Which Way for Today’s Mass Radicalization?

Capitalism’s Impending Catastrophe...

Or a Socialist Future

By Jeff Mackler

Predatory capitalism is facing its greatest crises ever. The gap between the exploiting few, who rule by guile and deceit – and brute force when necessary – and the vast majority, who are compelled to sell their labor to survive, has never been greater. A stunning half of the working-age population stand unemployed or subjected to a low-wage, part-time, gig economy wherein unprecedented numbers live paycheck to paycheck in fear of eviction or foreclosure. One in five families are unable to provide food for their children. 27 million Americans and their family members have lost health insurance coverage during the pandemic.

That systemic racism permeates every institution of U.S. society is only denied by an ever-declining tiny minority, cheered on by racist, hysteromongering Donald Trump, who persists in increas-ingly irrational rants and threats of violence despite the counsel of his frequent-ly-fired sycophant advisors and the top leadership of the Republican Party. Even the worst of them fear going down with Trump’s sinking ship. CNN reports that 84 percent of Americans support the anti-racist demonstrations that have mobilized an estimated 15-26 million in over 2000 cities and towns. The times are a-changing indeed.

Daily COVID-19 infection rates soar

A month ago, when the rate of new daily COVID-19 infections “plateaued” for a week or so at 22,000, all 50 state governors, Democrats and Republicans alike, devised plans for a return to work. Ignoring the generalized opposition of the scientific community, the ruling class as a whole calculated that “the economy,” that is, the trillions of dollars in profits over 1,000. To date, 164,000 are dead. It is this SYSTEMIC RACISM, not the police murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and Rayshard Brooks, that has infuriated the vast majority. That daily racist police violence – with kicks, chokeholds, punches, shoves, take-downs, Mace and Tasers – nearly 60 percent of those recently killed by Minneapolis police – 19 people – were Black; 17 percent – or 5 people – were white.

Massive opposition to SYSTEMIC RACISM and the inseparable generalized social inequality that permeates every institution in U.S. society, are the only serious explanations for the magnificent, unprecedented, defiant daily multi-racial mass mobilizations in 2000+ U.S. cities and towns. In the face of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic and police repression courageous millions have taken to the streets. The resounding declarations of Black Lives Matter! and No Justice, No Peace! have reverberated across the world. An unprecedented 84 percent of the U.S. population, according to CNN polls, agree with the anti-racist demonstrators. An estimated 15-25 million have participated in the protests.

Yet astonishingly, several of the nation’s top research groups, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), now advocate reopening public schools. Their previously released stringent guidelines to do so, they now insist, are “suggestions” only. They pretend ignorance of the hundreds of billions needed to implement them – an amount that is absent from the new round of economic recovery.

The Challenge to Abolish Systemic Racism

Initiated by Alice Walker, Glen Ford, Pam Africa, Jeff Mackler, and many more!

Massive opposition to SYSTEMIC RACISM and the inseparable generalized social inequality that permeates every institution in U.S. society.

Who are we marching with?

In the United States, with Black men, women, and children massacred, the first signers of this statement were 27 million people. We urge everyone who is marching with us to add their names to the list. We also urge everyone who is opposed to this system of violence to add their names to the list and circulate this statement.

REQUEST FOR SIGNERS

We reprint this Manifesto at the request of its original signers. It is being circulated far and wide with the intention of opening a broad-ranging discussion of how today’s unprecedented movements against systemic racism and class oppression might develop toward new and independent organizations capable of challenging the ever-deepening incursions on fundamental social, political and economic rights. The aim is to include many activists who will add their names and help circulate this text. To add your name/organization, email socialistjusticemanifesto2929@gmail.com

(continued on page 3)
You don’t say! A group of the largest pension funds in the U.S. jointly managed a trillion dollars of investments, now says the looming climate catastrophe “poses a systemic threat to financial markets and the real economy, with significant disruptive consequences to asset valuations and our nation’s economic stability.” And you are going to do what for Mother Earth?

No exemptions for heroes on pedestals. Cop brutality and murders of Blacks has transformed national and the way U.S. society thinks. Not exempt from this sea change is the Sierra Club, a leading environmental group of 3-plus million members. Its founder, John Muir, was an avowed racist whose ideal of a white man in sync with nature to the exclusion of people of color is now being questioned by the organization. Get ready slave master George Washington, another tumbling wall is shaking the ground.

