Protesters challenge war profiteers’ summit

By John Parker

Austin, Sept. 21 – We gathered last night, coming from Baltimore, Los Angeles and Denver, at the hotel in Austin, Texas – 12 minutes away from the Austin Convention Center where the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) was holding its “Future Forces” conference.

The NDIA gathered merchants of death like Lockheed, General Dyna- mic, Raytheon and other weapons manufacturers salivating over the prospect of billions more additional dollars to add to the $70 billion already promised for war in Ukraine. Ukrainian officials and military officers, including President Volodymyr Zelensky himself, were scheduled to attend this conference – some in person, some virtually – to push for more weapons to be manufactured to make up for those already being used to target the Russian, Lugansk and Donetsk militaries and to target civilians, especially in the Donbass region.

People could be seen on the faces of Ukrainian military officers entering and exiting the conference, the last thing they expected to see were activists chanting: “Hey, hey, ho ho, war profiteers have got to go!” and “Biden, Biden, can’t you see – we don’t want a World War III.”

The protest was initiated by the Socialist Unity Party. Many activists from SUP, Freedom Road Socialist Organization, Dallas Anti-War Committee, Austin Students for a Democratic Society and other unaffiliated activists were also surprised at the overwhelmingly positive reception from residents and those working near the Austin Convention Center.

Paul Tardie, who decided to come over after seeing the protest from across the street, said, “Thanks for doing this!” He said that he was surprised at the overwhelmingly positive reception.

Said Sharon Black of the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly: “We need money for food, housing and infrastructure to rebuild our cities. We need to be fighting for abortion rights and trans rights, not for U.S./NATO proxy wars. Biden needs to stop the Starbucks and Amazon union busters, not spend billions on war.”

What we found out today is that there are a lot of people who now remain quiet, due to the perceived backlash for challenging the lies from the Pentagon and the corporate media about the U.S. war on Russia. They remain quiet because they have a different view.

From the conversations we had with some of them today, we learned that many more than we realized do understand what is really going on – from the Nazi infiltration of the military and gov- ernment of Ukraine, to the war’s billions of dol- lars in profits for the military-industrial complex.

More importantly, we discovered that when we mobilize and make our rejection of these lies and this war visible through protest – people will find their voices and join us.

The Donbass referendum and blood on Biden’s hands

By Melinda Butterfield

On Sept. 21, U.S. President Joe Biden stood before the 77th United Nations General Assembly and said with a straight face: “If nations can pursue their imperial ambitions without consequences, then we put at risk everything this institution stands for... You cannot seize a nation’s terri- tory by force.”

The Oxford English Dictionary defines projec- tion as “the unconscious transfer of one’s own desires or emotions to another.” Or, in this case, one’s own actions.

Biden’s remarks were subject to widespread ridicule on social media.

But many people who recognize the hypocrisy of a U.S. president condemning others’ alleged “imperial ambitions” may not fully understand how this slander was directed at the embattled people of the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics (DPR and LPR) of the Donbass region, who have been subject to eight and half years of unrelent- ing war since the 2014 U.S.-sponsored coup in Ukraine.

While Biden was in New York gracing world leaders with his comedy stylings and attempting to whip up a new wave of war frenzy against Russia and China, activists from around the U.S. gathered in Austin, Texas, to protest a conference of the biggest U.S. military-industrial corpora- tions, including Raytheon Technologies, Lock- heed Martin and General Dynamics.

Ukrainian President, U.S. tool, and war crim- inal Volodymyr Zelensky was the invited guest of honor of the National Defense Industrial As- sociation (NDIA). He only appeared virtually, but Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Volodymyr Havrylov was in Austin. Havrylov joined the cho- rus of U.S. officials and billionaire war profiteers, encouraging an unprecedented speedup of weap- ons production (and profits).

The Biden administration and Congress have committed $70 billion in war aid to Ukraine so far this year.

Thanks to these esteemed folks, on Monday, Sept. 19, another awful massacre occurred in Do- netsk, the capital city of the Donetsk People’s Re- public. At least nine people were killed and five more wounded when a Ukrainian shell hit a bus stop and destroyed a nearby market. As usual, the target was an entirely civilian area.

At first, rescue workers thought more people had been killed, Donetsk News Agency reported, due to the large number of body fragments.”

On Tuesday, Sept. 20, a school and several res- idential buildings in Donetsk were damaged by Ukrainian fire. A civilian was wounded. The next day, a hospital in the same city was hit.

Now it’s Thursday, Sept. 22. Another mass
Railroad workers have enough

By Stephen Millies

President Biden announced a tentative agreement on Sept. 15 between the railroad monopolies and unions representing 150,000 railroad workers. It still has to be voted upon by union members.

The terms may include a 24% increase in wages over four years and a retroactive pay package. Railroad bosses are notorious for agreeing to new contracts years after the old one expired.

A big issue is not being penalized for taking off work to see a doctor. None of these items have been officially disclosed. Everything had to be clawed out of the railroad outfits.

Railroad workers have been under attack for decades. While there were two million workers employed on U.S. railways in 1920, their number is now less than 175,000.

The capitalist economy would still grind to a halt without their labor. Wheat, corn, lumber, steel, cars, chemicals and coal are shipped by rail. So are many other items.

The elimination of almost all passenger trains outside of Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor may lessen the railroad industry’s visibility. Deindustrialization, especially the closing of many steel mills, has cost thousands of railroad jobs.

Yet globalization depends on freight trains carrying double-stacked containers from seaports to their destination. The seven big U.S. and Canadian “class 1” railroads hauled in $27 billion of net income last year.

That’s more than twice as much as what these railroads paid in wages. Meanwhile, CSX CEO James Foote raked in $20 million.

These vast profits don’t prevent rail bosses from turning the screws even tighter on workers. Earlier this year BNSF arbitrarily imposed a new attendance policy without any consultation with unions.

Workers are being threatened with being fired for going to a doctor or even a hospital visit. Forget about taking your child to the clinic.

BNSF is completely owned by the Berkshire Hathaway conglomerate, whose CEO Warren Buffett has a $94.6 billion fortune.

Most transportation workers don’t have Monday through Friday work weeks. Neither do millions of workers in hospitals, restaurants and other 24/7 workplaces.

Many freight engineers and conductors are on call with no set work schedule. They may be forced, along with other railroaders, to be away from their families for a week or more.

Yet just their demand for more sick days, even if unpaid, was fought by railroad companies.

Railroad lobby lies

The Association of American Railroads has for decades been spreading lies about railroad workers. The AAR called safety rules “featherbedding.” Train crews were slashed.

Railroad companies want to operate lengthy freight trains with just one worker. Or none at all, with the trains operated by remote control.

