.⁶

In the weeks following the attack on Venezuela – and with the shameful collusion of the Mexican government (and also with the acquiescence of the governments

⁴ The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, a bourgeois nationalist regime, was founded by Hugo Chávez in 1999 after being elected president the year before. It has been under constant attack by U.S. imperialism ever since, including multiple attempted coups d’état.

⁵ Literally “worms,” referring to counterrevolutionary Cuban exiles, particularly those who fled in 1959-60 after the overthrow of the dictator Fulgencio Batista and the radicalization of the revolution.

⁶ In November 1956, 82 Cuban fighters crowded onto the yacht *Granma* on Mexico’s Caribbean coast and set sail for Cuba. After a disastrous landing in a mangrove swamp, they were surrounded by troops of the dictator Batista, a former army sergeant. Only 12 survived, but three years later, on 1 January 1959, Batista fled the country into exile and the victorious rebels marched into the capital Havana.

of Colombia and Brazil, other supposed “allies” of Cuba) – Trump has succeeded in imposing the most severe military and economic blockade against Cuba since the island was surrounded for 13 days during the Missile Crisis of October 1962.⁷ A detailed article in the *New York Times* (20 February), “A New U.S. Blockade Is Suffocating Cuba,” starkly describes this process of strangulation:

“Cuban tankers have hardly left the island’s shores for months. Oil-rich allies have halted shipments or declined to come to the rescue. The U.S. military has seized ships that have supported Cuba. And in recent days, vessels roaming the Caribbean Sea in search of fuel for Cuba have come up empty or been intercepted by the U.S. authorities.”

Recently, Trump’s threats have become more strident. Although a Russian oil tanker, the *Anatoly Kolodkin*, managed to reach Cuba on March 31 with a cargo of 730,000 barrels of crude oil, that will only cover the country’s oil needs for about two weeks. When asked by a journalist whether Mexico would be allowed to send oil to Cuba, White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt emphasized that “there has been no firm change in our sanctions policy.... We still reserve the right to seize vessels, if it’s legally applicable, that are headed toward Cuba and that violate the United States sanctions policy” (*New York Times*, 31 March). Is it “legally applicable” for the U.S. government to seize Mexican oil tankers? The very fact that Claudia Sheinbaum’s government feels the need to seek U.S. approval to send oil to Cuba is clear proof of Mexico’s semicolonial status.

Cuba produces only 30 to 40 percent of its oil needs. That supply is largely limited to powering the country’s electricity generating plants, as Cuban crude is too heavy to be distilled in the island’s refineries. Virtually all the oil used for gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel must be imported. And the obsolete network of thermoelectric plants (half of which date from before 1959) provides a very unstable electricity supply, partly because burning sulfur-rich Cuban crude produces sulfuric acid, which damages boilers, turbines, and other equipment. Even before the current strangulation campaign, Cuba’s energy situation was quite difficult. Today, with only seven out of ten thermoelectric plants in operation, even those are running at only a fraction of their installed

⁷ Following the crushing of the U.S.-sponsored attack at the Bay of Pigs (Playa Girón) by a mercenary army of Cuban exiles in April 1961, the U.S. government of Democratic president John F. Kennedy stepped up a campaign of terrorism and sabotage inside Cuba. Meanwhile, the U.S. had stationed Thor nuclear missiles in Britain and in 1961 placed Jupiter nuclear missiles in Italy and Turkey, all targeted on the USSR. In July 1962, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev agreed with Fidel Castro to place nuclear missiles in Cuba to stave off a potential U.S. invasion of the island. After a U.S. spy plane detected missile launch sites in early October, Kennedy ordered a naval blockade (“quarantine”) of Cuba. As the spectre of nuclear war loomed, Khrushchev eventually backed down (over Castro’s objections) and withdrew the missiles in exchange for the U.S. publicly declaring it would not invade Cuba and secretly agreeing to remove the U.S. nuclear missiles in Turkey (later removing those in Italy and Britain).

capacity, resulting in repeated blackouts that not only hamper the island’s economy but also weigh heavily on the daily lives of its inhabitants.⁸

Economic Blockade Aims to Incite Counterrevolutionary Riots

The effects of the current stranglehold compound those caused by more than six decades of imperialist siege. When an undersecretary of state under President Dwight Eisenhower wrote a 6 April 1960 memorandum suggesting the imposition of an “embargo” against Cuba, he bluntly stated that its purpose would be “to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation, and overthrow of government.” As we noted five years ago, the blockade “continued under executive orders by successive U.S. presidents, until Democrat Bill Clinton made it a law and intensified it in the 1992 Cuban Democracy Act and the 1996 Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Helms-Burton) Act.”⁹ In 2017, Republican Trump imposed his infamous “243 measures” to intensify the blockade, and now he has completely cut off the supply of oil.

This has forced the Cuban government to take drastic measures to conserve fuel. Fuel will be sold only in dollars, with a limit of 20 liters per person. The workweek has been reduced to four days in public workplaces. Intercity train and bus service has been limited. University education will be conducted remotely or in a hybrid format, with different arrangements in secondary schools, while teachers, students and parents are making enormous efforts to keep schools open for basic (elementary) education. Twenty thousand solar energy systems are being installed in housing, with 10,000 delivered on an expedited basis to healthcare and education workers. In hospitals during blackouts, surgeries have had to be performed by the

⁸ Cuba was forced to rely on domestic crude oil due to the interruption of Soviet oil supplies as a result of the counterrevolution that brought down the USSR in 1991-92.

⁹ See “U.S. Blockade of Cuba: ‘Bring About Hunger, Desperation, Overthrow’” (July 2021) in *The Internationalist* No. 64, July-September 2021.



Anti-communist riot outside Communist Party headquarters in Morón on March 13.



One of the 10,000 micro, small and medium-sized private enterprises established since 2024 that have contributed to the rise in inequality in Cuba.

light of cell phones. Even so, it is reported that “Cuban Patients Are Dying Because of U.S. Blockade, Doctors Say” (*New York Times*, 26 March).

In mid-February, the Canadian mining company Sherrit (which extracts cobalt and nickel through a joint venture with the Cuban government in Moa, in Holguín province) announced the suspension of its operations due to a lack of fuel. The once-thriving industrial sector of the Cuban economy lies in ruins, a result also of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union and the bureaucratically deformed workers states of Eastern Europe during 1989-92. Even the tourism sector, once seen as a way to shore up the Cuban economy, has failed to recover since the 2020-21 pandemic period, when international travel was drastically reduced. Today, the situation is only getting worse: more than half of airlines with flights to Cuba have indefinitely suspended their service due to a lack of jet fuel on the island.

On the political front, the energy blockade the U.S. has imposed on Cuba is having an effect – though nowhere near as much as the Miami-based counterrevolutionary elements or the U.S. intelligence and provocation agencies would like. They want to see a repeat and escalation of the anti-government protests of 11 July 2021 until they turn into openly counterrevolutionary riots. As we wrote at the time: “While fueled by desperation over food shortages, lack of medicine and blackouts that have beset the island in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, the marches were instigated, manipulated and exploited by forces seeking to overthrow the Cuban Revolution” (“The Truth About Cuba Protests – Defend the Revolution Against U.S. Imperialism and Its Frontmen!” *The Internationalist* No. 64, July-September 2021).

This past March 13, a nighttime demonstration in the municipality of Morón in Ciego de Ávila province ended with the sacking of the local Communist Party headquarters. Videos, widely circulated on social media by counterrevolutionary outlets and the bourgeois press, showed a dozen young people instigating the destruction of the office (which was burned down), along with computer equipment and furniture. Some of the protesters can be heard banging on pots and pans while shouting “Down with communism!” There is now a media campaign to present this as part of a wave of pot-banging protests (*cacerolazos*) and roadblocks. “We

are all Morón!” wrote the U.S.-financed blogger Yoani Sánchez. There have been a few incidents of protests banging pots, expressing frustration and calling for government action during or after prolonged blackouts, but they have been neither widespread nor overtly political.

What there is, however, is an obvious anti-communist campaign to incite riots. If it comes to that, class-conscious workers and all defenders of the Cuban Revolution must mobilize to thwart any counterrevolutionary and pro-imperialist action.

No to Suicidal “Reforms” Aimed at Restoring Capitalism!

After announcing in capital letters that Cuba would not receive a single drop of oil, Trump – in his typical bully-boy tone – urged the Cuban government to “make a deal.” What kind of agreement might that be, with a gun pointed at its head? In late February, U.S. secretary of state Rubio declared, after a meeting with Caribbean leaders, that if the island’s government “want[s] to make those dramatic reforms that open the space for both economic – and eventually, political – freedom,” the United States would be for it. He did not specify what “reforms” he was talking about. Two weeks later, word was leaked from Washington that Cuban president and PCC leader Díaz-Canel would have to go as a precondition, but that “regime change” could be postponed. This caused discontent in the *gusano* milieu in Florida. In any case, there is no doubt that the “reforms” the U.S. is demanding are aimed at dismantling the socialized economy.

And Cuban leaders are not saying emphatically “no.” On the contrary, on March 2, Díaz-Canel stated: “We must focus, immediately, on implementing the urgent, most necessary changes that need to be made to the economic and social model” (*La Jornada* [Mexico City], 2 March). These “transformations” would be linked to “business and municipal autonomy, and the downsizing of the state apparatus, the government, and institutions.” Even more ominous was the announcement by the Cuban Minister of Commerce and Foreign Investment, Óscar Pérez-Oliva Fraga, that the government will allow investment by “Cubans residing in the United States and their descendants.” In an interview with the U.S. network NBC, Pérez-Oliva said this policy will apply “to investments – not only small investments, but also large investments, especially in infrastructure.” He summed up: “Cuba is open to having a fluid commercial

relationship with U.S. companies.”

The economic “reforms” proposed by the Cuban government are encouraging pro-capitalist forces within the island. The recent proposals by Díaz-Canel and Pérez-Oliva come on top of the 2019 amendments to the Constitution, which provided a constitutional basis for private ownership of certain means of production, as well as measures approved in 2020 aimed at strengthening the private sector of the economy at the expense of centralized economic planning through the implementation of the so-called “Tarea Ordenamiento” (Ordering Task).¹⁰ In late 2021, following the July protests, the opening of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MIPYMES) was permitted. As a result, “there are now ‘bodegones’ – small stores – well-stocked with high-quality domestic organic and imported products at high prices, where only the upper-middle class shops frequently,” notes University of Havana sociologist Mayra Paula Espina.

The sociologist is quoted in an in-depth BBC (10 March) report titled “How the opening of private grocery stores in Cuba exposed ‘invisible’ inequality.” By the end of 2024, some 10,000 MIPYMES had been registered, 60 percent of them in Havana, according to official statistics. Although the private sector is still small – a fact acknowledged even by Rubio – it is already gaining both strength and recognition as a vehicle for restoring capitalism in Cuba. In an informative and interesting article, Cuban academic Javier Gómez Sánchez (“Cuba Between the United States and ‘Disaster Capitalism,’” *Insurgente*, 26 March) analyzes the proposals put forward by economists close to the governing bureaucracy and by some Cuban-American investors already doing business on the island, who – unlike the early ex-Batista *gusanos* – envision implementing “reforms” to appease the imperialists while maintaining formal independence from Trump’s diktat.

One of those profiled is businessman Hugo Cancio (who left Cuba in 1980 with his family during the Mariel exodus and now runs several capitalist companies in the country), owner of the magazine *On Cuba*. In a recent article, Cancio – a longtime opponent of the U.S. embargo against Cuba who promoted the “Cuban-American thaw” during Barack Obama’s presidency – calls upon the island’s government to urgently implement free-market reforms

¹⁰ See “The Truth About Cuba Protests...” for a discussion of these measures.

to “influence the pace, scope and nature of their transformation” to prevent “events from being defined from outside rather than by the country’s own institutions.”¹¹ Gómez Sánchez also quotes political scientist Rafael Hernández, editor of the magazine *Temas*, who states, “Many issues on the pending agenda of Cuban reforms lie in areas that overlap the U.S. agenda toward Cuba. Among these are, for example, the expansion of the private sector.”¹²

Of course, as the Cuban *gusanos* and the Yankee imperialists recognize, a new liberalization of the economy to favor private enterprises would, in and of itself, be far from a restoration of capitalist class rule. But it is an ominous step that would encourage the growth of pro-capitalist forces in Cuba. Hernández makes his aim clear. He proposes: “Replace the centralized economic planning for the allocation of material and financial resources inherited from the USSR. Establish the market as the regulator of the state and non-state economy.” Gómez Sánchez rightly points out that such proposals present “a false dilemma, in which the ‘overlapping’ agenda is to be achieved either through ‘Cuban’ capitalism or ‘pro-American’ capitalism. But capitalism, in short.” Every revolutionary communist must oppose such plans for capitalist restoration.

In an emergency situation, such as is currently unfolding in Cuba, limited measures allowing for private initiative to supply the population with energy and consumer goods – thereby overcoming some of the bottlenecks in the highly bureaucratized economy – cannot be ruled out, provided that control by the workers state is maintained and the dangerous rise in inequality is countered. Some of the shrewdest proponents of free-market “reforms” point to the experiences of China and Vietnam, or the NEP (New Economic Policy) of the 1920s in Soviet Russia. However, those situations were quite different from Cuba’s today, and all harbor a potential for fostering capitalist counterrevolution. The significant capitalist sectors in China and Vietnam are pushing forward bourgeois forces that will inevitably clash with the foundations of the deformed workers state in the long run.

One highly dangerous current measure is allowing private companies and individu-

¹¹ “Cuba ante el espejo venezolano: cuando postergar las decisiones deja de ser una opción,” *On Cuba*, 8 January.

¹² “Cuba ante EEUU: lecciones y antilecciones de la intervención en Venezuela,” *On Cuba*, 14 January.



A truck belonging to a private company carrying an ISO tank of imported fuel, parked in front of a gas station in Havana on March 19.

Grupo Internacionalista Demands Oil for Cuba

In response to the new imperialist oil blockade against Cuba imposed by the U.S. government under Donald Trump, and to the capitulation to Trump's dictates by the government of Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum, the Internationalist Group, Mexican section of the League for the Fourth International, has launched a union campaign to raise funds for the purchase of oil for Cuba. Comrade Sherezada, of the GI/M, spoke from the podium (shown to the right) at a demonstration by the Mexican Movement of Solidarity with Cuba on February 1 in front of the former U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. A report in the newspaper *La Jornada* on the same date stated:

"For its part, the Internationalist Group/LFI criticized the government of President Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo for allegedly yielding to the will of the United States.

"In the recent negotiations, for example, regarding the free trade agreement between Mexico, Canada, and the United States, Claudia Sheinbaum has responded quite capitulatingly to Donald Trump's policy of cutting off oil supplies. As we know, since Maduro's oil extraction in Venezuela, Mexico became



the number one supplier of oil to Cuba. However, now Pemex has also warned that it will cut off oil supplies,' said Sherezada Leyva, a member of the Group. "Furthermore, she accused the Morena government of maintaining a policy subordinate to the United States by allowing military exercises by the Southern Com-

mand in the Yucatan Peninsula, which – she said – are aimed towards Cuba, and of reinforcing a restrictive immigration policy in the north of the country through the National Guard."