Mass movements 3, fossil fuel pipelines 0, Keystone XL – not now says the Supreme Court. Dakota Access pipeline – shut it down orders a federal judge. Atlantic Coast pipeline – cancelled by big business and celebrated by opponent Appalachian communities. We can almost smell the clean air.

“Social Cost of Carbon,” underplayed. It comes as no surprise that the Trump regime uses every opportunity to minimize the impact of growing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, believing that will help Trump’s buddies in the fossil fuel industry. Climate expert Michael K. Dorsey states, however, that “the only thing it does, unfortunately, is undermine … critical resources to communities that are experiencing the unfolding climate crisis. But then again, fudging the numbers is just a part of the social cost of capitalism.

Pork and hides. Since the bi-partisan members of Congress get very little done, generally, and it is an election year, specifically, why not pass around a little pork to make everyone in the esteemed chambers look good. So … here goes $9.5 billion for the Great American Outdoor. As upland conservation projects and national parks over the next 5 years (which we welcome), and to generate a few votes for incumbents everywhere (which does not surprise). Hides are worth protecting, too, you see. Bets are off, though, for the balance of the estimated $20 billion needed for deferred maintenance.

Signs of the times. Participating in the July 20 Strike for Black lives, the US Climate Strike Coalition championed the slogan and carried placards that stated, “Climate Justice is Racial Justice.” As many organizations that make up the present-day climate movement have already affirmed, the struggle for racial justice intersects with virtually all struggles for social justice, democratic rights and economic equality in the U.S. today.

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Socialist Action believes that the capitalist state and its institutions are instruments of the working class, and therefore they cannot be used in any positive way. Socialist Action is a national network of activists committed to the emancipation of workers and the oppressed. We strive to revitalize the anti-war, anti-racist, anti-fascist, anti-oppression, and other social movements with a mass-action perspective. Recognizing the divisions that exist on the left and within the workers’ movement, we seek to form united front type organizations around specific issues where a wide range of groups have agreement. In this way we seek to maximize our impact and demonstrate the power and effectiveness of mass action.

In the process we hope to bring activists together from different backgrounds into a revolutionary workers’ party that can successfully challenge the wealthy elite – whose pro-Iraqi war system is driving down living standards and threatens all life on this planet.

We are active partisans of the working class and believe in the need for independent working-class politics – not alliances with the bosses’ parties. If we take Jefferson seriously, he suggests something else: That Blacks have enslaved Africans, and that this is a moral judgment, and not a mere reflection of the economic power of the slave-owners.

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Socialist Action believes that the capitalist state and its institutions are instruments of the ruling class. We support the struggle of those who are specially oppressed under capitalism – women, LGBTQI people, national minorities, etc. We support the overthrow of capitalism, the establishment of a workers’ government and the fight for socialism. Our ultimate goal is a truly democratic, environmentally sustainable, and egalitarian society organized to satisfy human needs rather than corporate greed. We invite you to join us in the struggle to make the world a better place!
Socialist Action announced today the launch of a new member educational series. The bi-weekly educational program is a response by the Party to educate and integrate a growing wave of new recruits drawn to the ideas of revolutionary socialism.

“Now that we have recruited larger numbers of members across the country, we have the obligation to forge an educated cadre that is well versed in the history, theory and practice of revolutionary socialism,” states Jeff Mackler, Socialist Action’s National Secretary. “Our new member educational series is intended to help in that process. Classes will be offered by our movement’s own accomplished activists and educators.”

The class series will commence via Zoom on Monday nights, beginning August 10, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern, 7:00 Central, 6:00 Mountain and 5:00 Pacific times. The format will consist of a 30-40-minute presentation on a wide range of topics importance to revolutionaries. The factory Marxists followed by open Q&A dialogue. Eight classes are scheduled for the first round of the program running from mid-August to mid-November. Provisional members are strongly encouraged to participate in all 8 sessions. The series is open to all North American comrades (U.S. and Canada) regardless of longevity in the socialist movement. Older members are requested to defer to the questions and discussion of newer members, however, as the program is geared to them.

An initial schedule of classes is published in the August issue of Socialist Action and online at socialistaction.org.