The tragic result of these cutbacks was the Lac-Mégantic railroad disaster in Quebec, where 47 people were killed in 2013. This runaway train had just a one-person crew.

Railroad capitalists aren’t satisfied with getting rid of 1.3 million jobs over the last 75 years and tearing up 100,000 miles of track. They got rid of most passenger trains before dumping Amtrak.

These money bags have a new scheme misleadingly called “precision scheduled railroading.” It destroyed 45,000 railroad jobs in the last six years, a 29% cut in employees.

Surface Transportation Board Chair Martin Oberman said that the class 1 outfits have “cut labor below the bone... In order to make up for the shortage of labor, they are over-working and abusive the workforces they have.”

Trains have increased in length to as much as two miles or more. Railroad yards have been abandoned or downsized. Even the big capitalists who are railroad shippers are angry at the decline in service.

According to the Surface Transportation Board, the class 1 outfits paid out $96 billion in dividends and stock buy-backs over the last 10 years. That’s far more than the $136 billion that railroads spent on new equipment and maintaining the right-of-way.

For almost two centuries the government has lavished subsidies upon the railroads. The latest example is the $4 trillion the feds spent on positive train control, a safety system that was decades overdue.

The most notorious of these handouts were the vast land grants stolen from Indigenous nations. Custer had it coming and he died for the Northern Pacific railroad, now part of BNSF.

Thousands of miles of track were laid by enslaved Africans, both before and after the Civil War. The “steel-driving man” John Henry was a prisoner who was worked to death building the Chesapeake and Ohio railway, now part of CSX.

Warren Buffett needs to pay reparations.

New book coming soon: U.S. proxy war in Ukraine and Donbass

Articles and interviews, 2013-2022

By Melinda Butterfield

The military conflict in Ukraine didn’t start with Russia’s intervention in Feb. 2022. After a U.S.-backed coup in 2014, Ukraine waged a genocidal war against the people of the Donbass region (Donetsk and Lugansk) for eight years, while repressing internal opposition. Learn the truth behind Washington’s multi-billion-dollar proxy war against Russia in this collection of articles written as events unfolded.

Melinda Butterfield is co-editor of Struggle-La Lucha newspaper. In 2014, she visited Crimea, where she met with exiled Ukrainian anti-fascists, and was deported from Ukraine at gunpoint. In 2016, she went to the front line in the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics.

Paperback or Kindle https://tinyurl.com/vwarcv7

The Social Evolution of Humanity Marx and Engels were right by Bob McCubbin

This study of the evolution of humanity focuses on human social/sexual relations and, in particular, the changing social status of women. It offers a selection of scientific evidence that updates and augments the viewpoint expressed in Frederick Engels’ masterful work, “Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.”

McCubbin is the author of “Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View.” Published in 1976, during the first wave of the modern LGBTQ2S movement, McCubbin’s unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of how LGBTQ2S oppression developed.
New Orleans abortion rights protest blocks busy Bourbon St.

By Gregory E. Williams

Sept. 10—Today the Louisiana Abortion Rights Action Committee held a demonstration and march downtown. Signs and hand-outs read “Same wages, lower the rent, abortion access now” highlighting the intersection of all these issues affecting poor and working people. Access is a working-class issue.

The action was endorsed by Workers Voice Socialist Movement, Socialist Unity Party, Women In Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha and Louisiana Workers Councils.

Speakers began with addresses outside the Louisiana Supreme Court building on Royal Street.

Gavrielle Gemma of the WVSMS said that “there is a right-wing movement that wants to protect the accumulation of vast wealth and income inequality. They see (this moment) as an opportunity to take away everything—from workers, from women, from everyday people, just so they can be rich.”

“Every movement has a beginning and a time when it seems as if it is not strong. But the people are strong. Vote for whoever you want; it won’t change the situation. Organize. People fighting back will change this city.”

After the talks, the crowd began marching through the French Quarter, chanting, “Not the church, not the occupation. It’s more than the State Department. It’s more than the Wall Street bankers and the military-industrial complex.”

The escalating billions for the imperialist war, the Wall Street bankers and the military-industrial complex can only be countered by organizing opposition. The U.S. can only be stopped by resistance and solidarity.

Biden adds billions in Ukraine ‘aid,’ pushing total to $70 billion

By Gary Wilson

The people of Jackson, Mississippi, have toxic sludge coming out of their kitchen faucets. In some neighborhoods, there isn’t enough water pressure to have running water. They’re gotten, at most, the distracted attention of President Joe Biden.

Jackson Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba says it will take $1 billion to fix the city’s water plant and another $1 billion to fix the sewer system. The Biden administration’s response? Last January, they promised to loan the state of Mississippi $259 million over 5 years for water “improvements.” (Reminder: these loans from the federal government must be paid back with interest.)

The people of Jackson, a majority-Black city that has been underdeveloped for years. With the new crisis in Jackson’s water system, the current spending bill came from the Biden administration.

One joker suggested that if the city of Jackson declared itself a part of Ukraine, you could check whether it would be in the mail tomorrow. The joke isn’t that far off.

$13.7 billion ‘slipped in’

Andrew Lautz in Responsible Statecraft reports that the Biden administration has “slipped in” another $13.7 billion weapons package into a routine spending bill that Congress must pass to keep the government open past Sept. 30.

“If Congress accedes to the Biden administration’s request, then the U.S. government will have committed nearly $69 billion in taxpayer funds to Ukraine in just six short months,” the report says.

“The latest request from President Biden includes almost half of the total funding to the Department of Defense ($7.2 billion) and the other half to the Departments of State and Energy ($6.5 billion). This is in line with the first Ukraine aid package Congress passed ($13.6 billion) which included $6.5 billion for DoD and $6.8 billion for State) and the second, much larger aid bill Congress passed ($41.6 billion total, including $21 billion for DoD and $19 billion for State).”

If the Biden request passes as is, then total U.S. war spending comes to an estimated $85 billion over 80% of the workforce, banning strikes or picket lines, and tearing up existing union contracts. Zelensky signed the law in the last week of August.

Zelensky’s vicious anti-labor laws have been compared to the anti-labor repression of Chile’s fascist Pinochet regime.

Biden announced at the Stock Exchange a massive $400 billion state selloff, inviting Wall Street’s imperialist capitalists to exploit Ukraine’s resources and low-paid labor.

Zelensky is following the Wall Street appearance with a show prepared for a major U.S. military-industrial conference on Sept. 21 in Austin, Texas, hosted by the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA). Oleksii Reznikov, Ukraine’s minister of defense, is also scheduled to speak.

NDIA includes defense industry giants like Raytheon Technologies, Lockheed Martin and General Dynamics.