From: <https://mexicosolidarity.com/mexico-city-protest-demands-mexico-continue-sending-oil-to-cuba/>

als to import oil. This was announced on February 6 by Foreign Trade Minister Pérez-Oliva. Soon the *Miami Herald* (25 February) reported that the U.S. Departments of Commerce and the Treasury were issuing new guidelines for shipping oil to non-governmental entities in Cuba. This is already happening on a small scale through the shipment of ISO tanks¹³ of diesel fuel to MIPYMES. Now it could happen on a large scale. This would not only break the state monopoly on foreign trade but would also give the U.S. a lever to blackmail Cuba, potentially creating an existential crisis. The *Miami Herald* quoted a source saying, "There is nothing more in line with the Donroe Doctrine¹⁴ than making Cuba dependent on the United States."

A Cuban private entrepreneur explained to the *Herald* why the island's government will not intervene: "It's like what happened with chicken. The minute they confiscate a container with chicken, there won't be more chicken entering the market. The same will happen with the ISO tanks." Gómez Sánchez spells this out:

"In 2021, the market for staple foods was almost completely privatized. Now, in 2026, the goal is for another product with high social impact – such as fuel – to shift from being entirely managed by the state to being subject to private operations and control. Between 2023 and 2025, Cuba already experienced various episodes of deliberately induced shortages when the state tried to impose price controls on private chicken sales, or when the distribution chain and speculative hoarding drove up the price of flour. With fuel in private hands, a new

product – of strategic value par excellence for a country's stability – would fall prey to ... economic destabilization operations."

Faced with unprecedented imperialist pressure and the inefficiencies of bureaucratic management of the economy, the only way out that the governing Castroist bureaucracy in Cuba can see is to make concessions to the voracious U.S. imperialists in an attempt to "coexist peacefully" with them. But even if a whole series of privatizing "reforms" were implemented in Cuba, the truth is that not even that would appease the counterrevolutionary fury of Trump and his *gusano* hawk Marco Rubio. The only way they foresee avenging the affront represented by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie just 90 miles from the United States is through the counterrevolutionary destruction of the bureaucratically deformed Cuban workers state and the restoration of capitalist rule. The imperialists and the *gusanos* want to "take back" Cuba. And if they do, they will unleash a bloodbath of entirely predictable brutality.

Reformist "Socialists" Abandon Cuba

In mid-March, President Trump boasted: "I really believe I'll have the honor of taking Cuba," of "seizing Cuba in some way.... I think I could do whatever I want with it." But "we're going to deal with Iran before Cuba." Faced with this brazen threat to violate Cuba, what has been the response? It is striking that the "progressive" bourgeois nationalist governments (Brazil, Colombia, Mexico) – all oil exporters – have not lifted a finger to send Cuba the vital liquid it needs in the face of deadly imperialist threats. Even the *New York Times* (17 March),

the unofficial mouthpiece of Yankee imperialism, pointedly headlined an article, "Is Latin America Ready to Let Cuba Go?" And where are the mass protests against the imperialist shark that wants to devour the "first free territory of the Americas," which for decades was the beacon of the Latin American left?

The fact is that much of the left has abandoned the Cuban Revolution in the face of the counterrevolutionary threat, and has done so for years. Among the most repugnant are certain social-democratic organizations that abusively use the name "Trotskyist," but which merely continue the legacy of the late chameleon-like Argentine leader Nahuel Moreno. Morenoite propaganda against "the Cuban dictatorship" is often indistinguishable from that of the anti-communist *gusanos*. The leading voice in this counterrevolutionary chorus is the International Workers' League – Fourth International (LIT, from its initials in Spanish), which maintains that a capitalist counterrevolution has already taken place in Cuba and that the ruling bureaucracy is an exploiting social class. A recent

article¹⁵ by Eduardo Almeida Neto, leader of the Unified Socialist Workers' Party (PSTU) of Brazil, the flagship section of the LIT, states:

"Following the restoration of capitalism in the USSR, led by the bureaucracy itself, Cuba began to follow the same path. In the 1990s, the bureaucratic regime itself ended the monopoly on foreign trade and economic planning and began privatizing state-owned enterprises. It opened the country to multinational corporations, a move exploited by European imperialism to occupy the island. A new Cuban bourgeoisie began to emerge, rooted in the state apparatus and linked to European multinationals."

The claim that Cuba is already capitalist would come as a big surprise to the U.S. imperialists, who have been trying to overthrow "Communist Cuba" for 65 years and have spent more than a billion dollars just since the 1990s to subvert it. The LIT's thesis also stands in direct opposition to Leon Trotsky's Marxist analysis regarding the dual nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which usurped *political* power in the Soviet workers state after Lenin's death in 1924. This layer owed its privileges to the fact that it was a parasitic outgrowth seated atop the *social and economic foundations* of the workers state. Also false is the LIT's claim that the bureaucracy led the counterrevolution in the USSR – a lie that serves as justification for the betrayal of the Morenoites, who cheered Boris Yeltsin's seizure of power in 1991. After breaking with the bureaucracy, which paved the way for the counterrevolution, this *ex-Stalinist* went on to become the U.S. imperialists' man in Moscow, leading the restoration of capitalist rule.

When today the reformist pseudo-Trotskyists of the LIT and others of the Morenoite lineage claim that capitalism has been restored in Cuba, it is to suggest that there are no more gains of the Revolution left to defend. They cannot explain why the imperialists and the real counterrevolutionary capitalists are so determined to overthrow the regime, even going so far as to impose a total cutoff of oil supplies that could lead to economic collapse. If the LIT/PSTU article is titled, "In Defense of Cuba Against Trump's Imperialist Attack!" it is to pose the question on the bourgeois-democratic basis of sovereignty, just as the above-mentioned "patriotic" capitalist elements do. And the Morenoites will be no

¹⁵ "¡En defensa de Cuba ante el ataque imperialista de Trump! ¡Ninguna confianza en el gobierno de Cuba!" LIT, 2 de febrero.

¹³ Stainless steel tanks holding up to 6,900 U.S. gallons of liquid, built to the specifications of the International Organization for Standards (ISO).

¹⁴ "Donroe Doctrine" is a play on words drawing a parallel between Donald Trump's nakedly imperialist policies today and the "Monroe Doctrine." In 1823, U.S. President James Monroe proclaimed a policy against "interference" by European powers in the Western Hemisphere that could be summed up in the slogan, "America for (North) Americans," making Latin America the private preserve of the expansionist and later imperialist United States.



The March of the Pencils, Havana, 22 December 1961: the conclusion of the historic mass literacy campaign.



The William Soler Pediatric Hospital in March. Due to fuel shortages caused by the U.S. blockade, many hospitals have had to perform surgeries using light from cell phones.

more successful than those elements, because a genuine capitalist restoration will inevitably lead to the island's semicolonial subordination, just as in the days of the Platt Amendment,¹⁶ when for a quarter of a century Cuba had a fictitious "independence" as a U.S. protectorate.

Among the groups that have emerged from the Morenoite fold, the misnamed "Trotskyist Fraction" (FT) – rebaptized late last year as the Permanent Revolution Current – Fourth International (CRP) – has adopted a critical stance toward the "Maestro" (Moreno), while still retaining his Stalino-phobic perspective. In an article on the protests of 11 June 2021, the FT disagreed with the position of "some currents that claim to be Trotskyist" (i.e., the various Morenoite groups) who "consider that the restoration is a completed process" and therefore one must fight against the "capitalist dictatorship" in Cuba. At the same time, while continuing to formally consider Cuba a bureaucratically deformed workers state, the FT/CRP writes that "the main forces of internal restoration lie within the state itself – in the upper echelons of the Communist Party bureaucracy and particularly in the leadership of the armed forces – and in the proto-bourgeois sectors" of the MIPYMES.¹⁷

Today, the CRP refers simply to "the restorationist bureaucracy of the Communist Party."¹⁸ But if the PCC were indeed seeking to restore capitalism, or even if it were "only" a matter of the upper echelons of the state, one might ask: Why have these forces not succeeded in establishing capitalist rule? After all, they control all the levers of the state apparatus. The answer to this puzzle is that the premise is mistaken. Although the bureaucracy has enacted countless pro-capitalist reforms, dating back to the "special period" of the 1990s when

Soviet aid ended, it still preserves its dual character and at times needs to defend, in its own bureaucratic way, the foundations of the workers state. Secondly, imperialism (and its agents among the Miami *gusanos*) is not interested in compromises with the PCC but seeks to destroy the workers state root and branch. This remains the case, despite Trump and Rubio's sugarcoated proposals for a "deal" with the regime. Soon they would be after its heads, literally.

The centrist CRP habitually speaks from both sides of its mouth. For example, it reports on the recent looting of the PCC headquarters in an article, referring to the outbreak of "protests in Morón over repeated power outages and the social crisis exacerbated by the imperialist energy blockade" (*Izquierda Diario*, 14 March). But on the same date, it republished a post from the Blog Comunistas Cuba, linked to former academic Frank García Hernández regarding the counterrevolutionary riot:

"This action must be understood in the context of widespread frustration, compounded by the fact that the government lacks any political legitimacy. The assault on the PCC headquarters in Morón should not be seen as an anti-communist action, but as the typical social explosion that rises up against all structures of the established power."

Although the protesters were shouting "Down with communism!" the article apologizes for them, stating that "The protesters are not attacking communism as an ideology, but as the system that has led them to their current dire situation." The CRP has become the main promoter of the Blog Comunistas Cuba (BCC), whose policies have nothing to do with communism. Rather, it is serving as an anti-communist outlet for disillusioned former communists of the "The God That Failed" variety.

Both the FT/CRP and the BCC have adopted the famous "method" bequeathed by Nahuel Moreno: to tail after any "mass movement," regardless of its political program. (Moreno successively presented himself as a Peronist, Castroist, Maoist, Guevarist, and Sandinista before settling down (more or less)

as a left social democrat.) The International Communist League (ICL) has joined this flock of committed opportunists. On February 6, it published a superficial report based on impressions gathered by some of its supporters during a tourist trip to eastern Cuba. In addition to praising the Blog Comunistas Cuba – despite disagreeing with its "analysis" that capitalism has already been restored in Cuba (and China) – these ex-Trotskyists argue against us regarding the protests of 11 July 2021, which they portray as the result of the "erratic policy" of the Castro bureaucracy:

"The first round came amid the pandemic in July 2021, when protesters around the country took to the streets against the Covid lockdowns and shortages of food and medicine. While some were clearly animated by anti-communism (the U.S. media played up 'Down with Communism!' slogans), the sheer breadth of the protests in some 30 cities showed that this was not fundamentally a right-wing, U.S.-orchestrated revolt as claimed by the Díaz-Canel government and some Marxist groups (e.g., the League for the Fourth International)."

–"Cuba Under Siege. An Eyewitness Report" (7 February)

To these delusionary people, the widespread nature of these simultaneous 2021 protests is seen as proof that they pose no threat! For those interested, we refer you to our article, ("The Truth About Cuba Protests...") which explains in detail how the *gusanos* exploited popular discontent in instigating these protests.

For Revolutionary Defense of Cuba!

In July 2021, Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, founder of the bourgeois populist National Regeneration Movement (MORENA), said that Cuba was the "new Numantia." Expressing admiration for the people of the besieged island, AMLO compared Cuba to the Celtiberian city of Numantia, located in the north of what is now Spain, which in 133 BCE heroically resisted the siege imposed by Rome. After 15 months of siege at the hands of the famous general Scipio Africanus, the starving survivors decided to commit suicide rather than surrender to the Roman troops. AMLO's perspective is that of a bourgeois nationalist politician who can admire the resistance of a population besieged by imperialism, but who is impotent to assist it. And this is no coincidence: AMLO and the current Mexican president,

Sheinbaum, despite all their "good intentions," have complied with the dictates of the empire of the north – under both Biden and Trump – acting as U.S. border guards and now cutting a key lifeline to Cuba.

Cuba must not be a new Numantia. Today, the Cuban Revolution finds itself in the most dangerous situation it has faced since its inception. Its enemies believe the island is more isolated than ever, without Soviet, Venezuelan or Mexican oil. The would-be emperor Trump demands that Cuban leaders surrender, or sacrifice their leader as an offering to the empire. Faced with the hardship imposed by the blockade and the regime's inability to deal with this mortal danger, the governing bureaucracy sees the only "way out" as increasingly adopting capitalist measures to "revitalize" the economy – without success. We revolutionary communists, Trotskyists, advocate the opposite path. What is needed is to awaken the creativity, commitment and resolve of the working class and all those who defend Cuba's historic gains in a **proletarian political revolution** that puts the workers in charge of running the workers state, through the **proletarian democracy of workers councils (soviets)** with a **revolutionary internationalist leadership**.

The fate of revolutionary Cuba has not yet been decided. Ultimately, it depends on mobilizing the working class internationally to come to the aid of the Cuban people. Beyond the oil blockade threatening to suffocate the country, the current crisis demonstrates the impossibility of building "socialism in a single country" – the hallmark dogma of Stalinism – particularly on an island 90 miles from the world's most powerful empire. The attack on Venezuela and the siege of Cuba show that all the exploited and oppressed people of Latin America are in Trump's crosshairs. Massive workers mobilizations in defense of Cuba and against imperialism can throw a wrench into the machinery of U.S. domination and link up with the struggle of the working people of the U.S. against racist repression of Black and Latino people, mass deportations and the endless wars unleashed by both imperialist parties. We also note that California's Democratic governor, Gavin Newsom, is praising Trump's attacks on Cuba.

Today, it is urgent to fight for oil supplies to Cuba. In Mexico and Brazil, there have been protests by the left and even (in Brazil) a rally by oil workers demanding that their respective nationalist governments send crude oil to the



The arrival of the tanker *Ocean Mariner* at the Níco López refinery in Regla, Cuba, on January 9, carrying the last shipment of Mexican oil.

besieged island. But given the bourgeois nationalists' subservience to the imperialist masters, it is the working class itself that must take on this task. Let the unions raise funds to buy the fuel! Flotillas to Gaza and Cuba have become popular – so let oil workers themselves load a tanker to set off for Cuba from Rio de Janeiro, Coatzacoalcas, or Tuxpan, the Mexican port from which the *Granma* set out in 1956! We'll see then what the Yankee pirates prowling the Caribbean will do. They could end up unleashing an explosion of rage across the entire continent.

Cuba's power grid is in danger of collapsing. The 20,000 solar energy modules the government is installing are a drop in the bucket. We explained in 2021 that by forming workers councils the workers of the Unión Eléctrica (the network of large state electricity generating plants) and local "distributed generation" plants (which collect energy from various sources, including solar panels) could join forces to address power outages by organizing emergency measures in their communities. We **call on electrical workers unions across the Americas to send teams** with supplies to repair breakdowns and to dispatch specialists to resolve problems stemming from using outdated machinery. Furthermore, the working class should **appeal to the People's Republic of China** to come to the aid of its brother Cuban workers state by **sending ships loaded with millions of solar panels** – of which it is the world's largest producer – and technicians to assist in their installation. Such a gesture would encourage workers worldwide to rise up against the rampages of the wounded imperialist monster, which lashes out in all directions in its precipitous decline.

In Cuba, the task at hand is to **form workers councils to defend the gains of the Revolution**. Repel all attacks on the public education and health systems, the crown jewels of the Cuban people! **Factory and workplace committees** should unite in a **national assembly of workers in the socialized economy**. The delivery of food and basic necessities to endangered areas should be reorganized with teams of volunteer workers who can communicate with the poor population and encourage the implementation of joint projects to repair damage and make improvements collectively. There should also be a struggle for the freedom of political action for parties and organizations that defend the revolution and its achievements. And against the misdeeds and sabotage of a cumbersome bureaucracy, it's necessary to **unite genuine communists into a party based on the revolutionary and internationalist program of Lenin and Trotsky**.