To kick off the series, U.S. National Secretary Jeff Mackler and Socialist Action-Canada Federal Secretary Barry Weisleder will present the first two classes in the schedule.

Jeff Mackler’s talk on Monday, Aug. 10 is “Building the Revolutionary Socialist Party Today; Lessons of the 1917 Russian Revolution.”

Led by Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky, the 1917 Russian Revolution ended capitalist rule in the largest nation in the world. Mackler will present a Marxist analysis of that revolution. Points covered will include the program of Lenin’s Bolshevik Party, how that party and its leadership functioned, the conditions in Russia that made a revolutionary transformation possible, and why the revolution degenerated and succumbed to the subsequent Stalinist dictatorship. On Aug. 24, Barry Weisleder will follow suit with “The United Front: What It Is and How It Can Change the World.”

Weisleder will analyze the characteristics of the United Front, what is the history of the United Front, particularly its formative years in the 20th century? How does it differ from the Popular Front? How does Socialist Action apply the United Front tactic, at least in Canada?

These are some of the questions to be covered in this presentation of an essential mobilization tool used by the revolutionary Left.

Provisional and recently-joined members are asked to block out class times on their personal calendars. The educational series is one that will shape the political development of Party newcomers and assist them in becoming well-informed and effective revolutionary activists and leaders.

Out of hope for bipartisan bailout proposals, which largely focus on giving money to corporate mogul members instead, and concern over the “psychological damage” to students deprived of in-person education barely masks the underlying pressure exerted by the corporate elite to ignore the science in order to free up parents from childcare responsibilities and thus enable workers to return to capitalism’s factored and myriad workplaces.

The CDC’s assertion that students are less vulnerable to COVID-19 is increasingly contradicted by evidence of the likelihood that students will return home each day to infect their more vulnerable parents and grandparents, not to mention their teachers and other school workers. A recent study found that children are very effective carriers of the disease, with infected young children having 5 to 100 times more virus material in their upper respiratory tract than adults.

On July 31, the CDC reported that 260 children and staff became infected with the virus at a Georgia overnight camp after less than a week. Of those tested, 76% were infected. The camp had required “all trainees, staff members, and campers to provide documentation of a negative viral SARS-CoV-2 test less than 12 days before arriving,” according to the report. That day and after, campers arrived on June 21, “officials began sending campers home on June 24 and closed the camp on June 27,” the CDC reports.

The fact that even backyard gatherings over the “psychological damage” to students deprived of in-person education barely masks the underlying pressure exerted by the corporate elite to ignore the science in order to free up parents from childcare responsibilities and thus enable workers to return to capitalism’s factored and myriad workplaces.

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companies ever actually produce a work
vaccine is beside the point. The pan
demic—caused by deliberate and opportu
nities to take advantage of speculation in
the drug market — which they intend to do
at the highest price possible.

Today’s “Dump Trump! Vote Demo
crat or fascism is coming!” bombast
In the run-up to the 2018 midterm elec
tions, the Democrats shepherded militant
teachers, who had successfully struck
statewide in several red states, into the
electoral arena with their pledge to run
300 AFT and NEA union members or
their supporters as candidates — all
pledged to the Democrats. The promising
and unprecedented teachers’ uprising was
lent police repression has been the rule,
regardless of which party holds office.
Trump himself ordered the withdrawal
of his federal goons from Portland, with
his underlings essentially revealing that
there were never more than a dozen in
involved in the first place. Trump’s bluff
and bluster were once again revealed as
rhetorical bullshit.

Electoral advantage in the same,
many who decry Trump’s threats to violence
and its manifestation in Washington, D.C.,
when the posturing bufferoon ordered peaceful demonstra
ators disbursed with clubs and noxious
smoke from the streets of Lafayette Square, in scenes
broadcast nationwide — employ the same
brutal violence in good measure and
without reservation. The generals who
denounced Obama’s 2011 signing on to
lie in the generalized and increasing
impeachment of the vast majority.
Capitalism’s multiple failures in deal
ings with any of the present existential
risks — from the COVID-19 horror to
the impending global warming climate
catastrophe and endless wars of mass
murder and conquest — are not
longer easily swept aside with the electoral
wink of a Bernie Sanders, not to mention
Joseph R. Biden Jr. Their treacherous
call to social control overwhelmingly contin
ue to place their bets on maintaining the
facade of democracy and the myth that
the converging crises that plague work
class America. They fear that any re
solution: Vote Democrat! Win majorities
elections, the Democrats offered a single
solution: Vote Democrat! Win majorities
in both houses of congress! And Dump Trump
at all costs. The Democratic party was
organized and tightly controlled mass
demonstrations across the country.