Eight defense contractors — including Raytheon, Lockheed and General Dynamics — attended an April Pentagon meeting to discuss how the U.S. could increase arms production for the Ukraine proxy war. “This should be sufficient to set the course for the anti-imperialist movement. The U.S.–NATO proxy war is being expanded. It can only be countered by organizing opposition to the imperialist war,” the Wall Street bankers and the military-industrial monopolies behind it.
Fear of an educated working class

By Stephen Millies

Former U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer didn’t have to worry about student loans when she graduated from Brooklyn College in 1969. Black student enrollments then comprised over 90% of the students in the City University of New York system. Nobody had to spend a dime on tuition.

By 1990, Asian, Black, Indigenous and Latinx students accounted for 73% of the student body in CUNY’s four-year colleges and 85% in CUNY’s community colleges. But CUNY isn’t free anymore.

Current tuition is $6,930 per year for the four-year colleges and $4,800 per year in the community colleges. This doesn’t include over $200 in student fees or the cost of books and supplies.

The imposition of expensive tuition on the much more diverse student body is racism.

Black and Latinx students accounted for 40% of New York City’s high school graduates in 1969. Yet CUNY’s student body was still 91% white.

The same year, a student strike demanded open admissions to CUNY for all New York City high school graduates. It was won in 1970.

One of the fighters for open admissions was the late Tom Soto. He was later invited to come to Attica by the prisoners who would be massacred by Gov. Nelson Rockefeller.

Open admissions benefited everybody. The number of first-time students almost doubled from 19,939 in 1969 to 38,256 in 1972.

Black students increased 2.7 times from 16,529 to 44,031. Latinx students almost tripled, going from 4,723 to 13,563.

The number of white students also rose by 18%, going from 106,523 in 1968 to 128,804 in 1972. Thousands of more white students were able to attend college because of open admissions.

When Asian, Black, Indigenous and Latinx people move forward, so do all poor and working people.

Illiteracy is preferable to the rich

The wealthy and powerful hated open admissions. Just the idea that poor people could attend college offended them.

“We are in danger of producing an educated proletariat … that’s dynamite,” moaned Roger Freeman in 1970. Freeman was an advisor to then-Gov. Ronald Reagan of California. The term “proletariat” refers to the working class.

“We have to be selective on who we allow (to go to college),” said Freeman. Reagan and Freeman were outraged by the struggles of college students against racism and war in the 1960s.

On May Day 1970, President Richard Nixon called this student strike “dynamite.” The month “proletariat” refers to the working class.

“Dynamite,” moaned Roger Freeman in 1970. Freeman was an advisor to then-Gov. Ronald Reagan of California. The term “proletariat” refers to the working class.

Weeney’s sentiments were in tune with the Anglican Bishop Leonard Beecher’s 1939 report about education in the British colony of Kenya. Beecher wrote that “illiterates with the right attitude to manual labor are preferable to products of the schools.”

There were only three high schools for Africans in Kenya at the time, which admitted just 100 students annually.

Wall Street got its chance to gut open admissions and impose tuition on CUNY students during the 1975 “fiscal crisis” in New York City.

This was a hold-up of over 7 million people by the banksters who demanded 50,000 city workers be fired. Among them were thousands of teachers.

The passing of California’s Proposition 13 in 1978 referendum gutted funding for education and public services in the Golden State. While California residents paid a $300 yearly fee to attend the University of California at Berkeley in 1968, the tuition is now $15,000.

In contrast, all education in socialist Cuba is free. Also helping to drive poorer students out of college have been the attacks on affirmative action programs in California. Proposition 209, which passed in 1996, banned these attempts to promote equality.

The recently published book, “Mobilizing in Our Own Name: Million Worker March” includes the brilliant writing, essays and analysis of Saladin Muhammad. To order go to https://millionworkermarch.com/

The great revolutionary Saladin Muhammad joins the ancestors

Brother Saladin leaves an outstanding legacy of revolutionary commitment, leadership, consciousness, and direct organizing of our people’s struggle for liberation. He was a commander-in-chief of revolutionary forces throughout the Black Liberation Movement and a staunch fighter for the Black Working Class. He worked tirelessly and with phenomenal energy to organize, guide, and lead our people’s fights and battles against oppression. He was an internationalist, upholding the worldwide struggle against capitalism and imperialism. His intellect, insight, and analysis were outstanding in the theory and practice of organizing class and revolutionary struggle and the tactics and strategy of social transformation, national liberation, and socialism for the African American people.

Saladin’s unmatched organizing skills led to the formation of the Black Workers for Justice, UE Local 150, and the Southern Workers Assembly, just to recognize only a few of his impactful accomplishments. And these organizational formations of the Black working class were built in the context of North Carolina, a state widely recognized for its anti-unionism and racist history, and in the U.S. South where the lack of a strong, progressive labor movement in the southeast region has been the Achilles heel of the U.S. national labor movement. The struggle to build a “new trade unionism” in the U.S. South must continue.

Saladin Muhammad, PRESENTE!!!

– The Executive Committee, Black Workers for Justice

The wealthy also don’t want anyone else helping to educate poor and working people. The FBI hunted the labor schools operated by the Communist Party.

We agree that an educated proletariat is dynamite. All education should be free.

We look forward to helping to organize the coming social explosion that will get rid of capitalism forever.

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Struggle for trans rights and socialism go hand in hand

By Melinda Butterfield

On Aug. 12, the state of Florida announced new guidelines to end all gender-affirming care for trans adults and children who receive Medicaid. This will result in the forced detransition of thousands of the most vulnerable, especially Black, Brown and Indigenous people. It will result in more deaths among a community that already suffers astronomi-
cal rates of suicide when denied gen-
der-affirming care.

If most private insurance
ance companies are likely to be-
gin denying gender-affirming care
since the state rules give them a per-
fekt reason to do so. And that’s clear-
ly what’s intended.

Gov. Rick DeSantis couldn’t get a trans ban through the state legis-
late, so this was enacted by the Department of Health through the
recommendation of a hand-picked group of anti-trans doctors. This
follows the example of Texas, where earlier this year Gov. Greg Abbott and
Attorney General Ken Paxton unilater-
ately enacted criminal investiga-
tions of parents, teachers and health care
workers who support trans chil-
dren on charges of “child abuse.”

While there are ongoing legal
cases in these and other states, the
political coup d’etat by the U.S. Su-
preme Court will likely enable inves-
tigations of parents, teachers and health care
workers who support trans chil-
dren to continue.

The combined attacks at the state and national level have unleashed an
incendiary wave of trans panic across the U.S. this year. The most severe
collapse during Pride Month, when there were day-
ly attacks aimed at trans people and the LGTBQ2S+ community
generally, some spontaneous but many orga-
ized by the fascist right, often with
police support.