The struggle to defend Cuba is in reality inseparable from the fight for international socialist revolution. Throughout the world, it is necessary to break with the bourgeois parties – whether imperialist, like the Democrats in the United States, or nationalist-populist, like MORENA in Mexico – and with the reformist social democrats and Stalinists who work to subordinate the working class to capitalism, such as the Workers Party in Brazil. From the war on Iran to the siege of Cuba, the present situation highlights the urgent need to form Leninist-Trotskyist revolutionary workers parties, in the struggle to rebuild the Fourth International as the world party of the socialist revolution. To this end, League for the Fourth International, including its U.S., Mexican and Brazilian sections, work for the defense of Cuba and the struggle to defeat counterrevolution wherever it rears its head. ■

Union Campaign to Raise Funds to Send Oil – As Well as Educational and Medical Supplies – to the Island Besieged by Imperialism

Mexican Workers: Break the U.S. Oil Blockade Against Cuba!

The following article is translated from an April 2026 supplement to Revolución Permanente, the newspaper of the Grupo Internacionalista, Mexican section of the League for the Fourth International.

The United States is imposing an economic stranglehold on Cuba in order to destroy the workers state that emerged from the 1959 Cuban Revolution and reimpose imperialist domination. Despite its bureaucratic deformations, Cuba's collectivized and planned economy has achieved enormous advances in the fields of education and health care, serving as a beacon for workers around the world.

Today, these achievements are in danger. The energy blockade imposed by U.S. President Donald Trump seeks to tighten the screws until the island is suffocated by a lack of fuel. Since January 3, no oil has arrived in Cuba from Venezuela, and on January 8, the last oil shipment from Mexico arrived.

Sister and brother workers: The education, health care and energy unions must stand up for Cuba. Given President Claudia Sheinbaum's capitulation to Trump's imperialist dictates, it is above all up to the labor movement to mobilize its strength to break the criminal blockade—including by raising funds to purchase and organize the shipment of oil to Cuba!

This campaign is not about collecting charity donations, but about mobilizing class solidarity with the Cuban Revolution. This is why we must break with the capitalists, their politicians, and their parties, including the National Regeneration Movement (MORENA, the party of Sheinbaum and her predecessor, Andrés Manuel López Obrador), the PRI, the PAN, the PT, the PVEM, etc.¹ Don't forget that at least three weeks before Trump's January 29 Executive Order—in which he threatens third countries that sell oil to Cuba with the imposition of tariffs—the Mexican state-owned oil company PEMEX canceled all oil shipments to the island.

President Sheinbaum has resorted to sleight of hand to present her capitulation

¹ The Spanish acronyms for, in order, Institutional Revolutionary Party, National Action Party, Party of Labor and the Green Ecology Party.



Solidarity with Cuba and Venezuela event by the SUTIEMS, March 26.

lation to Trump as a "sovereign" decision. She then attempted to use the sending of three military ships loaded with humanitarian aid – 3,125 tons of rice, beans, powdered milk, etc. – as a fig leaf. But Cuba needs oil, including to distribute the "humanitarian aid." In fact, the Mexican government is complicit in the counterrevolutionary barrage launched by Trump and the Cuban "gusanos" in Miami.

Many workers in Mexico understand this. In mid-January, in response to the U.S. attack on Venezuela, the Mexican Electrical Workers Union (SME) sponsored the formation of the Mexican Anti-Imperialist Front (FAM), a coalition of unions and organizations from rural and urban areas that includes members of Morena. This class-collaborationist coalition has done nothing to mobilize the strength of the working class, instead diverting workers' desire to support Cuba into pleading with the government that canceled oil shipments to the island.

More recently, the Independent Union of Workers of the Autonomous Metropolitan University (SITUAM) called on February 5 for the formation of the Workers Popular Anti-Imperialist and Anti-Fascist Front (FPTAA), which includes both the SME and the National Coordination of Education Workers (CNTE), the dissident teachers' movement. The purpose of this new "anti-imperialist front" was clearly summarized in the SME's statement:

"President Claudia Sheinbaum: We demand that you exercise the legitimacy granted to you by the popular vote and immediately resume the humanitarian delivery of oil to the Cuban people and the sale of that fuel to the island under the terms that have been in place during your administration."

Calling on Mexico's semi-colonial government to break with its imperial master is

whistling in the wind. We workers can rely only on our own class strength.

On February 20, the General Council of Representatives of the IEMS Workers' Union (SUTIEMS) approved the following motion:

Whereas:

1) Since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, U.S. imperialism has sought to subjugate the brave Cuban people both through murderous terrorism and the criminal blockade;

2) That the expropriation of the capitalists 145 km from the U.S. was a victory for workers and the oppressed throughout the world;

3) That the enormous achievements in education and health on the besieged island are an example for education workers in Mexico and the world, as SUTIEMS has itself recognized in word and deed;

4) That since the racist Donald Trump administration's onslaught against Venezuela, it has been clear that the ultimate goal was to starve Cuba into submission by cutting off all international oil supplies;

5) That the union leaders who have spoken out in favor of Cuba are proposing nothing more than to politely beg the pro-business government to restore its meager oil shipments.

Therefore, we resolve:

To launch a union-led campaign to raise funds to send oil to Cuba as soon as possible. This campaign must form a union committee to mobilize genuine solidarity among workers in defense of the Cuban Revolution through class-based actions. Raising funds to purchase oil is an urgent task, as is the immediate shipment of school supplies, which our union must begin collecting. ■



NO TO PRIVATIZATION. Workers of Unión Eléctrica (Cuba's electrical power company) during maintenance work on the thermoelectric power plant in Camagüey, April 2025. The products of the toil and sweat of the working class must not be handed over to the capitalists.

Cuba Alert!...

continued from page 1

agreement with the union, and subject to analysis at a meeting of members and workers.” So it’s necessary to push hard against layoffs in meetings of the “collective” (the personnel), and if management refuses, to impose **workers control**. Since the supply problems plaguing the Cuban economy cannot be resolved at the level of a single enterprise, it would be necessary to form **plant or workplace committees**, unite them into **workers councils to defend the gains of the Revolution**, and convene a national **assembly of workers in the socialized economy**.⁴

It must be made clear that there is indeed an alternative to surrender: *to fight*. And in the face of a crisis unleashed by an imperialist onslaught, this struggle must be, above all, *international*. Brave as Cuban workers are – coping with hellish conditions, constant blackouts, sometimes lasting more than 24 hours across the entire island, and shortages and scarcity of everything – to defeat a ruthless enemy, **it is necessary to mobilize the forces of the working class throughout the Americas**. It’s not just the sadistic Trump – the “progressive” presidents of Brazil, Lula da Silva, and Mexico, Claudia Sheinbaum, are responsible for the Cuban people’s ordeal, as they have refused to send oil to the besieged island. Proletarian revolutionaries and class-conscious workers throughout the hemisphere must mobilize to break the energy blockade against Cuba: **workers action is urgently needed to send fuel to Cuba, now!**

Defending Cuba also requires **fighting for the political class independence of the workers**. Although many “friends of Cuba” and a large part of the Cuban leadership long for the era of Barack Obama, when the U.S. president traveled to Havana, his administration did not lift the sanctions that have stifled the island’s economy. The Democratic Party has always been and will continue to be a pillar of U.S. imperialism, pursuing the same fundamental goals as John F. Kennedy: the subjugation of Cuba to imperialist capital. In Latin America as well, the policy of many Cuba solidarity campaigns of forming *popular fronts* with bourgeois sectors can hinder *effective*

solidarity at decisive moments. In contrast, resistance to imperialism anywhere in the world helps Cuba (thus Trump being bogged down in his war against Iran makes it harder for him to launch a military attack on the island).

The grinding crisis in Cuba demands a revolutionary political response. The 176 measures are the desperate response of the leaders of the Cuban *bureaucratically deformed workers state* who see no alternative to capitulation in the face of the superior economic strength of the empire of the north. With their nationalist outlook, they have pursued the impossible Stalinist dream of “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism, the corollary of the dogma of “socialism in one country,” which is the antithesis of the Leninist program of international socialist revolution. What proved impossible for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the world’s largest country, is even less possible for a small nation “just 90 miles” from the United States. The urgent defense of Cuba depends on **forging a genuinely communist leadership and extending the revolution into the “bowels of the imperialist monster,”** as [Cuba’s historic independence leader] José Martí put it.

The U.S. Seeks to Cut Off All Trade with Cuba

The “Economic and Social Transformations” were presented by Cuban president and first secretary Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), and by Political Bureau member and prime minister Manuel Marrero Cruz to the National Assembly of People’s Power (ANPP), and were explicitly endorsed by former Cuban president Raúl Castro Ruz. They contain a wide range of measures that strike at the heart of the socialized economy. These include: “Transforming socialist state-owned enterprises into commercial corporations with shares or equity interests,” ensuring only that the state maintains a “majority stake” in strategic enterprises. Also included are the sale of state-owned enterprises to “domestic and foreign” individuals or entities; “transition to a model of financial planning” guided by “market signals”; and the introduction of private banks. It calls

into question the state monopoly of foreign trade, and much more.

Implementing this plan, as we have pointed out, would result in the dismantling of the planned economy and in privatizations that, given the lack of large quantities of capital in Cuba, would soon turn Cuba into yet another U.S. neocolony. However, although it is very detailed, the plan lacks overall coherence. It is a list of offers that reads more like a real estate prospectus. Are you, the owner of a small or medium-sized business, looking to expand your company? You can now hire more than 100 employees. Are you, a U.S. investor, looking to buy properties for tourism? Foreign investment is now permitted even in Old Havana, and to leave

no room for doubt, “real estate businesses may conduct sales transactions for residential units.” Etc., etc. That said, finding a buyer is another matter entirely.

Speaking at the CARICOM⁵ summit on the island of St. Kitts on February 25, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said of Cuba, “if they want to make those dramatic reforms that open the space for both economic and eventually political freedom for the people of Cuba, obviously the United States would love to see that. We’d be helpful.” The measures approved on June 17-18 appear to be tailored to these proposals. But when, on March 16, Deputy Prime Minister Oscar Pérez-Oliva declared that “Cuba is open to maintaining a fluid commercial relationship with U.S. companies,” the *gusano* Rubio immediately responded that this would not be enough, that “they

⁵ The Caribbean Community, an interstate organization including 15, mainly English-speaking, countries of the Antilles Islands.

need to put new people in charge.” Donald Trump was more explicit: he said that Díaz-Canel has to go.

The U.S. subsequently issued a series of mandates that make any commercial relationship with Cuba impossible. On May 1, Trump signed Executive Order 14404, which imposes sanctions on any person or company that has “materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, the Government of Cuba.” In particular, it focused on the energy, mining and financial services sectors. It targeted the joint-venture mining company Moa Nickel S.A., a producer of nickel and cobalt. The Canadian operator, Sherritt, shut down operations at the mine in June. Washington gave banks until June 5 to sever ties with Fincimex, part of the Cuban armed forces’ conglomerate GAESA. On June 6, Visa and Mastercard stopped working in Cuba.

In addition to the total fuel embargo, which has forced ten airlines to cancel service to the island, Executive Order 14404 seeks to block almost all trade with Cuba. In May, two of the world’s largest shipping companies, Hapag-Lloyd and CMA CGM, suspended operations to the country, as did the Melilla and Iberostar hotel chains. On June 10, Secretary of State Rubio imposed sanctions on the Cuban state-owned oil company Cupet. After Cuba authorized the importation of oil by private individuals in February – a move that the League for the Fourth International warned would open the door to imperialist blackmail – a Florida-based company, Vanguard Energy, announced plans to ship up to 250,000 barrels in a tanker. But it was soon forced to cancel the project because the fuel was to be stored in facilities leased from Cupet.

The main target of Trump’s executive order is the Grupo de Administración Empresarial S.A. (GAESA), a business conglomerate within the structure of the Revolutionary Armed Forces that was created during the “Special Period”⁶ of the 1990s

⁶ This is the Cuban phrase for the period following the imperialist-led counterrevolution

The “Brothers to the Rescue” Provocation

On 24 February 1996, a plane piloted by members of the organization “Brothers to the Rescue” was shot down by Cuban air defense forces after it entered Cuban airspace heading to Havana, after Cuban air controlled warned it that it was in danger; having entered a prohibited defense zone below the 24th parallel; and after the Cuban pilot had visually warned the plane to turn back. The U.S. claimed that the mission was to drop leaflets, but a Cuban intelligence agent (Juan Pablo Roque) who had infiltrated the group told the International Civil Aviation Organization that the group had planned to introduce anti-personnel mines and blow up high-tension electrical pylons to disrupt the energy supply.

Brothers to the Rescue purported to be a humanitarian organization aiding people who left Cuba on rafts, but its main activities were provocatively flying into Cuba. Cuba’s government sent at least nine diplomatic messages complaining of these provocations to the administration of Democrat Bill Clinton, who did nothing to stop them.

Brothers was founded by former members of Brigade 2506, the U.S.-organized Cuban mercenary army that was smashed at Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs) in April 1961. Its leaders included veterans of the Alpha 66 terrorist organization, which boasted of carrying out dozens of sabotage commando raids on the island. The founder and main leader of Brothers was José Basulto, who several years later admitted to having been a CIA agent trained by the agency for sabotage missions in Cuba. In 1962 he fired a 22 mm cannon into a hotel in Havana. In later years Basulto flew supplies to the CIA’s “contra” army fighting against the Sandinista government of Nicaragua.

Workers Vanguard (No. 640, 1 March 1996), at the time the voice of revolutionary Trotskyism, wrote that the shootdown of the plane was “a legitimate defensive measure against a brazen provocation” *The Internationalist* upholds that statement. The indictment of 96-year-old former Cuban president Raúl Castro Ruz over this is a cynical ploy to prepare for U.S. terrorist actions.

to combat the economic blockade imposed on Cuba. It operates a network of tourist facilities (Grupo Gaviota), runs several supermarkets and gas stations and manages the port of Mariel – all aimed at generating hard currency.⁷ Using loaded terms like “opaque,” “secretive” and “a mafia-like state within the state,” the imperialist and *gusano* propaganda machine has tried to portray GAESA as an ogre precisely because it has been a *key weapon* in defending Cuba against the brutal *economic war* that U.S. imperialism has waged against it for 65 long years.

To attract the desired foreign investment envisioned in the 176 “transformations,” approval from Washington is needed. This endorsement has not been forthcoming, nor will it be, because *what the imperialists seek is to overthrow the Cuban Revolution*. That is the “logic” behind the ridiculous legal indictment in May against Cuban leader Raúl Castro for the (justified) downing of the plane carrying the “Brothers to the Rescue” provocateurs in 1996 (see box on page 23). Then, on June 23, a Washington spokesperson described the 176 Cuban measures as “long overdue and ultimately superficial smoke signals” from Havana. At the same time, new sanctions were imposed on five companies, including two that handle nearly all of Cuba’s international transactions and one that serves as the main warehousing agency for the state, private companies and foreign firms.

In short, Cuba’s “transformations” will not be viewed favorably by the Trump administration, and without that support, it is nearly impossible for the country to attract foreign investment to increase production (and productivity, which depends on the introduction of new technology). Simply to survive with a minimum standard of living requires breaking the energy blockade, and any improvement requires eliminating or substantially reducing the economic blockade that dates back to the early 1960s. Substantial privatization of industry, energy, communications, etc., will not achieve the supposed increase in efficiency, no matter how rigid state-owned enterprises may be. And in the meantime, the resulting mass layoffs and price increases for basic necessities could lead to internal unrest . . . and a mass exodus.