Today, the Democrats are no longer
abstentionist. They and their corporate
supporters and foundations influence and
fund a vast array of liberal-minded
reform organizations, NGOs and faith
based groups that collectively, for exam
ple, initiated, promoted, and financed the
2016 Women’s March anti-Trump pro
tests, drawing an estimated five million
protesters across the country. Literally
every speaker in every city was either an
elected Democrat or directly associ
ated with one or more of the vast array of
Democratic Party-supporting main
stream liberal organizations.

The inspiring chants of the Black Lives
Matter movement and its ubiquitous
images have almost zero organizational
expression, except for the largely on
line presence of the Democratic Party
election-oriented reformist leadership of
M4BL, and similar organizations. Tragically,
no fighting component exists in today’s
terribly bureaucratized, class-collabo
rationist – if not corrupt – trade union
movement. Nonetheless, the dem
strator-called Strike for Black Lives actions
are at best symbolic. With regard to the
terrorists disbursed with clubs and noxious
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Democrats: Graveyard of social
movements
In these actions, and with regard to
nearly all those that followed in the three
thure Barack Obama, the Democrats, the no
rous “graveyard of social movements,”
and their kept allies effectively turned soci
in a “governor’s game” — to use the term of
Federal troops in Portland
Portland Democratic Party mayor Ted
Wheeler’s recent public stunt in rush
ing to the front lines of a demonstration
to denounce the tear gas-launching fed
eral forces, his dentures made from their pulled
and exploitation

Is the fascist threat posed today?
Aside from the moron Trump and a handful of his subordinates, all in step
with an associated rightwing band of rac
nist media personalities, no serious forc
today dare to pose the fascist threat.
Indeed, Trump’s camp is being increas
ingly deserted by his own party tops, as
his recent poll numbers indicate that his
re-election prospects are dim. When he
recently tweeted out the suggestion that
the November election may need to be
delayed,” Republican leaders Senator Mitch McConnell and Representative
Kevin McCarthy immediately responded in
unison that “Never in the history of the
country… have we ever had not a feder
ally scheduled election on time,” and that
there would be no delay of the upcoming
election, regardless of anything Trump
says. That Trump would impose martial law or challenge the results of his in
come is probably a fearsome prospection
d is far less a concern of any serious ruling class
think tankers or experienced politician
than is the present broad-ranging radica
lization in progress among unprecedented
working class layers.

Turning this radicalization into the safe
channels of the Democratic Party and
thwarting its coalescing into new and
independent mass working class forma
tion, is the overarching imperative of todays capitalist elite. They fully un
derstand that the present radicalization
has been sparked by unprecedented sol
idity with the most oppressed sections
of U.S. society, and that its roots also
(continued from page 3)
How Revolutionaries Use Elections

By Lazaro Monteverde

The Ballot or the Streets, or Both?

By August Nimtz

(Haymarket Press, 2019)

As I write this review, the protests over the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis and the recent events in the United States have highlighted the desperate struggles of the working class. At this moment in history, August Nimtz’s The Ballot or the Streets, or Both? has never been more needed, by those of us who want to build a better world.

How do we bring about fundamental social change? I am not talking about this reform or that, but deep thorough-going change. This is the question of political strategy for revolutionaries. Every generation of radicals struggles with this question. Before us, three of the greatest revolutionaries of the last 300 years also struggled with these same questions: Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Now political scientist and revolutionary socialist August Nimtz has explored their thinking and made it available to a new generation of revolutionaries. Nimtz’s book is a manual for today’s revolutionaries both here in the U.S. and in all corners of the world.

Nimtz prioritizes the voices of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. We hear them speak and learn what they said. They argued that only through independent working-class mass action can change occur. Furthermore, they did not believe the working class could merely take control of the existing state apparatus, which serves the interests of the ruling class — the working class had to smash the state and rebuild it.