Hundreds of incidents have been
recorded in both so-called “blue” and
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From the Tops Market massacre to the Donbass region earlier this year, after increasing their bombings from 70 per day to 1,400 between Feb. 15 and Feb. 22, the people of the now-independent republics of Lugansk and Donetsk formally requested protection from the Russian government to toll humanitarian aid caused by the Ukrainian military. The Russian military had a responsibility to stop a genocidal nightmare pushed by the U.S.-NATO bloc.

U.S. media cover-up

Why hasn’t all of this been reported by the corporate media?
When the U.S. targets a country for war, the media lose their pretense of objectivity and become an arm of the Pentagon. They report without verifying any stories that fit the narrative villainizing the people and leadership of the targeted country.

Ukraine has purged itself of any public opposing views against this U.S. holy war against Russia. Journalists not willing to play along have either been jailed or killed and media outlets are closed for simply reporting the truth.

There are two major manufactur- ers of U.S. propaganda in Ukraine, established with money from NGOs like the National Endowment for Democracy, the European Endowment for Democracy and other U.S. intelligence and NATO funders. They are the Kiev Independent and the Euromaidan Press.

The Kiev Independent has a cozy relationship with the Azov Battalion, one of those fascist organizations that got money and weapons in 2014. Azov is now an official part of the Ukrainian military, and along with other fascist and white supremacist groups including Aidar, Right Sector and Svoboda, they especially target the Donbass region.

Azov sends out videos and reports of “verified” atrocities by the Russian military and the Kiev Independent funnels these stories and videos to Western media, while also disseminating them through social media.

The Euromaidan Press had an interesting and heart-wrenching story about an older couple who were simply trying to get humanitarian aid to a shelter established by the Ukrainian military to protect people in Rubizhne, a city in the Lugansk region, from the Russian military which, they said, were targeting civilians.

What is so interesting about this story is that the alleged account they wrote about happened a few weeks before I visited Rubizhne.

Euromaidan Press’ story becomes more dramatic when it is revealed that this well-meaning couple met up with bullets from a Russian checkpoint. The woman, they wrote, was instantly killed, but the man lasted just long enough to call his son and speak to him for the last time before the last beat of her heart.

The reality of Rubizhne

Heart wrenching, isn’t it? However, the fact is that the shelter in Rubizhne, which I visited and at one point held 500 people, was filled with people who were escaping the bombings of their homes, not by Russian tanks, but Ukrainian tanks — according to them. And, the Rus-
From the Tops Market massacre to Ukraine’s war crimes in Donbass

The Ukrainian military was not in control of the area when this story allegedly happened – the Ukrainians were.

Larissa, the manager of the shelter in Rubizhne, was brought to tears when she told me what had happened weeks before we arrived. She said the people in the shelter, including her daughter, were under threat of starvation, with no food or water or fuel to run the well, nor ability to go out and get these things, due to the heavy fighting going on while this area was under Ukrainian control.

She said that even under those conditions, Russian military personnel made the choice to risk their lives to bring water, food and vital supplies to the shelter. If not for that humanitarian aid, they may not have survived.

As we traveled further west in the Lugansk region, we ran across a tuberculosi s hospital that had been retrofitted by the Ukrainian military, a building converted to make war against civilians and used in violation of the 2015 Minsk II agreements.

That facility was full of artillery – 122mm shells that penetrate tanks and aircraft. The walls had been decorated with symbols of Nazi Germany and the emblem of the Azov Battalion – the same one used by the 18-year-old white supremacist who massacred Black shoppers at a playground in Lugansk City.

We then traveled to Krymske, which in 2015 was occupied by the Ukrainian military. There was a ceasefire treaty by using this location and bunkers just east of it for the sole purpose of bombing civilians and the Lugansk People’s Militia in the neighboring town of Solkinsky.

Ukraine’s assault on these areas began in 2014, when the professionalized military of the Donbass region decided not to go along with the backsliding of history created by the U.S.-sponsored coup: a new anti-Russian government of puppets to U.S. interests and fascists who glorified World War II German Nazis and their collaborators in Ukraine.

So, with a vote of over 89%, the people of the Donbass region voted to have two independent republics – the Lugansk People’s Republic in the north of Donbass and the Donetsk People’s Republic in the south.

However, instead of honoring the democratic wishes of the people of Donbass, the new coup government in Kiev began massacring civilians in this region with tanks, resulting in the occupation of Krymske by the Ukrainian military, until late February 2022 when the combined forces of the Lugansk People’s Militia and the Russian military forced them out.

The first impression you get when entering the town of Krymske is how normal-looking the homes and buildings are, unlike in Solkinsky, where the homes look more akin to Swiss cheese and the administrative buildings are more rubble than structure.

This is due to the constant bombing of Solkinsky by the Ukrainian forces from 2014 until February 2022. By 2017, in fact, the civilian population there had to flee for their lives.

In Krymske, however, although they fit the Azov Battalion’s description of being white supremacists and the symbol on the wall in the tuberculosis hospital when he did the killing, it featured the Azov emblem in his manifest.

The recent killing here in Buffalo was done by an 18-year-old white supremacist who said he was influenced by Tarrant — and the beat goes on.

In spite of protest from a former FBI agent about the danger of white supremacist groups here in the U.S. that have international ties, the FBI refuses to put the Azov Battalion, RAM or other white supremacist groups on their terrorist list, which would give them more legal avenues to shut them down. Instead, the FBI recently went after the African People’s Socialist Party for simply having relations with a legal Russian organization.

The FBI has a history of assisting or orchestrating assassinations against Black organizations and activists from Martin Luther King Jr. to Fred Hampton to Malcolm X. We, especially Black and Brown peoples, can’t rely on them. We have to rely on ourselves and the solidarity from our working class.

We can’t rely on those who don’t give a damn about the threat to Black people from these fascist groups, like the Biden Administration and the Democrats, all of whom voted to continue to support feeding these monsters in Ukraine. They are no better than the racist Republican Party when it comes to white supremacy and the murder of our children by either the cops or fascist organizations.

The money they are literally sending up in smoke to bomb ethnic Ukrainians, ethnic Russians and other peoples in Ukraine could have saved countless lives from COVID — which, by the way, hits us Black people three times harder — or solved the homelessness crisis and stopped the march towards poverty for our entire class due to inflation. But they don’t give a damn about our security or our children’s lives.

We are at a critical juncture. What lays before us is the threat of World War III. What lays before us is the threat of unprecedented poverty due to the rise in costs of basic necessities.

What lays before us is a return to Jim Crow laws and the Lynchings we have already seen in the form of shootings of stores, shootings of churches — all resurrecting the past horrors of the bombing of the church in Birmingham by the KKK.