Abandoning the Planned Economy: Blow Against Workers

The Communist Party leadership insists over and over that the purpose of the 176 measures is “to advance the defense of socialism” (President Díaz-Canel, at the plenary session of the PCC Central Committee on June 17); and that it is “to preserve the achievements of the Revolution and guarantee the continuity of socialism” (Prime Minister Marrero, at the National People’s Power Assembly on June 18). Díaz-Canel told the Congress of the Cuban Workers Confederation (CTC) on June 27, “We do not propose – nor will it ever be our intention – to restore capitalism in Cuba!

that brought down the USSR in 1992, abruptly cutting off Soviet trade with Cuba, particularly oil, which had been paid for with Cuban exports of sugar.

⁷ “Hard currency” refers to globally traded currencies that are freely exchangeable, notably the U.S. dollar and the European euro. The Cuban peso (CUP) is not exchangeable anywhere outside the country.

Chinese and Vietnamese “Models”? Yankee Imperialists Aren’t Buying It

There is a lot of talk about the “Chinese” or “Vietnamese model.” A “study of the experiences of socialist construction in other countries such as China and Vietnam” was conducted, Díaz-Canel said at the Central Committee meeting. In many respects, the projected structures resemble those in China after 2013, with certain important differences. In China, some strategic sectors remain 100% state-owned, such as electricity transmission (a natural monopoly) and nuclear energy, while in others, operating companies in sectors such as oil, non-ferrous metallurgy, air transport and rail transport have minority private and foreign investment but are controlled by parent companies that are 100% state-owned.¹ In the 176 Cuban measures, however, there is no mention of companies that would remain exclusively state-owned.

Beyond the formal structure, the socioeconomic and geopolitical environment is quite different. In China, after several state-owned enterprises were converted into joint-stock companies, they attracted large amounts of financing from commercial banks taking advantage of the extremely high domestic savings rate. In addition, they benefited from a massive influx of foreign investment, including from large “multinationals” eager to enter the vast Chinese market. In Cuba, banks lack

¹ For example, the oil companies Petrochina and Sinopec Corp. are publicly traded corporations with private and foreign minority shareholders, but are subsidiaries of holding companies – China National Petroleum Corporation and the Sinopec Group, respectively – which are 100 percent state-owned and, in turn, are controlled by the State-Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC).

a savings base for investment, and international investors are pulling out due to sanctions and the energy crisis. And while China received investments from Chinese capitalists in Taiwan and Hong Kong (for example, the Foxconn factories), with few exceptions, Cuban capitalists in exile will not invest in the island governed by the Communist Party.

The situation in Vietnam is, broadly speaking, similar to that of China, but with an even higher proportion of foreign investment, particularly from the region, in export-oriented sectors. The new policy adopted by the Cuban CP resembles that of those leaders in China whom the Maoists labeled “capitalist roaders,” like Deng Xiaoping. In that case, it led to unprecedented growth of both the state sector and of the capitalist sector, which poses a threat to the socialized economy. In Cuba, due to the fragility of an economy that has been subjected to a criminal blockade for 65 years, and has now intensified to the point of asphyxiation, the same free-market measures could trigger a collapse that capitalist forces would seek to exploit to foment bloody counterrevolution.

To think that privatization and Cuba’s opening up to the global capitalist market can “save socialism” is to live in a fantasy world. In any case, neither the promised riches from foreign investment nor greater productivity will be possible under the current conditions of an almost total blockade. Díaz-Canel may insist that the “transformations” are “a sovereign decision by Cuba,” that they are not “the result of concessions made in the face of U.S. threats,” and are not a response to demands on Cuban authorities made in bilateral discussions. But if would-be emperor Donald Trump and his viceroy Marco Rubio do not give their stamp of approval, the major capitalist conglomerates will not take advantage of

the offers: they will have been stillborn. And the White House and the State Department have already nixed them.

For the CP leadership, this is the old Stalinist dream of “peaceful coexistence,” but the enemy is anything but peaceful, nor is it the least bit interested in coexisting. So far, only Russian and Chinese companies have shown interest; all others fear sanctions. It cannot be ruled out that some wily American investor might consider investing in Cuba, but they would need some guarantee that the U.S. government would eventually legalize it, like Trump and Rubio are doing now for U.S. oil companies in Venezuela. Even so, for the frenzied counterrevolutionaries of the Miami *gusano* crowd, such as the Cuban-American National Foundation, which has become a bastion of the Republican Party in Florida, their *sine qua non* (bottom line) condition is the destruction of the Communist Party and arrest – or worse – of its leaders.

Since it must be obvious to all that foreign investors are not going to line up to put their money into a Cuba ruled by the PCC, there is another possibility: that state-owned properties will be sold, auctioned off or simply transferred to those most familiar with them – members of the bureaucracy or their relatives. In China, which remains a bureaucratically deformed workers state despite the growth of a substantial – and dangerous – capitalist sector of the economy, some children of high-ranking bureaucrats became corporate executives because of their high-level connections. It cannot be ruled out that something similar might happen in Cuba. This underscores the importance of mobilizing workers to use their power against privatizations, particularly when local proto-bourgeois elements are involved.

It is a matter of . . . saving the Revolution and its undeniable social achievements, because we will never renounce the majority’s aspiration for socialist construction.” He also spoke there of saving “the socialist orientation of the economy.” Aspiration? Orientation? It is the *reality* of the socialized economy that is at stake.

And in reality, these measures undermine the foundations of the workers state. In addition to the importation of fuel by private and foreign capitalist entities – the dangers of which we have already pointed out – state entities, municipalities and co-operatives are now authorized to export, import and retain foreign currency revenues; “natural persons” (individuals) are permitted to make “commercial imports through non-commercial channels”; and the “partial dollarization of the economy” is formalized. Although it is claimed that such measures “do not imply granting foreign trade powers,” in fact they undermine the state’s monopoly of foreign trade. Combined with the effort to foster by multiple means a substantial capitalist sector (“non-state economic actors”), the

measures as a whole threaten the pillars of Cuba’s socialized economy.

The 176 measures refer to “moving toward a model of financial planning in which the state gradually shifts away from the physical allocation of resources, giving greater weight to market signals.” This amounts to abandoning a planned economy. Planning based on financial indicators is by no means socialist; it is practiced by several capitalist countries. France, for example, adopted it after World War II, establishing a Planning Commission that existed until 2006. Although such “indicative planning” can guide the development of different sectors in the medium or long term, in the day-to-day functioning of the economy it would be the market and the (capitalist) law of value that determine what to produce, rather than a decision based on social needs.

Since the state monopoly on foreign trade, economic planning and the entire state sector would be weakened and jeopardized by the impact of the 176 measures, how can the bureaucracy that governs the Cuban state insist that it is defending or

saving socialism? When they speak of “socialism,” they invariably point to public education and healthcare, which are indeed great achievements of the Cuban Revolution and a beacon for all of Latin America. But while they are achievements of a socialized economy, and officials vow to keep them free of charge, that in and of itself is not incompatible with social-democratic-style capitalism. In reality, these jewels which are Cuba’s pride and joy would be undermined in a market-driven economy.

PCC leaders also promise that they will ensure “social justice,” and that the reforms will generate “greater riches,” which they will distribute “with the greatest possible social justice” (Díaz-Canel at the CTC). However, there is no guarantee that the free-market changes will increase production, while it is certain that they will produce greater inequality (this is even their intention, at the Central Committee he himself called for “producing with equity, not with egalitarianism”). And the elimination of subsidies for basic necessities, the introduction of differentiated wages and rising layoffs will, by definition, be

The Pseudo-Trotskyists: Obstacles to Defense of the Cuban Revolution

There is a trio of groups that claim (falsely) to be Trotskyist and have issued statements against the measures recently adopted by Havana; what they have in common is that they are abandoning the defense of the Cuban workers state, if they have not already done so. The Revolutionary Communist International (RCI, formerly International Marxist Tendency) titled its article, “Faced with unbearable imperialist pressure, Cuba moves towards capitalist restoration” (*In Defence of Marxism*, 22 June). The text asserts that the 176 measures, “taken as a whole ... if implemented, spell the end of the planned economy and the restoration of capitalism.” While the end of the article mentions “defending the Cuban revolution,” these are empty words since for them, capitalist restoration has already been decided on (and carried out in China and Vietnam).

The **Current for Permanent Revolution** (CPR, formerly Trotskyist Fraction), for its part, writes that “the restorationist turn ... is being completed,” and that we have now reached “the end of the cycle of ‘reforms,’ in terms of capitalist restoration” (*Izquierda Diario*, 28 June). The article’s title is interesting: “Cuba: Capitalist Restoration by Decree?” But instead of rejecting such nonsense (for Marxists, counterrevolution will not be carried out by virtue of a few words on paper), they leave the question open. The CPR asks rhetorically, “how can one even imagine for a moment that it would be possible to defend what remains of the achievements of the 1959 revolution while ‘reaching out’ to Cuban investors in Miami?” and concludes the article saying: “One thing is certain: it will not be possible to defend the Revolution or the island’s sovereignty in the event of direct U.S. intervention with the leaders of this system.” This is the opposite of Trotsky’s policy of *unconditional defense of the workers state*.

The **International Communist League** (ICL, better known as the Spartacist tendency) has adopted a more modulated, and deceptive, language to present a position similar to that of the RCI and CPR: treating capitalist restoration, if not yet as a *fait accompli*, at

least as a matter that has been decided. Thus, it describes the 176 measures as “a series of economic reforms that, if implemented, could well lead to the destruction of the gains of the Cuban Revolution” (*Spartacist* supplement, 20 June) without mentioning the very real obstacles standing in the way of their implementation. While it advocates forming “a left opposition to the PCC leaders’ course” based on “a fighting socialist perspective,” it does not explain what the policy of this generic opposition should be, aside from opposing Díaz-Canel’s measures. This is yet another example of its now-typical irresponsible light-mindedness in the service of an all-round opportunist policy that could be summed up as “unite for unity.”

A subsequent article (“Cuba: How to Stop the Catastrophe,” *Spartacist* supplement, 30 June) advocates “a radically new course.” It criticizes “weaknesses” in the statements by the RCI and CPR, namely that “they do not outline a concrete line of struggle for the Cuban masses today.” *The same can be said of what the ICL has written*. Of the three points they highlight at the end, the first (“break the blockade”), as fundamental and essential as that is, is not controversial on the left. The second (“for radical egalitarianism” and “no to bureaucratic privileges”) paints an idyllic picture (“no privileges, no corruption, no speculation: total equality”). In reality, the greatest privilege in Cuba today – access to dollars – excludes the vast majority of PCC members, while many anti-communist “dissidents” are on the U.S. payroll.

And the third point of its three-point program (“for workers’ democracy”) omits the qualifier “revolutionary” – that is, in the framework of defending the Cuban Revolution. This could prove significant, given that U.S. agencies always seek to foster a counterrevolutionary “worker” opposition, as they did with Solidarność in Poland. Moreover, the ICL demands, “Stop the attacks on protests calling for equality and an end to poverty.” In doing so, it glosses over the fact that explicitly anti-communist slogans have been chanted at some of the recent protests, and that the “*cacerolazos*” (pots and pans demonstrations) have *not* been physically suppressed. And with its call on “security personnel to end the repression,” the ICL would paralyze defend-

ers of the Revolution in the face of a counterrevolutionary riot.

It is striking that in the statements by the ICL, as well as those by the RCI and the CPR (the latter two supported Polish Solidarność), there is no mention of an anti-communist opposition, which is very real and was mobilized during the protests of 11 July 2021. Unlike all those who have prettified those protests – *including the ICL* – we of the League for the Fourth International (LFI) investigated in great detail what happened that day, explaining that:

“While fueled by desperation over food shortages, lack of medicine and blackouts that have beset the island in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, the marches were instigated, manipulated and exploited by forces seeking to overthrow the Cuban Revolution.”

–“The Truth About the Protests in Cuba: Defend the Revolution Against U.S. Imperialism and Its Frontmen!” *The Internationalist* No. 64, July-September 2021

As we noted at the time, even the “progressive” wing of the Democratic Party, in the person of Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, echoed the imperialist propaganda surrounding July 11, declaring: “we solidarize with [the protests] and condemn the anti-democratic actions led by President Díaz-Canel.”

An account of a visit to Cuba by Canadian supporters of the ICL (*Workers Tribune*, 7 February) referred to the 2021 protests, claiming that “the sheer breadth of the protests in some 30 cities showed that this was not fundamentally a right-wing, U.S.-orchestrated revolt,” directly criticizing the LFI. On the contrary, the protests’ breadth reflected the explosion of calls on social media, originating in Florida, urging people on the island to take to the streets against the Communist Party “dictatorship.”¹

To be clear, the protests that have taken place in Cuba over the past month and a half (of which there have been several dozen), have not, with few exceptions, been counterrevolutionary political actions. They have mainly reflected the desperation resulting

¹ An article analyzing digital media traffic on 11 July 2021 has just been published (by a group of journalists aligned with the Cuban government): “11J: How a Foreign Interference Operation Is Fabricated,” (in Spanish) *Cuba Debate*, 14 July 2026.

from the effects of the suffocating fuel blockade imposed by the U.S. government: food shortages, a lack of public transportation, and above all, a series of blackouts due to extended outages of the national power grid. However, as we wrote in April, “If it comes to that, class-conscious workers and all defenders of the Cuban Revolution must mobilize to thwart any counterrevolutionary and pro-imperialist action.” (“[For International Workers’ Mobilization in Defense of the Cuban Revolution!](#)” *The Internationalist*, April 2026).

It is also worth noting that the statements by the ICL, RCI and CPR do not include the terms “deformed workers state,” “Trotskyism” or “Trotskyist.” So when they speak of opposing the “transformations” approved in June, they fail to provide readers with the programmatic and conceptual framework needed to understand what has happened or to act in defense of the Revolution. For decades, the Cuban population has been told that they live in a “socialist” country, when in reality it is a workers state – the “dictatorship of the proletariat” – which should serve as the starting point for achieving socialism, a classless society that can only be built on an economic foundation of abundance, not poverty. Hence the survival of the Cuban Revolution and its achievements depends on extending the revolution.

It must also be understood that this workers state is ruled by a bureaucracy; in other words, it is a *deformed workers state*. This relatively privileged petty-bourgeois stratum rests on the foundations of the socialized economy, and its *nationalist and conservative policies* are the result of its own history and the Stalinism it imbibed from the USSR. Thus, in the cases of both Nicaragua and Venezuela, the Cuban government, and Fidel Castro himself, advised the Sandinista and Bolivarian leftist movements that they should *not* follow the path of the Cuban Revolution and should instead seek coexistence with imperialism. But it turned out that the Yankee imperialist sharks were not, and are not, interested in tolerating even bourgeois-nationalist regimes, much less a “communist” outpost 90 miles from their shores.

acts of social injustice that all class-conscious workers and genuine communists must resist with workers action. To put it bluntly, promises of future wealth do not put food on the table.