So, did Marx, Engels, and Lenin reject elections and voting rights? No — absolutely not! They were strong defenders of electoral struggle and meaningfully vote for all men and women, of all races and religions. But this defense of democracy and voting was never an end in itself; voting was a tactic to strengthen the independent working-class movement, not a strategy of revolutionary change. As Nimtz shows, they were also aware of the dangers of elections. These dangers were summarized in the label “parliamentary cretinism,” a term popularized by Engels and later by Lenin. Parliamentary cretinism is the set of beliefs that what happens in congress or in an election is more important than what happens in the streets, that real change comes from legislation, not mass action. Parliamentary cretinism is a form of opportunism, a willingness to compromise with the ruling class for short-term gains at the expense of long-term objectives. Ultimately, parliamentarianism abandons socialism as a goal for reforms that might perhaps bring about a kinder, gentler capitalism.

The alternative to this opportunism and parliamentary cretinism is to use elections to build the independent working-class movement. This is done through revolutionaries running their own candidates independent of the capitalist parties. These candidates are selected by a revolutionary party or group and present a program of action that reflects their personal views. It is not important that they win. What is important is that they use the campaign to educate the masses and challenge their understanding of the nature of the working class. The number of votes the candidate earns is an indication of the mood and consciousness of the working class, just as statistics on strike activity are. If the candidates are elected, they remain under party control and use their positions to strengthen the struggles of working people and the oppressed. This revolutionary use of elections is known as revolutionary parliamentarianism, the very opposite of parliamentary cretinism.

While these revolutionary legislators do support specific reforms that benefit the masses, they oppose all reforms that take the opportunities to promote independent working-class action. They can use the elections to educate, agitate, and build independent working-class political power. It is for these reasons that the ruling class does everything it can to keep revolutionaries off the ballot and exclude them from participation in its elections. The lists of requirements for candidates to appear on the ballot in bourgeois elections are long, arbitrary, and overseen by capitalist courts, which have no interest in allowing a revolutionary socialist to take part. When Socialist Action and others have run candidates, the ruling class simply declare thousands of signatures on our ballot petitions invalid, then say we have too few to qualify — or any of the other myriad reasons they can use to deny socialist candidates. Socialist Action forthcoming elections use the campaign to educate the masses about a kinder, gentler capitalism. Parliamentary cretinism abandons socialism as a short-term gain at the expense of long-term opportunities. This revolutionary use of elections is known as revolutionary parliamentarianism, the very opposite of parliamentary cretinism.

Unlike Democrats, revolutionary legislators would use campaigns to educate the masses, strengthen the independent organizations of the working class, and expose the class nature of government structures. Nimtz concludes his extremely valuable exposition of the revolutionary legacy of Marx, Engels, and Lenin with a clear summary of the book’s relevance:

‘More than most of the twentieth century, the center of world revolutionary process is the so-called Third World. The unprecedented and still unfolding crisis of global capitalism has shifted the axis of politics to the advanced capitalist world, where there are far more opportunities in the electoral and parliamentary arenas — making Lenin’s strategy of revolutionary parliamentarianism more relevant now than ever. But to realize its potential, it has to be used. This book is a contribution toward that end for those who are truly anticapitalist and who not only seek but are willing to fight for a working-class alternative.’ (p. 412).

Read this book. Use voting and elections to build independent working-class power. Overthrow the capitalist world system.

Lenin speaking at Finland Station upon his return to Russia in April 1917, before the October Revolution. In speeches at that time, Lenin denounced the then-ruling coalition government, saying it was “an agreement between the socialists and the capitalists, it meant suppression of the revolution.” The way forward, he said, was “not by any agreement between the workers and the capitalists, and between the soldiers and the landowners, but by a struggle of the workers and peasants against their oppressors.”

Socialist Action continues to employ the approach of Marx, Engels, and Lenin’s approach. Ex-Hawkins, leading a candidate for the Green Party presidential nomination, and Michael Albert, a staff writer and editor of Z Magazine, who advocates a safe strategy of voting for third party candidates only in states where Biden is sure to win at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryWNdUvXf_Q.