But if we unify our struggles, if we pledge our solidarity to every movement of working and poor people and people of color; to women and gender non-conforming people and our trans family, to Star- bucks and Amazon workers fighting for a union; to Haitian immigrants fighting for their lives along with the entire immigrant community; and pledge to never let U.S. imperialist law be allowed to decimate our class and our struggle — instead of using us fearing them, they will tremble at our strength and actions.

Let’s get organized and unified, now! You can do that by keeping in touch with the Socialist Unity Party and joining our efforts to unify and reinvigorate a truly anti-imperialist movement in this country.

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Ukraine’s war crimes in Donbass

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Playground in Lugansk city.
SACRAMENTO: A day of solidarity with prisoners and formerly incarcerated people

By Gloria Verdieu

This is the story of my experience going to Quest for Democracy 2023 on Aug. 8 in Sacramento, California’s state capital.

I was offered the opportunity to go to the rally with All Of Us Or None (AOUON), a grassroots organization led by formerly incarcerated people, families, friends and all our relations. I learned that the voice of people most affected by mass incarceration and the growth of the prison-industrial complex. Their goal is to build a powerful political movement to win full restoration of human and civil rights for incarcerated and previously incarcerated individuals.

I was told Quest for Democracy is a statewide lobbying day giving incarcerated and formerly incarcerat-ed individuals and their families the opportunity to meet with state representatives and learn the process by which bills are passed. Most important, it is a chance to hold elected officials accountable.

We arrived with a list of bills and asked to choose a couple that interested us. When meeting with assembly members, we were to speak on what we consider the most important issues, and the representatives, “Can we count on your ‘yes’ vote on this bill?”

I was a bit hesitant, because I was told not to bring up other issues and stick to the list. I don’t consider myself a lobbyist and don’t have any confidence in the capitalist criminal justice system, or the politicians to do the right thing.

Early on the morning of Aug. 8, a group of several activists, including me, boarded two flights from San Diego to Sacramento. We rented a van and drove to the capital, where everything was set up.

Some groups came the day before and received training on how to approach assembly members and present their concerns in a concise manner. The time you have is very limited, so you must point your fingers at no more than 5 messages.

There was a line at the AOUON booth to get t-shirts, a lunch ticket, a packet listing summaries of many bills on prison reform, and a package of “score room sheets” for state representatives. We were asked to review this information before going to visit with our assigned representative. I knew little about what was going to happen when we sat with our assigned member.

End involuntary servitude!

I was excited when the announcement was made from the capitol steps for everyone to gather in a semi-circle to prepare for a rally.

The first speaker was Dorsey Nunn, co-founder of All Of Us Or None, executive director of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC) and one of the organizers for Quest for Democracy. Nunn was sentenced to life in prison when he was 19 years old.

Nunn spoke about justice, dignity, and humanity for incarcerated people. “This is the moment when he said, “Why should you spend months, years or decades in prison, and when you get out you get $200. What the fuck can you do with $200?” she shouted.

She supported a bill that would raise the “gate money” given upon release to $1,300, which is still “not enough” (SB39). What’s needed is a path to reentry – training, counseling, housing, a job with a living wage, and compensation when making mistakes. There were many bills that impacted incarcerated peoples’ reentry into society. These are issues that Cuba has figured out. Yes, in Cuba you do the time, but the whole purpose is to come out restored, renewed, re-united with family and community, and hopefully you will do better. The system is not set up for you to fail.

Fighting for basic needs

Christopher, a 17-year-old completing his first year at San Diego City College, was with our group. His thoughts on the bills echoed mine when he said, “Why should there be a debate about a prisoner’s right to call their family for free?”

Prisoners and families should be able to call without paying exorbitant phone rates (SB1008). Families should be encouraged to visit and stay connected with their loved ones in prison (AB590). Families should be notified right away when an imprisoned son, daughter, father, mother, brother, or sister has a medical emergency (SB139).

There are 11 bills that resonated with me, like one to prevent children 12 years old from being tried in juvenile court (SB143). There is a bill to release medically vulnerable people who are the most expensive to incarcerate and least likely to re-offend with a sense of humanity that is prevalent in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).

Some think [imprisonment] is a vacation or a break.

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“Prisoners need not be discriminated against because they went to jail. Our objective is not to make a repressive action against those persons but to help those persons, who are victims themselves in many cases.”

Cuba’s neighborhood CDRs number 138,000, with over 8 million members, and continue to work on programs and solutions to the problems of petty crime, drugs and mental illness.

Solution to mass incarceration

I think about the remarks by Cuban President Miguel Diaz–Canel on May 16. “In the United States, 2,000 children are arrested every day and 44,000 are in prison. We only cite this data to demonstrate, once again, the hypocrisy and double standards of those who presume to judge what happens around the world.”

Diaz stated, before our people and the world, that in Cuba no one under 16 years of age is imprisoned!

There are coalitions such as those which organized Quest for Democracy 2023 throughout the U.S. The Socialist Unity Party’s Prisoner Solidarity Caucus will work with these groups. We will support incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, listen to their demands, support their efforts to reform this system and fight for their right to exist and live with dignity.

These organizers are aware of the hard, long struggle it’s going to take to pass these bills, because it took years to get passed “Ban the Box” – the box on applications that is used to deny formerly incarcerated people access to livable wages, decent housing, medical care and many other life-sustaining benefits.

When we had our 20 minutes with State Assembly member and Local Government Committee Chair Celilia Aguilar and two of her staff, I asked about ACA 3, the amendment to end involuntary servitude. Aguilar said: “This is a hard bill to pass. My staff and I will research this bill. This is what we do with all bills.”

Each person spoke about bills, and she expressed her support for all of them. We thanked her for taking the time out of her schedule to talk to us and she thanked us for coming.

We returned to our rented van and made our way to the airport for our 5:00 flight back to San Diego.

It was a learning experience. It didn’t change my position on lobbying with the politicians, but I am glad I went. It just shows how much work we must do to educate our class about socialism.

Prisoners should be compensated for their labor while incarcerated and at the time of their release. They should have a path for reentry, be united with family and community, be treated with dignity, and not be punished or discriminated against because they went to jail.

With over 2 million people in U.S. prisons, affecting millions of families, this is a major concern.

The hard-won reform and act of solidarity, however small, is important. But as Cuba shows, the only solution is a socialist revolution.

Abolish capitalism! Shut down the prison-industrial complex! End mass incarceration now!

For information about LSPC, AOUON and Quest for Democracy, visit Prisoners WithChildren.org/Policy-Advocacy.
How can we respond to U.S. crisis and threat of world war?