Resist the Surrender of the Socialized Economy at Every Step

While the dreamed-of wave of foreign investment is not about to materialize, what is coming is the elimination of subsidies, layoffs and a sharp rise in prices for food and other necessities – all attacks on the workers that must be opposed and resisted. The measures which are truly

urgently needed go in the opposite direction: mobilizing the creativity and power of the workers, fighting for **workers control** in the enterprises. It’s necessary to impose the will of the workers collective against those petty-bourgeois managers who dream of privatizing them (and allying with those administrators who oppose privatization). Workers mobilization is needed to block foreign capitalists who seek to snap up at bargain prices what has been built by the toil and sweat of the Cuban workers. Are there suspicions of corruption at GAESA? Let a workers commission inspect its books, *as part of defending the socialized economy!*

Díaz-Canel said at the CTC Congress,

“To this day, no one has explained – much less demonstrated in practice – how socialism is to be built in a nation under the conditions of siege that Cuba has endured at the hands of the world’s greatest power since the very beginning of the victorious Revolution....” This goes to the heart of the matter. It is not possible to “build socialism in a single country,” (Stalin’s anti-Marxist formula), especially not in a small country on the doorstep of U.S. imperialism; instead, international workers struggle is required, extending throughout Latin America and into the very heart of U.S. imperialism. Resistance by workers in Cuba against measures similar to those being imposed on workers, peasants, and indigenous peoples

in Bolivia could inspire a proletarian response across the entire continent.⁸

Although Trump has imposed a total blockade on Cuba, he doesn’t hold “all the cards,” as is his favorite phrase. The president in Washington wants to repeat his Venezuelan lightning coup, when he kidnapped President Nicolás Maduro and seized control of the country’s oil. Trump envisioned repeating that “feat” against Iran, with disastrous results for U.S. hegemony. And Venezuela is not the same as Cuba. The “Bolivarian” government was,

⁸ See “Bolivia: de la rebelión popular hacia la revolución obrera,” *Revolución Permanente*, June 2026.



Demonstrators in Havana at dawn on May Day 2026. Hundreds of thousands came out on the International Workers Day to defy the blockade, marching in front of the U.S. embassy.

and is, a bourgeois-nationalist regime, based on a capitalist economy with all the contradictions that entails. Cuba, on the other hand, is, and has been for decades, a workers state – although deformed by a bureaucratic government – with a socialized economy. The Cuban state has a cohesion that the Venezuelan regime lacked.

The regime of Stalin and his successors in the Soviet Union, after seven decades in power, finally succumbed to the economic and military pressure of imperialism in 1989-92. In contrast to Stalinism's illusory nationalist policy, Leon Trotsky – co-leader, alongside Lenin, of the October Revolution of 1917 – outlined the perspective of *permanent revolution*. This holds that in countries under the yoke of imperialism, even democratic tasks – such as real national independence – can only be achieved by the proletariat taking power, supported by the peasantry, and by extending the socialist revolution into the heart of imperialism. Genuine Trotskyists always defended the USSR, just as today they defend Cuba, China, Vietnam and North Korea against imperialist siege and counterrevolution.

The Cuban government is, without a doubt, bureaucratic. The fact that it approved the 176 measures, which entail a fundamental change in the entire Cuban

economic system, by unanimous vote at back-to-back meetings of the Central Committee of the PCC and the ANPP in just 48 hours is proof positive. A true *revolutionary workers democracy* would have given rise to vigorous debate over these “transformations,” which can only wreak havoc on the household budgets of working people. In Bolivia, when the reactionary government enacted a sweeping package (*paquetazo*) of measures in December 2025 that eliminated fuel subsidies, it raised the minimum wage to an utterly inadequate amount of 3,300 bolivianos, equivalent to US\$316. Under the Cuban *paquetazo*, the new minimum wage will be 3,120 CUP, equivalent to US\$5 – impossible to live on and meet basic needs at market prices!

So, if workers truly have a “voice and a vote,” as Díaz-Canel asserted to the CTC Congress, if they determine the country's course – as it should be in a workers state – then it is *imperative for genuine communists to oppose and organize resistance against these anti-worker measures*, which seek to sell off the assets of the working class to capital. But serious resistance against this disastrous policy cannot be merely reactive; it must present an alternative. To defend the socialized economy and the gains of the Cuban Revolution,

a *proletarian political revolution is necessary, based on an assembly of workers councils*. And the axis of such a revolutionary Marxist policy is that *there is no solution just within the narrow confines of a Cuba besieged to the point of suffocation*. The struggle must be *escalated to the international level*. For starters, *we call on the workers of Latin America to demand that their governments immediately send oil to Cuba, and to enforce this through workers action*.⁹

In the face of the capitulatory stance of the government leadership, genuine communists must make use of cracks in the bureaucratic wall

to defend the interests of the working class and the Revolution. In a speech at the CTC Congress, Díaz-Canel admitted that “among the people” there are “those who have doubts and are concerned about the impact these measures may have on socialist construction,” asserting that “this is for the best” because they, too, “are defending the Revolution.” So, when in debates over layoffs, for example, the bureaucrats seek to silence the opposition, it is worth citing this. And when the first secretary of the PCC asserts that “the Socialist State Enterprise ... will continue to be the fundamental pillar of the economy” (Díaz-Canel's speech at the Central Committee), one can recall these words as they try to sell those enterprises (or parts of them) to capitalist bidders.

This does not mean that all small-scale privatization should be rejected: nationalization in Cuba sometimes reached extremes, and petty-bourgeois sectors can make a valuable contribution to socialist construction. Moreover, at times it is necessary to take a step back, as in the NEP (New Economic Policy) of the 1920s in the USSR. But that *temporary* policy, which has been cited *ad nauseam* to justify pro-capitalist reforms in Cuba, is light-years away from the 176 measures that undermine the core of the collectivized economy. We must combat, step by step, these *counter-reforms* that harm workers and benefit the capitalists who exploit their labor to enrich themselves. And we must emphasize the need to adopt an overall program, the only one that can save the Cuban Revolution: the program of Lenin and Trotsky for *international socialist revolution*.

Return to the Program of Lenin and Trotsky

As for what is to be done, in Lenin's famous phrase, the answer cannot be a return to a Castro-era “golden age,” as disappointed Fidelistas and Guevarists (of whom there are surely many among those who have doubts about the new measures) might think. Let's be clear: *the approval of the 176 “transformations” is a declaration of political bankruptcy by the Communist*

⁹ See “Grupo Internacionalista Demands Oil for Cuba” and “Mexican Workers: Break the U.S. Oil Blockade Against Cuba!” *The Internationalist*, April 2026.

Party. Not only does it renounce the line it has defended for decades (with, as noted, its fundamentally Stalinist character), but it would also throw overboard the most fundamental interests of Cuban workers. Yet there are hundreds of thousands of communists in the PCC, as well as unaffiliated leftists, who wish with all their hearts to defend the revolution to which they have dedicated their lives. We want to discuss with them, because there is indeed a revolutionary way out, an alternative to the Stalinist dead end, and that path is to *return to the internationalist program of Lenin and Trotsky*, the program of Red October.

The League for the Fourth International, whose founders were leaders and cadres of the ICL when it was the voice of revolutionary Trotskyism, continues the program of the Spartacist tendency that today's reborn ICL has almost completely discarded. Ours is the history of the authentic Trotskyists who fought against the capitalist reunification of Germany, calling in the DDR (the German Democratic Republic, the deformed workers state in the east) for a proletarian political revolution in order to fight on both sides of the Cold War border for a “red Germany of workers councils” in a Socialist United States of Europe. We also fought to the end in the USSR against the Yeltsin-Bush counter-revolution. In both cases, we reached out to cadres of the Stalinist Communist Parties, as well as to military personnel, who wanted to fight for genuine communism. The core of this revolutionary and internationalist program that we defended then is crucial today in defending Cuba (and also China, which remains a central target of the imperialist war drive).

When we speak of the international spread of the revolution, it is important that those inside and outside the besieged island who wish to defend it grasp the enormous impact the Cuban Revolution had, from the Southern Cone of South America to Mexico and throughout the Caribbean, all the way to the United States and Europe, as well as Africa and many other parts of the world. An intrepid struggle of the workers against abandonment of the socialized economy and the surrender of the Revolution's gains to its sworn enemies – against the transformation of the rebel island into a client state and neocolony of Uncle Sam – could inspire a new generation of young activists around the world, a working class under attack from relentless and racist anti-union campaigns, war-weary populations of imperialist countries and oppressed peoples beset by imperialist wars.

The primary responsibility for making the prospect of *international socialist revolution* a reality rests with those who are fighting in the imperialist countries that are besieging Cuba – in the U.S. and also in Europe – and in the countries of Latin America, where capitalist governments (including those in Mexico and Brazil, which in the past have posed as “friends of Cuba”) have bowed to the threats of the Yankee plunderer Trump and are complicit in the energy stranglehold on Cuba. *Urgently needed is international workers mobilization to break the suffocating blockade, and to fight to forge communist parties like the Bolsheviks of Lenin and Trotsky.* ■



Internationalist demonstrators call to defend the Cuban Revolution, New York City, July 11.

Trans...

continued from page 5

gathered and what it would ultimately be used for, but clearly it could fuel individual surveillance and prosecution.

And along with targeting trans people, the MAGA regime is compiling lists of immigrants. Last November, after coming under fire from the federal government, California governor Gavin Newsom announced that the state was revoking 17,000 commercial driver's licenses issued to immigrant truck drivers. Although a state court ordered California to let the drivers reapply, the state said it was giving detailed information about license holders to the American Association of Motor Vehicles, whose database could be targeted by ICE. This "means more than 1 million people may face higher risk of deportation," reported the news site *CalMatters* (28 April). This particularly affects the overwhelmingly immigrant port truckers. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) should demand that California immediately reinstate those licenses.

As for the government-issued IDs, revolutionary Marxists have no position about what should be listed on them, as this information is particularly for police purposes, but we are emphatically against any changes or requirements that would endanger transgender people, immigrants or any other vulnerable population. The Internationalist Group has fought for driver's licenses for immigrants and we oppose a national identification document, as it would be essentially for repression. What Trump *and the Democrats* are seeking goes way beyond that, including biometric information on so-called "Real IDs." As for sex/gender markers on driver's licenses, there is no legitimate safety reason for them at all. Get rid of them!

Targeting Those Seeking Gender Care, Hospitals, Shelters and Jails

It would be dangerously naïve to believe that bathroom bans and compiling *de facto* lists of trans people through driver's licenses are isolated instances. Instead, this is part of broader efforts to compile lists of transgender people's data, addresses, medical information, etc., in order to erase them from public life.

Thus, for example, the batch of 19 anti-trans measures approved by the Tennessee legislature this spring include: ● defining "immutable" sexes of "only" male or fe-

male based on anatomy at birth; ● requiring sex-segregated restrooms; ● requiring any publicly funded gender transition clinic to pay for "detransition" procedures; ● protecting college groups that anathematize homosexuals and trans people; ● authorizing suing medical professionals for performing gender transition procedures; ● prohibiting government funding of gender transition treatment; ● prohibiting bans on "conversion therapy"; ● prohibiting medical professionals from asking minors questions about gender dysphoria; and ● requiring reporting of any gender transition procedures, therapy or referrals, with the names of medical professionals and details about the individual that could (and in many places, would) make them identifiable.

This is all taking off from the 2023 Tennessee law SB 1 that banned providing puberty blockers or hormone therapy or performing surgery on anyone under age 18 to treat gender dysphoria (while allowing them for other medical purposes). This is the law upheld by the Supreme Court in its June 2025 ruling on *U.S. v. Skrametti* that threatens medical providers with up to 30 years in jail. Interestingly, the last package of transphobic Tennessee laws included declaring June "nuclear family month." Yet for all the talk of upholding parental authority in the latest laws, under SB 1 gender transition measures are illegal even if the parents request them. What this is about is creating a "moral panic" over trans people, like the claim that "illegal immigrants" are "invading the U.S." – transparently nonsensical but politically useful to whip up hysteria.

The whipping up is coming straight from Washington. In May, the Justice Department issued criminal subpoenas seeking "names and files of providers, administrators, accountants, attorneys, volunteers and other personnel involved in what it calls 'sex-rejecting procedures' and their related 'billing or coding activities'" (*Salon*, 22 May). New York University Langone Hospital received a grand jury subpoena demanding this information, as well as "documents sufficient to identify each patient who underwent Sex-Rejecting Procedures." Within days of Trump's 28 January 2025 Executive Order 14187 (grotesquely titled "Protecting Children from Chemical and Surgical Mutilation"), Langone stopped gender care for youth. The Internationalist Group and Revolutionary Internationalist Youth joined hundreds in protesting against this.

Meanwhile, savage new steps by the prison system aim to make conditions there even more barbarous and potentially deadly

for transgender inmates. On February 19, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBP) issued a new policy on "Management of Inmates with Gender Dysphoria." The policy mandates confiscation of "social accommodations" like "cosmetics and clothing, used to alter the person's appearance to align with the person's 'gender identity'"; a ban on hormone therapy for any transgender inmate not already receiving it – and medical "detransitioning" by forced tapering off and discontinuation of hormone therapy for

those currently getting it.¹¹ While partially blocked (for now) by a court order, some trans people in prison have already been "detransitioned." Moreover, if the diktat goes through it will not only affect federal prisons but also the 36 state prison systems that tie their policies closely to federal regulations.

Adding yet another layer of potentially deadly targeting of trans people, the policy, which treats being transgender as a mental disorder, calls for prisons to "treat" it with "psychotherapy, psychotropic medication, or other appropriate medically accepted interventions."¹² So while the government says it won't pay for transgender medical care, it declares that it *will* pay for medical "treatment" of transgender people to try to force them to cease being transgender. As for what the FBP is calling psychotherapy, what they mean is "*conversion therapy*." This grotesque practice, denounced by both the American Psychiatric and Psychological associations, is classed as *torture* by the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCTV) and the UN.¹³ It was, however, OK'd in March by the U.S. Supreme Court in its *Chiles v. Salazar* ruling.

Then, on May 29, the Office of Management and Budget, the departments of War, Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Justice, Labor and Treasury and dozens of other federal agencies issued a proposed "Regulation for Federal Financial Assistance" stating that before receiving federal funds, a grant recipient must pass a "pre-issuance review" to screen against these being used to "fund, promote, encourage, subsidize, or facilitate" what it brands as "gender ideology," including anything from bathroom access and healthcare to HR procedures that might be examples of "deny[ing] the sex binary." Thus, any school, medical facility, etc., failing to adhere to the MAGA line on trans people could have its federal funding blocked. Many hospitals and nonprofits have preemptively restricted transgender medical care.

A key purpose of this method of changing laws by ordering rules changes is to test the waters for police-state rule. And these policies will kill people – through deprivation of needed medical care, sadistic pseudo-medical/psychological torture and suicide, as well as sexual assault and murder when trans people are put in prisons according to their "biological sex at birth," as Trump's 20 January 2025 Executive Order 14168, "Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government," called for. Already a decade ago, a large-scale *2015 U.S. Transgender Survey* reported that 30% of trans people in prison had been physically or sexually assaulted in the last year. In 2024 a report on transgender inmates by the Vera Institute of Justice reported that over half (53%) had experienced sexual assault in their cur-

¹¹ No exception is listed for people with medical conditions that do not allow them to produce sufficient hormones on their own, where depriving them of needed medications can cause their death..

¹² U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons, "Program Statement: Management of Inmates with Gender Dysphoria," 19 February. Also see "The Federal Bureau of Prisons Is Running a Conversion Therapy Program." National Center for LGBTQ Rights, 19 March.