By Sharon Black

A discussion on the continuing danger of imperialist war must lead our political discussion. Nancy Pelosi’s reckless and provocative actions in Taiwan could have easily touched off a military response that would have had dire consequences. I think it’s accurate to say that the Communist Party of China’s careful and measured response helped make sure no such event took place. This is good news, but it does not change the dangerous threat of war and the key importance of Taiwan.

The amoral servants of finance capital – warlords and board rooms, or in the Pentagon war room and the White House – may well have differences about when and how to pull the trigger. But the one thing that remains constant is the necessity of capitalism to live or die. They are servants to that.

China is now second to the U.S. in gross domestic product and that nagging fact keeps most of them up all night.

Generals over the White House

I wanted to preface further remarks with a quote from Sam Marcy’s “Generals Over the White House.” It’s good to review this pamphlet for both a historical perspective and as a guide to understanding today’s military-industrial complex, which, I believe, is nothing but militarism. It’s a war economy that is fundamentally bound to the military-industrial complex, which, I believe, is nothing but militarism. It’s nothing but militarism.

“Military and economic are a bond of action, not just a political and economic relationship. We need to understand the military-industrial complex as a political-economic-economic entity, not just as a military-industrial complex.”

This is why we need to understand the military-industrial complex as a political-economic-economic entity, not just as a military-industrial complex. It’s nothing but militarism.

Afghanistan withdrawal

We are coming up on the one-year anniversary of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. The U.S. military exit was more than just a military defeat for the Biden administration, as important as this is in calculating the trajectory of U.S. foreign policy. It was a U.S.-Russia confrontation with Russia and the destruction of Ukraine.

Military contractors and U.S. banks made a fortune during the 20-year war on Afghanistan. The war was financed to the tune of $2 trillion. The U.S. Treasury will be paying the banks until 2050. With interest added, they will shell out $6.5 trillion in costs. This is surplus value stolen from the working class both now and in the future.

This military-industrial complex profited off the death of close to 150,000 Afghan people. U.S. withdrawal didn’t end the pillage, destruction or misery. The U.S. immediately seized $9.5 billion from Afghanistan’s central bank held in the New York Federal Reserve. It must be noted that this loot has already prompted widespread starvation.

The scourched-earth misery has played out in U.S. proxy wars and occupation from Yemen to Palestine, from Iraq to Libya, and around the globe.

Donbass, Russia and Ukraine

We should be proud of the work of our comrades – particularly of John Parker, who literally went to the front line in Donbass and Russia. And equally of the analysis and coverage and the pamphlet published and the actions we organized.

All of this took place under the most difficult avalanche of bourgeois propaganda and the capitulation of a significant segment of the anti-war movement.

This has to be attributed to comrades Melinda Butterfield, who may be credited as one of the very few communists in the United States who not only wrote about the war on Donbass consistently from the beginning in 2014, but also initiated and organized protests.

The NATO build-up has nothing to do with the so-called defense of Western Europe or Japan. Its purpose is to force upon them planes, guns, missiles and weapons systems made in the U.S. and sold at extortionate prices.

The European Union countries should keep in mind the words of Victoria Nuland, who is currently the Under Secretary for Political Affairs. “The reality of today’s world is that we need a realignment of political forces. And that realignment must be high on our agenda. First: “We are firmly convinced that a realignment of political forces is necessary to make sure that the military-industrial complex is not allowed to live or die.” And second: “We are firmly convinced that a realignment of political forces is necessary to make sure that the military-industrial complex is not allowed to live or die.”

This is why we need to understand the military-industrial complex as a political-economic-economic entity, not just as a military-industrial complex. It’s nothing but militarism.

Put struggle for socialism on the agenda

I want to end by saying something about the World Marxist Political Parties Forum that took place on July 28, and the urgent need to put the struggle for socialism on the agenda.

This conference was hosted by the Communist Party of China’s Central Committee, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee Nguyen Phu Trong, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee and President Miguel Diaz-Canel, and Chair of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation Gennady Zyuganov.

I wanted to read two quotes from his address:

First: “We are firmly convinced that socialism is the only way toward development with social justice, as a creative overcoming of capitalism, its unemployment, inequality and the values that it guile.”

Second: “The reality of today’s world is that we need a realignment of political forces. And that realignment must be high on our agenda.”

The fight for revolutionary socialism is high on our political agenda. Going back to Sam Marcy’s pamphlet: “Revolutionary Marxists do not view the inevitability of capitalist catastrophe, nor its message of socialists unity and affirmation of Marxism, especially from Cuba’s President Miguel Diaz-Canel.”

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The fight for revolutionary socialism is high on our political agenda.
Punishing Cuba: the self-serving ‘State Sponsors of Terror’ list

By Cheryl LaBash

On Sept. 25 car and bike caravans formed in cities across the country demanding that Cuba be taken off the U.S. State Department’s “State Sponsors of Terrorism” list. Was there any other road to such an end? Every presidential administration appoints a secretary of state. Now it is Antony Blinken; before him was Mike Pompeo; before him was John Kerry and Hillary Clinton. And the president, through the secretary of state, can put countries on this list or take them off. It is arbitrary.

As a parting slam against Cuba, on Jan. 12, 2021, just eight days before Joe Biden assumed the presidency, the Trump administration condemned Cuba once again. And Biden has let it stand, although he cannot prevent provisions to remove Cuba from the list altogether.

There are automatic consequences, as the U.S. can do for the country put on the “naughty” list, but other countries, businesses and even individuals. The State Department website says sanctions “include restrictions on U.S. foreign assistance; a ban on defense exports and sales; certain controls over exports of dual use items; and miscellaneous financial and other restrictions.”

Okay, the U.S. won’t give foreign aid or certain technology, or export “dual use” items – like how Washington blocked chlorine to purify water in Iraq when that country was on “the list.” But its powers don’t extend to Cuba. One exception is for Peace/U.S.-Cuba Friendship school buses and toasters as possible “dual use” items!

But let’s look at “miscellaneous and other restrictions.” Additional “sanctions laws that penalize persons and countries engaging in certain trade with state sponsors” are activated.

If a relatively small country like Cuba wants to buy ventilators or other medical equipment, raw materials for their life-saving vaccines, or anything on the international market, who will trade with it when threatened by the U.S.? There are plenty of examples of mega-fines levied by the U.S. against major foreign banks, corporations like Honda and even Airbnb. Is it worth the risk of irritating Uncle Sam to trade with a small market of 11 million people?

There is no knowing what else is activated, just by putting a country on the “list” until it’s affair of it. If a vacationer from England enjoys a vacation at Varadero, snorkeled or enjoyed a bird-watching or vacation, they are surprised if they decide to visit the U.S.

The U.S. excludes these individuals from using the visa waiver program simply because they enjoyed a Cuban beach. They may not get an appointment for a visa interview for months.

Even U.S. states have automatic laws prohibiting sales to countries on the list. Who is the real terrorist?

What gives the United States the authority to call anyone a terrorist? Cuba was again voted to be part of the United Nations Human Rights Commission. A Cuban woman got the highest number of votes for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). On Nov. 2 and 3 the U.N. General Assembly will again call on the United States to end its one-sided war against Cuba – as it has for 30 years.

Pro-blockade politicians try to use the scary word “terrorism” to stop people from looking for the facts. Is it really terrorism to help end racist toxins or attempted to assassinate Black leaders like Fred Hampton, Mark Clark, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr., was it wrong to give refuge to Assata Shakur? Was it wrong to host peace talks to end the civil war in Colombia? These are some of the excuses that are given to divert from the real reason.

Cuba gained independence and sovereignty through a revolution. Cuba prioritizes human rights and development, not exploiting workers, not making war to make a handful of billionaires rich. It has no landlords or predatory bankers. Instead of restricting rights, Cuba expands rights, consultation and participation.

Compare Cuba’s new Families Code referendum on Sept. 25 with the U.S. Supreme Court’s reversal of Roe v. Wade, denying bodily autonomy – the most basic of human rights.

“Will the real terrorist please stand up?” The title of this documentary made by Saul Landau as the world fought to free the Cuban 5 from U.S. prisons seemed irrelevant on Dec. 17, 2014, when the U.S. decided to switch Cuba strategy — Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labanino and Antonio Guerrero, the last three Cuban heroes, flew home, free from U.S. penitentiaries.

But after Jan. 12, 2021, the history of U.S.-sponsored terrorism against Cuba and its friends became important to review.

It is important to note that Cuba has never attacked the United States. Never planted bombs in hundreds of U.S. cities. Never attacked American citizens or sank vessels. Cuba is not a terrorist country.

All of the actions described above were, however, carried out by the U.S. and its agents against Cuba. The Oct. 6 anniversary of the first midair bombing of a commercial airliner will be recognized in Barbados with a remembrance ceremony for Cuban Flight 455 and the 73 people who died. Luis Posada Carriles, who died a free man in the U.S., organized and paid for this mass murder.

At the same time, communities across the U.S. are asking for better relations with Cuba. Most recently, the City Council of Willimantic, Connecticut, called for the U.S. to end the blockade in a 7-2 vote. It is likely that ratio could be applied to the entire U.S. where resolutions representing more than 41 million residents have been passed in labor unions and city councils, state legislatures, school boards and county commissions.

A small but important first step toward justice is for President Biden to remove Cuba from this scurrilous and self-serving list. Do it now!

As we support the heroic Puentes de Amor monthly caravans through the streets of Miami by creating support actions in our local communities on the last weekend of each month, let’s raise the demand to #Delist along with #UnblockCuba.

All out for Cuba on the weekend before the vote at the United Nations, Oct. 29-30!

By Rasika Ruwanpathirana

Recent news of people overruning the presidential palace in Sri Lanka, followed by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fleeing the country, took Western media by storm. What really happened in Sri Lanka? The struggle continues.

Sri Lanka: The struggle continues

By Rasika Ruwanpathirana

Recent news of people overruning the presidential palace in Sri Lanka, followed by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fleeing the country, took Western media by storm. What really happened in Sri Lanka? The struggle continues.
Pakistan floods and capitalist-fueled climate change

By Scott Scheffer

The year 2022 has seen so much devastation from climate change. Deadly heat waves plowed through all-time temperature records in Europe, the U.S., and Asia.

Devastating floods from Eastern Kentucky and St Louis, Missouri, to Sydney, Australia, turned roads into rivers, washed away bridges, and destroyed thousands of homes.

East Africa is enduring its most prolonged drought in many decades, and 20 million people are at risk of severe hunger. The death toll from all of this is elusive, but when estimates are possible, it will certainly be in the hundreds of thousands.

Capitalist-fueled climate change is a threat to the planet and all its inhabitants.

With all that, what is happening in Pakistan stands out. A monsoon season nearly double compared to 2021 and many others are affected. Millions of people have fled their damaged or destroyed homes, and search and rescue operations are finding more victims daily. More rain is on its way. Language describing the situation includes “epochoal level,” and “nothing left.”

Capitalist-caused climate change

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres made an emergency appeal for a $160-million relief fund. He warned of the perils of capitalist-caused climate change in his video message to raise funds. Guterres said, “Let’s stop sleepwalking toward the destruction of the climate that we all depend on. It’s too late. It’s changed. Today, it could be your country.”

Guterres’ remarks could easily be seen as a veiled criticism of the dismal U.S. response to climate change. For more than a century, while emitting the most significant volume of greenhouse gasses, the U.S. has been engaged in the construction of imperialist corporations and banks. Being the preeminent imperialist country, the U.S. is considered the most well-equipped and simultaneously, the most obligated to battle climate change. But for decades, U.S. energy companies, banks, and the entirety of corporate U.S. have blocked and sabotaged actions to curb emissions.

IMF austerity imposed on Pakistan

A 2019 IMF “bailout” of Pakistan’s economy imposed austerity measures as is typical. When exploitive imperialist corporations bleed a country dry, the IMF swoops in and demands that the government lower wages, cut social services and push living standards down in exchange for funds to “rescue” the spiraling economy. After a long delay, they finally released a scheduled payment of $1.17 billion during the devastating flooding.

The government of Pakistan estimates that the recovery from the floods will cost $50 billion. However, if the U.S. appeal for $160 million comes to fruition, combined with the long-delayed IMF payment, that will provide less than 12% of the estimated needs.

Since 1994, the U.N. has organized annual conferences on climate change called Conference of the Parties (COP). In 2009 at COP15 in Copenhagen, wealthy capitalist countries were forced into an agreement to provide $100 billion annually to the Global South by 2020. The funds are meant to finance mitigation and adaptation in the countries that are not the cause of climate change but have been so exploited by imperialist policies that they are the least able to recover from the consequences of an overheated global atmosphere.

Pakistan is a sterling example. According to CBS News, “Since 1959, Pakistan is responsible for only 0.6% of the world’s historic CO2 emissions. The U.S. is responsible for 21%.”

So far, not one penny of the funds promised in 2009 has been paid. Because of the explosion of climate-change-related, devastating crises around the world in the last few years, the lack of payment is anticipated to be a huge issue at the November COP27 in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt.