¹³ IRCTV, "It's Torture Not Therapy: A Global Overview of Conversion Therapy," 2020; American Psychological Association, "The Evidence Against 'Conversion Therapy,'" 1 April; Stanford Medicine, "Conversion Practices Linked to Depression, PTSD and Suicide Thoughts," 30 September 2024.

rent sentence.¹⁴ This will clearly get worse as the executive orders and federal rule changes take their toll.

Defense of Immigrants' and Trans Rights in the Fight Against Police-State Repression

The intensifying repression of transgender prison inmates is of particular importance as a far higher percentage of trans people are imprisoned compared to the rest of the population. According to Prison Policy Initiative (4 June 2024), "One in six trans people have been incarcerated at some point, including nearly half of Black trans people. This is compared to about 3% of the total adult U.S. population in 2010 that had ever been in prison, and almost 10% of Black adults." Those numbers will inevitably increase, as the new labyrinthian anti-trans measures take effect, ensnaring trans people in a damned-if-you-do, damned-if-you-don't trap in which, one way or another, they will end up in the claws of "law enforcement" enforcing laws and rules designed to victimize them. Unless the victimizers are stopped.

The avalanche of repressive measures against transgender people at the state level, as well as by federal rules in hospitals and prisons, is being replicated throughout the federal government. And as we have indicated, there is an intimate connection between the war on trans rights and immigrants' rights. Thus, in the drive for mass deportations, as part of the "legal" framework to let the ICE Gestapo snatch immigrants off the street, last September the Supreme Court set the precedent (in a ruling on the case of *Noem v. Vasquez Perdomo*) that the "specific articulable facts" required by the immigration act for immigration agents to have a "responsible suspicion" that a person may be an undocumented immigrant could be that they are speaking Spanish or speaking English with an accent, that they are at a particular location like a bus stop or car wash, their type of work, or their "apparent race or ethnicity."

In March, the State Department issued a rule on "Enhancing Vetting and Combatting Fraud in the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program," saying that the box for "sex" on the form for entering the U.S. must "match the applicant's biological sex at birth, even if that differs from the sex listed on the applicant's foreign passport or other identifying documentation." This lays the basis for accusing transgender people of "fraud or misrepresenting a material fact" in obtaining a visa or other documentation, making a person ineligible to enter the U.S. So if the box says "female" and the person "appears" to be a woman but the birth certificate says "male," they could be accused of "misrepresentation of sex." Or if the application says "male" but the person appears to be a woman they could be held on "reasonable suspicion" of presenting a "fake birth certificate."

This kind of "Catch-22" scrutiny could occur long after the person entered the United States, and even used to invalidate a "green card" (permanent residency ID document). So "looking trans" (whether you are or not) – that is, at variance with what some agent considers the norm for either legally ordained sex checked on a form – could be deemed a "specific articulable fact" to provide a supposedly legal basis for seizing people. It could get someone held for questioning, excluded from entering the U.S. or kicked out of the country.

¹⁴ Vera Institute, *Advancing Transgender Justice: Illuminating Trans Lives Behind and Beyond Bars* (February 2024)



William Hendrix, vice chairman of Kansas Young Republicans, was a communications assistant for state attorney general Kris Kobach until exposé of group chat of Young Republican leaders shot through with fascist themes (gas chambers, support for slavery, "I love Hitler").



Internationalist contingent at a protest outside of NYU Langone in New York City on 3 February 2025, after the hospital began canceling appointments with trans patients under the age of 18.

It could also lead to trans people being abused in immigration detention facilities. Although ICE is required by law to report the number of transgender detainees, it has stopped doing so. And a federal complaint has been filed about a warden at an ICE facility in Louisiana targeting and demeaning trans detainees and assigning them to forced labor (*Newsweek*, 27 September 2025).

And it's not only in immigration matters that this kind of entrapment can occur. A recent (May 6) rule-change proposal by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) calls for changing forms for firearms and explosives so that they "make clear that 'sex' on ATF forms refers to an individual's immutable biological classification as either male or female and does not include the concept of gender identity." It also reiterates that forms shall be filled "under penalties of perjury...." So if a trans person who has changed their ID gender marker wishes to buy a gun, they are faced with two options: 1) input the sex designation assigned to them at birth, which, after being contrasted with their ID, would cause a mismatch and likely denial of sale; or 2) face the threat of a federal perjury charge, a felony that can bring five years in federal prison – now mandated to forcibly "detransition" transgender inmates. This is a clear attempt to scare trans people away from exercising their Second Amendment right to secure firearms as a means of self-defense.

The elaborate legal and repressive framework being erected to deal with a tiny percentage of the population is indicative that this manufactured "crisis" serves a broader agenda. The bigoted executive orders, barrage of anti-trans laws and federal rule changes go together with the use of ICE as a paramilitary force to terrorize immigrants – and the general population. They are central to the drive toward a "Bonapartist" police state, wielding the "imperial presidency" bulked up by Trump's Democratic and Republican predecessors.¹⁵ Glorifying in the sadism of the onslaught against marginalized, vulnerable sectors of society, fascistic elements in the Republican Party have been emboldened,

¹⁵ On "Bonapartism" and the nature of the Trump regime, see "Trumpland, USA: Lurching Toward Authoritarian Rule" and related articles in *The Internationalist* No. 75, January-May 2025.

from Kansas Young Republicans on up to the vice president, JD Vance, as well as outright fascists like the Proud Boys, who see themselves as "Trump's army."

It is crucial that class-conscious workers drive home that the assault on immigrants' and trans rights threatens everyone's democratic rights. And it vital that labor – the organized workers movement – come to the fore in defending those rights. As the banner of ILWU Local 10 in the San Francisco Bay Area on May Day 2024 put it, along with calling for workers action to stop deportations and to stop military cargo to Israel, we need to mobilize workers' power to "Defend the Rights of All of Us." First the racist reactionaries are coming for immigrants and transgender people. Next up are other oppressed and vulnerable populations, and all working people, because the anti-trans crusade is a front for the ruling-class attack on all those it oppresses and exploits. ***And the fight against the transphobic, xenophobic onslaught must be a working-class fight.***

Use Workers' Power in Defense of Trans People

What stands in the way of unchaining the enormous potential power of the multiracial working class? First and foremost, the subordination of labor and the left to the Democratic Party. Many gay, lesbian and trans activists have also looked to the Democrats for support, reeled in by its rhetoric and rightly repulsed by the vile, trans-bashing MAGA Republicans. While the Democratic (Party) Socialists of America (DSA) and most of the "left" are working overtime to refurbish and strengthen illusions in this U.S. imperialist party that twice paved the way for Trump, revolutionary Marxists emphasize that unchaining the power of the working class requires breaking from the Democrats and building a revolutionary workers party with a class-struggle

program to defend all of the oppressed.

Many (by no means all) liberal and even not-so-liberal Democrats do oppose the orgy of reactionary legislation targeting transgender people. Virtually every Democrat in the Kansas and Tennessee legislatures voted against the anti-trans legislation detailed above. Maine governor Janet Mills refused to bow to Trump's threats to strip her state of federal funding unless it banned trans women from women's sports. But when Dems fear that support for trans rights might cost them at the ballot box, they duck ... or cave, or even

join the attack. Congressmen Seth Moulton (D-Mass.) and Tom Suozzi (D-NY) openly pander to anti-trans backlash. When push comes to shove, not a few may follow their shameful path.

California governor Newsom takes the cake. (This is the wannabe John F. Kennedy who hails Trump's drive to bury the Cuban Revolution, grotesquely claiming that cutting off Cuba's oil is bringing "democracy" to the embattled island.) By inviting the notorious trans-hater Charlie Kirk onto his podcast, and declaring he was "completely aligned" with Kirk in opposition to trans athletes in women's sports, Newsom was cynically trying to ingratiate himself with the bigots. More typical is Kamala Harris, who during the 2020 presidential primary campaign said she supported "necessary care for gender transition, including surgical care" for inmates of federal prisons, but when she came under fire for this in the 2024 presidential campaign would only say that she would "follow the law." Of course, the current attacks on trans people are all "legal."

While looking to the Democrats to protect transgender people is a dead end, the Supreme Court's 2025 *Skrmetti* and 2026 *Jackson/Hecox* rulings should make clear that faith in the capitalist *injustice* system such as Harris was trying to foster is (and

always was) entirely misplaced. The Court was not stopped by the fact that the bans on gender care for minors are blatantly discriminatory.¹⁶ And even in liberal bastions like California and New York, gains in trans rights are all too easily reversible. Last year, the shutdown of Children's Hospital Los Angeles's Center for Transyouth Health and Development and NYU Langone's Transgender Youth Health Program, and ending gender transition surgeries for trans youth under the age of 19 (a very rare occurrence) by Kaiser Permanente California and Stanford University, took place in "blue" states where transgender medical care is still legal.

Powerful forces are behind the assault on trans rights. For the Christian nationalists (like the ADF, which designed many of the reactionary laws and won approval from the Supreme Court) and evangelical Christian rightists, defense of transgender people is an insult to their god. Family Research Council president Tony Perkins said supporters of "transgenderism" "follow neither god nor science, but rather the lies of a radical and a destructive ideology." The Southern Baptist Convention in a 2014 resolution "On Transgender Identity" proclaimed, "Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles as ordained by God are part of the created order," and "intersexuality" and "gender identity confusion" are the result of "human fallenness." This is a comparatively "mild" expression of the virulent transphobia for which the very existence of trans people is an abomination.

Moreover, the anti-trans hysteria campaign is the godchild of racist reaction. The Southern Baptist church was created in 1845 to defend the institution of slavery as supposedly divinely ordained, and after the Civil War it continued to uphold white supremacy. We have noted how the "Christian right" sought an "an emotionally charged issue to stir people up" to defend the tax exemption of whites-only "Christian academies," first whipping up anti-gay bigotry in the 1970s before latching onto

¹⁶ Hormone therapy with testosterone or estrogen used in gender transition are even more widely used by people who align with their "birth sex," particularly by older people who seek to better muscle mass, bone density, energy levels and other medical conditions. But for them it is legal, while for trans people it is being made a ticket to jail.



Mobilize labor's power to defend trans people. Painters Local 10 banner at Portland Pride march, 16 July 2023. Supporters of Class Struggle Workers – Portland and Internationalist Group warn that Democrats won't fight anti-trans bigots.

the issue of abortion in the '80s.¹⁷ These are the same forces that are the bedrock of the trans-bashing crusade today, amplified by the fascistic MAGA rightists who use it as a tool to go after the Democrats and rev up police-state repression. For all their posturing, the racist right doesn't give a damn about women's rights, and wants to turn white women into baby factories.

So along with being paired with the war on immigrants, the war on trans people is closely intertwined with racist reaction, the attacks on women's rights and the crusade to uphold the nuclear family, the central institution of women's oppression. (Hence the Tennessee law making June "nuclear family month.") And as trans people have been targeted by a generalized reactionary offensive, part of a wholesale attack on democratic rights, for Marxists the defense of transgender rights must be part of a class-struggle defense of all the exploited and oppressed. The Internationalist Group calls to **mobilize workers' power** to demand that:

- **trans persons be allowed to use the bathrooms of their choice;**
- **transgender women be allowed to participate in women's sports;**
- **government stay out of medical decisions about gender transition, which should be a matter between the person and their doctor,**

as part of a fight for **high-quality socialized medicine for all.**

Likewise, we call for workers action to:

- **drive out the ICE/Border Patrol Gestapo;**
- **stop immigration raids and deportations,**
- **fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.**

Yet while these are all simple democratic demands, they have only been achieved in the context of social revolution. It was the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Russian Revolution of 1917 that won citizenship rights for all working people, regardless their country of origin. And it was the Bolshevik Revolution that established free abortion on demand and struck down laws against homosexuality.¹⁸ The fight against the repression of transgender, lesbian and gay people is not a sectoral struggle but part of an overall fight to secure democratic rights and uproot capitalist social oppression through the socialist reconstruction of society.

The assault on transgender people is part and parcel of the overall decay and degeneration of capitalist society. To fight it, we need to build a **revolutionary workers party** – which, as Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin wrote, acts as a "tribune" (defender) of the people. Building such a genuinely communist party that champions the cause of all the oppressed in leading the fight for international socialist revolution is the urgent task for those who would put an end to age-old social oppression and banish the spectre of a thermonuclear World War III that threatens the future of humanity. ■

¹⁷ See "Racism and the Deadly Anti-Abortion Crusade," in *The Internationalist* Nos. 67-68, May-October 2022.

¹⁸ See "Gay Rights and Socialist Revolution," *Revolution* No. 4, September 2007 and "Bolshevik Revolution First Legalized Abortion on Demand," *Revolution* No. 22, September 2022. See also "Magnus Hirschfeld: A Pioneer in the Struggle for Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Rights," in *Revolution* No. 16, May 2019.

Dehumanizing Persecution of Trans People in Trump Prisons

As a result of Executive Order 14168, "Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government," which President Donald Trump signed on the first day of his second presidency, the approximately 2,200 trans people in federal custody are not only denied access to gender transition treatment, they are ordered to be housed according to their sex assigned at birth. When the next month the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) informed 14 trans women in women's prisons that they would be transferred to men's prisons, where they would face dramatically high rates of physical abuse and sexual violence, they quickly sued. So far, the BOP has been blocked from carrying this out by seven injunctions issued by a Washington, D.C. judge (a Ronald Reagan appointee).

But stymied (for now) on one front, the gratuitous cruelty freaks populating the Trump administration have found other ways to persecute transgender prisoners. Seven of the 14 trans women plaintiffs are currently held in the Federal Medical Center (FMC), Carswell women's prison located on the Naval Air Station in Fort Worth, Texas. The facility, the BOP's only women's medical center nationwide, has long been known as the "hospital of horrors," subject to repeated investigations. It is infamous for cases of sexual abuse of women inmates, with eleven complaints filed in 2025 alone (*Guardian*, 11 December 2025). At one point in 2020, 500 women prisoners (almost half the total) were infected with COVID and seven died. Notoriously overcrowded, with a design capacity of 926 people, as of August 1 it housed 1,014.

On June 2, a U.S. district judge granted an injunction ordering the BOP to use "separate movement, routing, scheduling, or other measures as necessary to prevent overlap" between the trans women (whom he labeled male) and the other inmates "in housing and shared spaces." So FMC Carswell set up a separate unit to segregate its trans population. Prison authorities soon turned this into an *isolator*, cutting trans prisoners off from other human contact, while under the prying eyes of male guards 24 hours a day.

The website transiticsnews.com gathered descriptions of life in this unit from court filings from several of the women plaintiffs incarcerated there. One of them, Carla Jones, wrote in a July 1 filing:

"I am in this unit at least twenty-three hours a day. It was twenty-four hours a day until recently. I started going to recreation for our only allotted hour outside the unit to try to improve my mental state. But there is no outdoor recreation, and one hour outside the unit is not enough.... I had inquired about taking some classes but was told I cannot participate in instructor-based education classes and instead can only do self-study on the unit....

"My only exposure to the sun or ability to be outdoors is about five to ten

minutes a day when we are escorted and walk to and from the recreation building. Even those brief walks are stressful, as they have to shut down the facility and guards surround us to ensure that none of the other incarcerated women can see us. It is unnecessary and humiliating to be treated this way. They send three guards to escort three people walking to the indoor recreation area to make sure that we cannot cross paths with any other incarcerated women. The only reason we are being treated this way and have lost whatever sense of freedom and humanity we had within prison walls is because we are transgender."

Another one of the women, Mary Doe, reported in a July 17 filing:

"In the first weeks we were in this unit, we were permitted to go outside for recreation once a day, but rather than going to the usual outdoor recreation space that has a track, hula-hoops, volleyballs, basketballs, benches, and my friends, we were only permitted outside on a small patio that is about 15 feet by 10 feet wide. We were not even allowed to go to the corners of the patio because other incarcerated women might see us. There was no equipment on the patio; it was just an empty concrete space."

Carla Jones added that "A small piece of paper covers a portion of the window that looks into the shower area, but [she has] seen guards move that paper aside and was told by one guard that they need to be able to see us at all times."

A third plaintiff, using the pseudonym Emily Doe, in a July 17 filing, wrote:

"I used to spend a lot of time with other incarcerated women, who I saw as my sisters, in a sense. These women were my support system. We would eat meals together, do craft activities together (I especially liked to knit with them), take walks on the track, help each other with our make-up and hair, and generally enjoy each other's company."

Mary Doe added, "I'm only being treated this way because I am a transgender woman."

As these accounts make clear, these women are being subjected to *psychological torture*, cut off from outside human contact, deprived of any possibility of physical or educational activity. This is a deliberate attempt to *break them*, while the cutoff

of gender transition medication, linked with "conversion therapy," is *physical torture*, as has been internationally recognized. The authors of this treatment share the sicko mentality of those who designed the "waterboarding" torture under the George Bush II administration and their perverted underlings who reveled in abusing prisoners at the notorious Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. And they fit right in the Trump gang, whose

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) chief deported immigrants to a notorious torture prison in El Salvador (and then posed in front of it with her \$60,000 Rolex watch).

Abuse of Transgender People in ICE Concentration Camps

Amid the general blackout in the "mainstream media" about the escalating persecution of transgender people through legislation and federal rules changes, very occasionally there is an exceptional mention. One instance is the article, "Trans Migrants in ICE Detention Are Losing Their Rights and Medical Care," by Ana Ley in the *New York Times* (21 August). The article recounts the story of Camila Toro de Paula, a trans woman who made her way to the United States in 2024 and requested asylum because of persecution she suffered in Venezuela. After being seized at 26 Federal Plaza in New York City during a routine appointment at the ICE offices there, she has been held for the past eleven months in a men's detention center in Jena, Louisiana, "where she said she has been assaulted, threatened and deprived of medical care."

The *Times* piece cites the federal policy changes cutting off medical care for transgender immigrants held in the ICE web of concentration camps that are detailed in our article "Anti-Trans Hysteria Fuels Police-State Repression" in this issue. It cites a 2023 [report](#) by the group Immigration Equality that found that "almost all" transgender participants in a survey "said that they were the targets of homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic, racist or other verbal and nonverbal abuse." About half had been put in solitary confinement. The arbitrariness and wanton cruelty of their treatment was highlighted by the DHS justification of Toro de Paula's detention on the grounds that she had been charged with felony assault and possession of a weapon, even though those charges were dismissed and the case sealed. (Her lawyer said she was accused of hitting a man on the head with a skillet in fending off a robber.)



Camila Toro de Paula

New York Times

Alerta Cuba...

sigue de la pagina 32
de EE.UU. La urgente defensa de Cuba depende de **forjar una dirección auténticamente comunista**, y de **extender la revolución a las “entrañas del monstruo” imperialista**, como dijera José Martí.

EE.UU. busca cortar todo comercio con Cuba

Las “Transformaciones económicas y sociales” fueron presentadas por el presidente cubano y primer secretario, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, ante el Comité Central del PCC, y por el miembro del Buró Político y primer ministro, Manuel Marrero Cruz, ante la ANPP, y avaladas explícitamente por el ex presidente Raúl Castro Ruz. Contienen todo un abanico de medidas que van contra la médula del sistema económico socializado. Incluyen: “Transformar las empresas estatales socialistas en sociedad mercantil por acciones o participaciones”, sólo garantizando en las estratégicas que el estado tenga una “presencia mayoritaria”. También la venta de empresas estatales a personas o entidades “nacionales y extranjeras”; el “transitar hacia un modelo de planificación financiera” siguiendo “las señales del mercado”; la introducción de bancos privados. Pone sobre la mesa el monopolio estatal del comercio exterior, y mucho más.

Implementar este guion, como hemos señalado, resultaría en el desmantelamiento de la economía planificada, y en privatizaciones que, dada la ausencia de grandes capitales en Cuba, dentro de poco haría de Cuba otra neocolonia de Estados Unidos. Sin embargo, aunque muy detallado, no tiene una coherencia integral. Se trata de una lista de ofertas que parece más bien un catálogo de bienes raíces a la venta. ¿Ud., dueño de un mipyme,¹ quiere expandir su empresa? Ya puede contratar más de 100 empleados. ¿Ud., señor inversor norteamericano, quiere comprar propiedades para el turismo? Se permite la inversión extranjera hasta en La Habana Vieja, y para que no haya duda, “los negocios inmobiliarios puedan realizar

¹ Micro, pequeñas y medianas empresas.

operaciones de compraventa de unidades residenciales”. Etc., etc. Ahora bien, que se encuentre comprador, es otra cuestión.

Hablando en la cumbre de Caricom² en la isla de St. Kitts el 25 de febrero, el secretario de estado de EE.UU. Marco Rubio dijo acerca de Cuba: “si quieren hacer esas reformas drásticas que abran el espacio tanto para la libertad económica como en algún momento política para el pueblo de Cuba, es algo que evidentemente a Estados Unidos le gustaría ver. Seríamos de ayuda.” Las medidas aprobadas el 17/18 de junio parecen estar hechas a la medida de estos planteamientos. Pero cuando el 16 de marzo el viceprimer ministro Oscar Pérez-Oliva declaró que “Cuba está abierta a mantener una relación comercial fluida con empresas estadounidenses”, el gusano Rubio respondió de inmediato que eso no sería suficiente, que “deben poner gente nueva al mando”. Donald Trump fue más explícito: dijo que Díaz-Canel debe irse.

EE.UU. luego emitió una serie de mandatos que imposibilitan toda relación comercial con Cuba. El 1º de mayo, Trump firmó la Orden Ejecutiva 14404 que impone sanciones a toda persona o empresa que “haya prestado asistencia material, patrocinado o proporcionado apoyo financiero, material o tecnológico, o suministrado bienes o servicios al Gobierno de Cuba”. En particular se enfocó en los sectores de energía, minería y servicios financieros. Apuntó a la empresa minera conjunta Moa Nickel S.A., productora de níquel y cobalto. Su operadora canadiense Sherritt cerró operaciones en la mina en junio. Les dio a los bancos hasta el 5 de junio para cortar relaciones con Fincimex, parte del conglomerado de las fuerzas armadas cubanas GAESA. El 6 de junio dejaron de funcionar en Cuba las tarjetas Visa y Mastercard.

Además del cerco total de combustibles, que ha obligado a diez aerolíneas a cancelar el servicio a la isla, la OE 14404 busca hacer imposible casi todo comercio con Cuba. Ya en mayo, dos de las mayores navieras del mundo, Hapag-Lloyd y CMA CGM, suspen-

² La Comunidad del Caribe, organización interestatal que abarca 15 países de las Antillas, principalmente del Caribe anglófono.

dieron operaciones para el país, como también hicieron las cadenas hoteleras Melilla e Iberostar. El 10 de junio, el secretario de estado Rubio impuso sanciones a la petrolera estatal cubana Cupet. Después de que Cuba autorizara en febrero la importación de petróleo por particulares, lo que advertimos abre la puerta al chantaje imperialista, una empresa floridense, Vanguard Energy, anunció planes de enviar cargamentos de hasta 250,000 barriles en un tanquero. Pero pronto fue obligada a cancelar el proyecto porque el combustible se iba a almacenar en instalaciones alquiladas de la Cupet.

El blanco principal de la Orden Ejecutiva trumpiana es GAESA (Grupo de Administración Empresarial S.A.), un conglomerado comercial dentro de la estructura de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias creado durante el Período Especial de los años 1990 para combatir el cerco económico tendido en torno a Cuba. Tiene una red de instalaciones turísticas (Grupo Gaviota), maneja algunos supermercados y gasolineras, gestiona el puerto de Mariel, todo relacionado con captar divisas. Con un lenguaje tildado como “opaco”, “secreto” y “estado mafioso dentro del estado”, la maquinaria de mentiras imperialista y gusana ha tratado de dibujar a GAESA como un ogro precisamente porque ha sido *un arma clave* para defender a Cuba contra la cruenta *guerra económica* que el imperialismo yanqui ha librado contra ella durante 65 largos años.

Para atraer la deseada inversión extranjera imaginada en las 176 “transformaciones” se necesita la aprobación de Washington. Este aval no se obtuvo, ni se va a obtener, porque *lo que el imperialismo busca es derribar la Revolución Cubana*. Esa es la “lógica” de la ridícula acusación judicial en mayo contra el líder cubano Raúl Castro por el (justificado) derribo del avión de los provocadores “Hermanos al Rescate” en 1996. Luego, el 23 de junio, un vocero de Washington calificó a las 176 medidas cubanas de “muy tardías y, al final, no más que señales de humo superficiales” de La Habana. Asimismo, impusieron nuevas sanciones contra cinco empresas, entre ellas dos que gestionan casi todas las transacciones internacionales de Cuba y una que es la principal agencia de almacenaje para el estado, empresas privadas y extranjeras.

En resumen, las “transformaciones” cubanas no van a tener una acogida positiva por parte del gobierno Trump, y sin eso es casi imposible que puedan atraer la inversión extranjera para aumentar la producción (y la productividad, que depende de la introducción de nueva tecnología). Simplemente para sobrevivir con un mínimo nivel de vida es preciso romper el cerco energético, y cualquier avance exige eliminar o reducir sustancialmente el bloqueo económico que se remonta a comienzos de los años 1960. Una sustancial privatización de la industria, energía, comunicaciones, etc., no va a lograr el supuesto aumento de eficiencia, por muy rígidas que pueden ser las empresas estatales. Y mientras tanto, los despidos en masa y aumentos de precios para artículos de primera necesidad resultantes podrían producir disturbios internos . . . y un éxodo masivo.

Abandono de la economía planificada golpearía a los trabajadores

La dirigencia del PCC insiste una y otra vez en que la finalidad de las 176 medidas es “avanzar en la defensa del so-

cialismo” (Díaz-Canel, en el pleno del Comité Central del PCC, el 17 de junio); es “preservar las conquistas de la Revolución y garantizar la continuidad del socialismo” (el primer ministro Manuel Marrero Cruz, en la ANPP el 18 de junio). “¡No nos proponemos ni jamás estará en nuestros propósitos la restauración del capitalismo en Cuba! Se trata . . . de salvar la Revolución y sus innegables conquistas sociales, porque no renunciaremos nunca a la aspiración mayoritaria de construcción socialista” (Díaz-Canel en el Congreso de la Central de Trabajadores de Cuba [CTC]).³ Ahí mismo habló de salvar “la orientación socialista de la economía”. ¿Aspiración? ¿Orientación? Es la *realidad* de la economía socializada la que está en juego.

En los hechos, las medidas minan los fundamentos del estado obrero. A la importación de combustibles por entidades capitalistas privadas y extranjeras, de la que ya señalamos su peligrosidad, se agrega ahora la facultad para entidades estatales, municipios y cooperativas de exportar, importar y retener ingresos en divisas; el permiso a “personas naturales” (individuos) de hacer “importaciones con carácter comercial, por la vía no comercial”; y el formalizar la “dolarización parcial de la economía”. Aunque se diga que tales medidas “no implica[n] otorgar facultades de comercio exterior”, en realidad atentan contra el monopolio estatal del mismo. Aunado al esfuerzo de fomentar, por múltiples medidas, un sector capitalista (“actores económicos no estatales”) sustancial, el conjunto amenaza los pilares de la economía socializada de Cuba.

Se habla, en las 176 medidas, de “transitar hacia un modelo de planificación financiera, donde el Estado abandona progresivamente la distribución física de recursos, dando mayor participación a las señales del mercado”. Esto equivale al abandono de una economía planificada. La planeación según indicadores financieros no tiene nada de socialista, es practicada por varios países capitalistas. Francia, por ejemplo, la adoptó después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, estableciendo una Comisaría de Planificación que existió hasta el 2006. Aunque tal “planificación indicativa” puede orientar el desarrollo de diferentes sectores a mediano o largo plazo, en el funcionamiento diario de la economía, serían el mercado y la ley del valor (capitalista) los que determinen qué producir, y no una decisión basada en necesidades sociales.

Dado que el monopolio estatal del comercio exterior, la planificación económica y el sector estatal serían debilitados y puestos en peligro bajo el impacto de las 176 medidas, ¿cómo es que la burocracia que dirige el estado cubano puede insistir en que estarían defendiendo o salvando al socialismo? Cuando hablan del “socialismo”, casi siempre señalan a la educación y la salud públicas, que sí son grandes conquistas de la Revolución Cubana, y un faro para toda América Latina. Sin embargo, aunque son logros de una economía socializada y el PCC jura que se mantendrá la gratuidad, eso de por sí no es incompatible con un capitalismo marca socialdemócrata, y en realidad estas joyas y objetos de orgullo serían socavados en una economía regida por el mercado.

Los dirigentes del PCC también prometen que van a velar por la “justicia social”,

³ *Trabajadores*, 29 de junio.

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que las transformaciones producirán “más riquezas” que van a distribuir “con la mayor justicia social que se pueda lograr” (Díaz-Canel a la CTC). Sin embargo, no hay ninguna garantía de que los cambios libremercadistas aumentarán la producción mientras es seguro que producirán mayor desigualdad (es incluso su intención, en el CC él mismo llamó a “producir con equidad, no con igualitarismos”). Y la eliminación de subsidios a productos de primera necesidad, la introducción de salarios diferenciados y el aumento de despidos serán, por definición, **actos de injusticia social que todos los trabajadores con conciencia de clase y auténticos comunistas deben resistir con la acción obrera**. Hablando sin rodeos, las promesas de riquezas futuras no dan de comer.

Resistir paso a paso la entrega de la economía socializada

Mientras la soñada ola de inversiones extranjeras no se va a concretar, lo que sí viene son la eliminación de los subsidios, los despidos, el alza feroz de los precios para alimentos y otras necesidades: estos son ataques contra los trabajadores, que hay que rechazar y resistir. Las medidas que realmente urgen van en la dirección contraria: movilizar la creatividad y el poder de los trabajadores, luchando por el **control obrero** en las empresas para imponer la voluntad del colectivo en contra de aquellos gerentes pequeñoburgueses que sueñan con privatizarlas (o aliándose con los jefes que rechacen la privatización). Hay que trabar con la movilización obrera a los capitalistas extranjeros que busquen comprar a precios de ganga lo creado con el esfuerzo y sudor de los trabajadores cubanos. ¿Hay sospecha de corrupción en GAESA? ¿Que una comisión obrera inspeccione sus libros de contabilidad *defendiendo la economía socializada*!

Díaz-Canel dijo en el Congreso de la CTC, “Nadie hasta hoy explicó, mucho menos probó en la práctica, cómo se construye el socialismo en una nación bajo las condiciones de asedio que soporta Cuba por parte de la mayor potencia del mundo desde los inicios mismos del triunfo de la Revolución...” Esto va al nudo del asunto. No se puede “construir el socialismo en un solo país” según la tesis de Stalin, y sobre todo en un pequeño país a las puertas del imperia-lismo yanqui, sino que se requiere una lucha obrera *internacional*, que se extienda a toda América Latina y hasta el corazón del impe-rialismo norteamericano. Una resistencia de los trabajadores en Cuba en contra de medi-das semejantes a las que están imponiendo a los obreros, campesinos e indígenas en Boli-via podría inspirar una respuesta proletaria en todo el continente.