Climate scientists have shown that because of rising ocean temperatures due to greenhouse gas emissions, rainstorms, tropical storms, and hurricanes lose their strength and move along more slowly than before capitalist industrialization. Rainstorms hang around for days dousing water on land. Urban areas with concentrations of tall buildings slow the storms down even more. This phenomenon has been especially apparent in the last 50 years and has been expressed most clearly when Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. Katrina also showed the world that racial and national oppression compound the problems of climate change. The experience of nations of oppressed people within the borders of the U.S. in many ways mirrors that imposed on people in the Global South.

Hoping for a solution from a capitalist government is like appointing the fox to guard the henhouse.

Writing this week in the journal Nature Climate Change, a group of scientists has called on their colleagues for activism. April saw protests by more than a thousand scientists from 25 countries. In the U.K., scientists were arrested for gluing their scientific papers — and their hands — to the Department for Business building.

The fight against climate change must be taken from the hands of the corporate class and their government. A militant mass movement in solidarity with the most impoverished and oppressed throughout the world will surely grow.

Catastrophic flooding in Pakistan.
**Continúa la lucha sobre la energía en Puerto Rico**

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

La política energética de un país debe estar diseñada para mejorar la calidad de vida de sus habitantes, teniendo en cuenta el desarrollo que fomente su economía y proteja su medioambiente. En esta colonia, es al revés. La política energética en la práctica, es realmente la de una falta de interés por el bienestar de la ciudadanía.

Aqui el gobierno permite que corporaciones extranjeras se apropien de nuestro entorno, construyan lo que quieran y donde quieran sin requerirles los permisos necesarios de construcción, ni de impacto ambiental. Es decir, les dejan operar al garete, igual que opera el mismísimo gobierno.

Si ya hemos reportado del desastre de la compañía maafosa Luma Energy, hoy les quería mencionar a otro criminal de la energía, New Fortress Energy. Una de las compañías de gas estadounidense que tiene contrato con la Autoridad de Energía para suplirle gas natural.

Resulta que esta compañía construyó, sin los permisos necesarios, un terminal en la Bahía de San Juan, poniendo en peligro los alrededores, incluyendo a los habitantes de la zona. Y como siempre, son las organizaciones ambientales, religiosas y comunitarias las que salen a defender al pueblo. Esta pasada semana un grupo de estas, se presentó a las oficinas de uno de los legisladores de la Comisión de Recursos Naturales llevando globos y un bizcocho hueco, corriendo “Cumpleaños feliz” para exigirle que se cumpla con una Resolución pasada hace ya un año, que obliga a los ejecutivos de New Fortress a declarar sobre la seguridad y los daños ambientales.

Esta se suma a las decenas de manifestaciones nacionales y locales que intentan exporner los crímenes neoliberales causados por las privatizaciones y el abandono de este gobierno fallido. Por eso es más urgente que nunca la unidad de acciones como esta para encaminarlos a la recuperación de nuestro país a través de la independencia.

Y como decíamos antes, ¡Solo el pueblo salva el pueblo! 🇵🇷 🇵🇷

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**The Donbass referendum and blood on Biden’s hands**

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slaughter of civilians in Donetsk. “Kiev gunmen delivered artillery fire from the occupied town of Orlovka using 155mm projectiles which impacted near the Central Indoor Market building and flower shops and hit the Route 38 mini-bus. Six people, including a 14-year-old girl, were killed, and another six were wounded in the shelling, according to the latest reports.”

In the Lugansk People’s Republic, cities like Alchevsk that had been largely spared from attacks in recent months are now being routinely attacked by Kiev, using long-range weapons provided by the U.S. and other NATO powers. notwithstanding, the reality is that the US military and neo-Nazi gangs. Anti-fascists in those areas were forced into exile, imprisoned, killed, or driven underground.

The United States pressured Ukraine to launch a new offensive against the Donbass starting in late 2021 – a deliberate provocation to draw Russia into a military conflict with the NATO military alliance. In February, the US Department of Defense and the US Armed Forces united in a special military operation to protect the Donbas republics and de-Nazify Ukraine. Today many Ukrainian anti-fascists fight in the ranks of the Donbas militias.

A movement for a referendum on joining the Russian Federation has been growing in the Donbass republics for several years. It’s not something the Russian government wanted; Russian President Vladimir Putin resisted these calls in the interests of a negotiated agreement with Ukraine and its Western sponsors. But the US rulers weren’t interested in a negotiated settlement – they wanted war.

If, as expected, the referendum is successful, the Russian government has signaled that it will accept the vote and incorporate the DPR and LPR as soon as October 1.

The decision to join the Russian Federation may not be ideal from a political standpoint and certainly was not the goal of many of the communists and socialists who inspired the independence struggle of 2014. But it is driven by necessity.

**Stronger defense for Donbas**

Under the Russian Constitution, once the DPR and LPR are part of the federation, Russia will have a much stronger basis to defend those areas and respond to the Ukrainian-NATO attacks, including exercising its nuclear deterrent. The republics will maintain their names and enter the federation as autonomous republics, as Crimea did in 2014.

The recent military setback for the anti-fascist alliance in Ukraine’s Kharkiv region and subsequent attempts by the Ukrainian military to break into the DPR and LPR have created enormous anxiety for the people of Donbas, who face genocide in the event of a Ukrainian takeover. This has been the stated policy of not only the hardened fascist battalions like Aidar and Azov but even of high officials in Kiev for the last eight-plus years.

On Sept. 21, President Putin made a national address to present a decree on a partial military mobilization (draft). Up to 300,000 people are to be called up to protect Russian territory from NATO aggression, which will soon include the DPR and LPR. It appears that the Russian government has now accepted the fact that there will be a prolonged state of war with the imperialist West. We can expect these new defensive measures to be met with a new wave of anti-Russian war propaganda heading into the midterm US elections, on a par with the witch-hunt against all things Russia earlier this year. This is likely to have an impact on the politically weak sections of the anti-war movement here. It is incumbent on principled anti-imperialists and socialist workers to meet this challenge with courage and political clarity.

Victory to the Donbas republics, Ukrainian anti-fascists, and their allies! Defeat U.S./NATO imperialism and its Ukrainian proxies! End the New Cold War against Donbas, Russia, and China!

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**National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) ‘Future Forces’ conference poster.**

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**SLL PHOTO: MAGGIE VASCASSENNO**

Miles protestan contra LUMA Energy el 25 de agosto frente a La Fortaleza, la residencia del gobernador en el Viejo San Juan. Posteriormente, la Unidad de Operaciones Tácticas de la Policía atacó a los manifestantes pacíficos con gas pimienta y granadas de humo.

**PHOTO: DONETSA NEWS AGENTS**

The hull of a Donetsk bus destroyed by Ukrainian artillery on Sept. 22. Six people were killed, including a 14-year-old girl.

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**Desde Puerto Rico, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci.**