Aunque Trump ha impuesto un blo-queo total a Cuba, no tiene “todas las fi-chas”, como suele decir. El mandatario en Washington quiere repetir su golpe de mano venezolano, cuando secuestró al presidente Nicolás Maduro y se adueñó del petróleo del país. Pensó en repetir la “hazaña” en contra de Irán, con un resultado desastroso para la hegemonía de EE.UU. Y Venezuela no es igual a Cuba. El gobierno “bolivariano” era, y es, un régimen nacionalista burgués, ba-sado en una economía capitalista con todas las contradicciones que esto conlleva. En cambio, Cuba es, y ha sido durante décadas, un estado obrero, aunque deformado por el gobierno burocrático, con una economía so-cializada. El estado cubano tiene una cohe-rencia que al régimen venezolano le faltó.

El régimen de Stalin y sus herederos en la Unión Soviética, luego de siete décadas en el

poder, finalmente sucumbió a la presión eco-nómica y militar del imperialismo en 1989-1992. Contra la ilusoria política nacionalista del estalinismo, León Trotsky –codirigente junto con Lenin de la Revolución de Octubre de 1917– esbozó la perspectiva de la *revolución permanente*. Ésta sostiene que en países bajo el yugo imperialista, hasta las tareas democrá-ticas, como una verdadera independencia na-cional, sólo pueden lograrse mediante la toma del poder por el proletariado, apuntalado por el campesinado, y la extensión de la revolución socialista a los países imperialistas mismos. Los auténticos trotskistas siempre defendieron a la URSS, como hoy defienden a Cuba, China, Vietnam y Corea del Norte contra el asedio im-perialista y la contrarrevolución.

El gobierno cubano es burocrático, no cabe duda. El haber aprobado las 176 medidas que implican un cambio fundamental en el sistema económico cubano entero, con voto unánime, en sendas reuniones del CC del PCC y de la ANPP, en sólo 48 horas, es prueba inapelable de ello. Una verdadera **de-mocracia obrera revolucionaria** habría dado lugar a un vivo debate sobre estas “transfor-maciones” que no pueden sino causar estragos en los presupuestos familiares de los trabaja-dores. En Bolivia, al decretar en diciembre de 2025 un *paquetazo* que eliminó subsidios a los combustibles, el gobierno reaccionario subió el salario mínimo a un monto totalmen-te inadecuado de Bs. 3.300, equivalente de US\$316. En el *paquetazo* cubano, el nuevo salario mínimo será CUP 3,120, equivalente a US\$5, ¡totalmente insuficiente para satisfacer las necesidades básicas a precio de mercado!

Entonces, si es que los trabajadores real-mente tienen “voz y voto”, como sostuvo Díaz-Canel ante el Congreso de la CTC, si determinan el rumbo del país, como debe ser en un estado obrero, entonces para los auténti-cos comunistas es **imprescindible oponerse y organizar el rechazo a estas medidas antio-breras**, que pretenden vender el patrimonio de los trabajadores al capital. Pero una resistencia sería contra esta política desastrosa no puede ser meramente reactiva, tiene que presentar una alternativa. Para defender la economía socializada y las conquistas de la Revolución Cubana, es necesaria una **revolución políti-ca proletaria, basada en una asamblea de consejos obreros**. Y el punto central de tal política marxista revolucionaria es que *no hay solución tan solo en el estrecho marco de una Cuba asediada al punto de la asfixia*. Hay que **escalar la lucha al nivel internacional**. Para empezar, toca **apelar a los trabajadores de América Latina a exigir a sus gobiernos –e imponer con la acción obrera– el envío in-mediato de petróleo a Cuba**.

Ante la postura capituladora de la capa gobernante, los verdaderos comunistas deben utilizar brechas en el muro burocrático para defender los intereses de la clase obrera y la Re-volución. En una intervención en el Congreso de la CTC, Díaz-Canel admitió que “dentro del pueblo” hay “personas que tienen dudas y que están preocupadas con el impacto que las medi-das puedan tener en la construcción socialista”, afirmando que “es para bien” porque también “están defendiendo la Revolución”. Entonces, cuando en debates sobre cesantías, por ejemplo, los burócratas busquen callar la oposición, vale citar esto. Cuando el primer secretario del PCC afirma que “la Empresa Estatal Socialista ... seguirá siendo el pilar fundamental de la eco-nomía” (discurso en el CC), se puede recordar-les estas palabras cuando traten de venderlas (o partes de ellas) a postores capitalistas.

Esto no significa que haya que rechazar toda privatización menor: la estatización en

Cuba a veces llegó a un extremo y sectores pequeñoburgueses pueden hacer un aporte valioso a la construcción socialista. A veces sí hay que dar un paso atrás, como en la NEP (Nueva Política Económica) de los años 1920 en la URSS. Pero esa política *temporal*, que se ha citado hasta el cansancio para justificar reformas pro capitalistas en Cuba, está a años luz de las 176 medidas que atentan contra el núcleo de la economía colectivizada. Hay que combatir paso a paso estas *contrarrefor-mas* que perjudican a los trabajadores y be-nefician a los capitalistas que explotan su tra-bajo para enriquecerse. Y hay que subrayar la necesidad de adoptar una política global que es la única que puede salvar a la Revolución Cubana: la política de Lenin y Trotsky de **la revolución socialista internacional**.

Retomar el programa de Lenin y Trotsky

En cuanto a ¿qué hacer? en la famosa frase de Lenin, la respuesta no puede ser el retorno a una edad de oro castrista, como pensarían fidelistas y guevaristas decepcio-nados, de los que debe haber muchos entre los que tienen dudas sobre las nuevas medi-das. Hay que ser claros, *la aprobación de las 176 “transformaciones” es la declaración de bancarrota política del Partido Comunis-ta*. No solo niega la línea que ha defendido durante décadas (con todo y su carácter fun-damentalmente estalinista), sino que echaría por la borda los intereses más fundamentales de los trabajadores cubanos. Sin embargo, hay cientos de miles de comunistas dentro del PCC, y también izquierdistas no afilia-dos, que desean con todo su corazón defen-der la Revolución a la que han dedicado sus vidas. Con ellos queremos debatir, porque sí hay una salida revolucionaria, una alternativa al callejón sin salida esta-linista, y ese camino es el de **retomar el programa internacionalista de Le-nin y Trotsky**, el progra-ma de Octubre Rojo.

La Liga por la IV In-ternacional, cuyos funda-dores eran dirigentes y cua-dros de la LCI cuando ésta era la voz del trotskismo revolucionario, continua-mos el programa de la ten-dencia espartaquista que la renacida LCI de estos días ha abandonado casi por completo. Es nuestra la historia de los auténti-cos trotskistas que com-batimos la reunificación capitalista de Alemania, propugnando en la RDA, el estado obrero deforma-do del este, una revolución política proletaria para po-der luchar en ambos lados de la frontera de la Guerra Fría a favor de una Alema-nia Roja de consejos obre-ros en unos Estados Uni-dos Socialistas de Europa. También luchamos hasta el final en la URSS en contra de la contrarrevolución de Yeltsin-Bush. En ambos casos, nos dirigimos a cua-dros de los PCs estalinis-tas, y también a militares, que querían luchar por el auténtico comunismo. Lo fundamental de este programa revolucionario

e internacionalista que defendimos en aquel entonces es crucial hoy en día con respecto a la defensa de Cuba (y también de China, que sigue siendo el blanco central de la campaña bélica imperialista).

Cuando hablamos de la extensión inter-nacional de la revolución, es importante que quienes dentro y fuera de la isla sitiada que quieren defenderla comprendan el enorme impacto que tuvo la Revolución Cubana, desde el Cono Sur, México y todo el Caribe hasta Estados Unidos y Europa, y también África y muchas otras partes del mundo. Una lucha intrépida de los trabajadores contra el abandono de la economía socializada y la entrega de las conquistas de la revolución a sus enemigos jurados, contra la conversión de la isla rebelde en un estado cliente, una neocolonia del Tío Sam, podría inspirar a una nueva generación de jóvenes luchadores alre-dedor del mundo, a una clase obrera bajo los embates de las campañas rompesindicatos incesantes y racistas, y a la población de los países imperialistas y los pueblos oprimidos acosados por guerras imperialistas.

La responsabilidad principal de hacer posible la perspectiva de la *revolución so-cialista internacional* recae en los que lu-chan en los países imperialistas que asedian a Cuba, en EE.UU. y también Europa; y en los países de América Latina, donde los go-biernos capitalistas –incluso los de México y Brasil que en el pasado han adoptado la pose de “amigos de Cuba”– se han inclina-do ante las amenazas del saqueador yanqui Trump y son cómplices de la estrangulación energética de Cuba. ***Es urgente la movili-zación obrera internacional para romper el bloqueo asfixiante***, y la lucha por ***forjar partidos comunistas como los bolchevi-ques de Lenin y Trotsky***. ■

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¡Acción obrera internacional para romper el bloqueo energético!

¡Alerta Cuba!

Es la hora cero para defender la Revolución

El siguiente artículo es reproducido de Revolución Permanente n° 4, agosto de 2026, el periódico del Grupo Internacionalista, sección mexicana de la Liga por la IV Internacional.

El 17 y 18 de junio, con una prisa alarmante, el alto mando del Partido Comunista de Cuba (PCC) presentó, votó e hizo aprobar por la Asamblea Nacional Popular (ANPP) un guion de “transformaciones económicas y sociales” que, si son aplicadas, aun parcialmente, podrían desatar un frenesí de privatizaciones que amenazaría los cimientos y las conquistas históricas de la Revolución Cubana. Sin embargo, la posible aplicación de estas medidas es una interrogante mayor para un país bajo asedio de la potencia imperialista más poderosa del mundo, un país que carece de divisas, en donde no hay capital para invertir y, en primerísimo lugar, donde no hay combustible. Resulta obvio que las 176 medidas son una oferta para plegarse a las exigencias del gobierno de Donald Trump, pero no hay ningún indicio de que el destinatario esté interesado. Muy por el contrario.

El hecho es que el imperialismo yanqui está haciendo lo posible para someter a la isla a la asfixia energética mientras insiste en un “cambio de régimen”. Continúa así la política que ha sido la constante de todas las administraciones en Washington desde 1960: arrasar el “peligro comunista” a sus puertas. Es difícil vislumbrar que las inversiones, incluso compras de empresas estatales, se produzcan con el Partido Comunista al mando. Los gusanos contrarrevolucionarios de Miami nunca reconocerán los derechos de propiedad de nadie que haya tratado con los mandatarios actuales. En cambio, resulta fácil comprender los estragos que causarían los despidos y la eliminación de subsidios de productos, previstos por las “transformaciones”. Por muy insuficientes que sean los suministros de la libreta de abastecimiento, son esenciales.

El pueblo cubano se encuentra hoy entre la espada del Comando Sur estadounidense y la pared de la asfixia energética. Las medidas aprobadas por el gobierno sobrepasan con mucho una “reforma”, son la negación de la economía socializada. Re-



Manifestantes en La Habana, al amanecer del 1° de mayo de 2026. Cientos de miles salieron a la calle en el Día Internacional de los Trabajadores para desafiar al bloqueo, marchando frente a la embajada de EE.UU.

Las 176 medidas: amenaza de restauración capitalista

¡Rechazar las privatizaciones! ¡Control obrero, ya!

La disyuntiva: La burocracia cede a la presión imperialista

La clave: Construir una verdadera oposición comunista

sultan del chantaje imperialista, no de la ineficiencia de la industria estatal desprovista de insumos. Serán los trabajadores quienes paguen el precio de la privatización, incremental o galopante. Por eso mismo hay que organizar la oposición a ella desde dentro del movimiento obrero. Habrá, seguro, resistencia de parte de los jefes. Se plantearía entonces una crisis política que es urgente enfrentar *ahora*, antes que sea demasiado tarde. Su resolución dependerá de ampliar el debate a la clase obrera en su conjunto y a todos los comprometidos con la Revolución.

Cada una de las 176 medidas requiere legislación u otra acción para su aplicación. Cuando se habla cínicamente de despidos (“los trabajadores que cesan el vínculo laboral”) se especifica que sea “previa evaluación en el órgano colegiado de dirección, de común acuerdo con la organización sindical y análisis en la asamblea de afiliados y trabajadores”. Entonces habrá que darles fuerte en reuniones del colectivo

y, ante la negativa de los directivos, imponer el **control obrero**. Como los problemas de suministros que acechan a la economía cubana no se resolverán al nivel de una sola empresa, se plantearía la necesidad de formar **comités de planta** o de lugar de trabajo, de unirlos en **consejos obreros para defender las conquistas de la Revolución** y de convocar una **asamblea nacional de trabajadores de la economía socializada**.

Hay que hacer patente que sí hay una alternativa a la rendición: *luchar*. Y ante una crisis desatada por una arremetida imperialista, esta lucha tiene que ser, ante todo, *internacional*. Por muy valientes que son los trabajadores cubanos –lidiando con condiciones infernales, con apagones constantes, a veces de más de 24 horas en toda la isla, con escasez y faltas de todo– para vencer a un enemigo despiadado **hay que movilizar las fuerzas de la clase obrera en toda América**. Más allá

del sádico Trump, son responsables del calvario del pueblo cubano los presidentes “progresistas” de Brasil, Lula da Silva, y de México, Claudia Sheinbaum, que se han rehusado a enviar petróleo a la asediada isla. Los revolucionarios proletarios y trabajadores con conciencia de clase del hemisferio entero deben movilizarse para romper el bloqueo energético a Cuba: **¡urge acción obrera para enviar combustible a Cuba, ya!**

La defensa de Cuba requiere también **luchar por la independencia política de clase de los trabajadores**. Aunque muchos “amigos de Cuba” y gran parte de los dirigentes cubanos añoran la época de Barack Obama, cuando el presidente de EE.UU. viajó a La Habana, su gobierno no levantó las sanciones que han asfixiado la economía de la isla. El Partido Demócrata siempre ha sido y seguirá siendo un pilar del imperialismo yanqui, persiguiendo los mismos objetivos fundamentales que John F. Kennedy: la subyugación de Cuba al capital imperialista. También en América Latina, la política de *frentes populares* con sectores burgueses de muchas campañas de “solidaridad con Cuba” puede obstaculizar una solidaridad *efectiva* en momentos decisivos. En cambio,

la resistencia al imperialismo en cualquier parte del mundo ayuda a Cuba (como el que Trump esté empantanado en su guerra contra Irán le dificulta atacar militarmente a la isla).

La agobiante crisis cubana exige una **respuesta política revolucionaria**. Las 176 medidas son la respuesta desesperante de los mandatarios del *burocráticamente deformado estado obrero cubano*, que no ven alternativa a la claudicación ante la fuerza económica superior del imperio del norte. Con su visión nacionalista, han seguido el imposible sueño estalinista de “coexistencia pacífica” con el imperialismo, el corolario del dogma del “socialismo en un solo país”, antítesis del programa leninista de la revolución socialista internacional. Lo que resultó imposible para la Unión de Repúblicas Socialistas Soviéticas (URSS), el país más grande del mundo, es aún menos factible para una pequeña nación a “sólo 90 millas”

sigue en la página 30

Retomar el programa de Lenin y Trotsky!