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See the recent debate between Makker, Howie Hawkins, a leading candidate for the Green Party presidential nomination, and Michael Albert, a staff writer and editor of Z Magazine, who advocates a safe strategy of voting for third party candidates only in states where Biden is sure to win at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryWNdUvXf_Q.

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looped lynch ropes ominously tied to trees in an Oakland, CA park a few days later.

SYSTEMIC RACISM: That is, the school-to-prison scenario, where ev-

der-segregated, underfunded schools in the communities of the poor “graduate” near majors of functionally illiterate students channeled into the ever-pri-

vatized-for profit mass incarceration prison-industrial-complex to work at
Fortune 500 corporations at slave wage rates averaging 50 cents per hour. Half of the incarcerated are people of color. The nation that ranks first in the number of billionaires ranks first in the number and percentage of its population in jail. 

SYSTEMIC RACISM: When COVID-19 deaths of Blacks, Latinx

and Native Americans are triple the rate of whites and quality health care, if any

health care, is absent for the great ma-

jority.

SYSTEMIC RACISM in the poverty wage, part time, “gig” economy, “flex-

ible” workforce largely of the poorest “essential workers” forced back to work in
deadly unsafe/unprotected conditions to salvage the profits of corporate Amer-

ica. The darker the skin color, the lower the wage. And even more so for the low-
est rungs of the scale largely occupied by poor, Black women.

SYSTEMIC RACISM and CLASS EXPLOITATION when trillions of dol-

lars in the recent CARES Act corporate bailout legislation were gifted to behe-

moth corporations – with a handful of billionaires getting $457 billion – while a one-time pitance is allocated, if at all, to working people.

SYSTEMIC RACISM when 43 per-
cent of the military’s soldiers are Black, Brown and Native American – victims of the economic draft – and trained to police the world at a cost one Stri1ion annual-

ly while our cities decay, our environ-

ment destroyed, our waters polluted, our

schools fall, our health care disappears, our jobs deemed obsolete, our wages cut, our children go hungry and our hopes for a better future increasingly dashed.

Today, with undaunted millions in the streets, frightened figures in power have conceded more in days than in multiple decades, indeed centuries. Statues hon-

oring the segregationist slaveocracy have been removed at the hands of the peo-

ple and even by decree of local and state governments and in the nation’s capital.

Their portraits have been ordered dis-

appeared from the halls of Congress. Promises of “police reform” have been

instantaneously announced in cities across the country. Generations of racist brutali-
y

ty and discrimination are pledged to be remedied with the passage of a piece of

paper. Buildings honoring racist Klan

member U.S. senators have been instant-

ently renamed. A handful of police chiefs resigned. A few racist cops have been
charged with murder and may be con-
victed in contrast to yesterday where such charges, not to mention convictions were the rare exception.

Spectacle of U.S. troops taking the

knee

Even the nation’s leading generals, who oversee U.S. wars around the world, counseled caution with regard to sending active duty troops, 43 percent of whom are people color, to quell the massive an-

ri-racist protests. “The right of the people peaceably to assemble,” they assert-
ed, rather than be subjected to threats of martial law, at least for now, had to be respected. At least for now! No doubt the rebellious spectacle of U.S. troops taking the knee or otherwise fraternity with rather than repressing their own people who was a risk to be avoided. And Juneenth, June 19, when federal troops arrived in Texas in 1865 to announce the end of slavery, is to be declared a national hol-

iday. That is supposed to fix everything.

Where do we go from here?

We begin with the proposition that the term police reform is an oxymo-

ron. Derek Chauvin’s knee has been on Black necks for four centuries. His

police ancestors were the slave patrols of yesteryear formed to track down es-

caped chattel. They were the post Civil War police who arrested en masse Black Code designated “vagrants” turned into instant prisoners transferred to planta-

tion chain gangs to work free for former slave owners; they were the racist Bull

Connor heads of Birmingham’s Public Safety Commission hired to enforce the state’s “separate but equal!” Jim Crow laws; they were and remain the cops em-

dployed to break union strikes and club civil rights demonstrators. They are all part of the system’s inherent function to maintain the social order of the few at the cost of their lives.

Abolitionist Frederick Douglass said it well, “Power cedes nothing without a de-
mand. It never did and never will.”

Wendell P. Williams, Malcolm X, a century later came to the same conclusion, “Power never takes a step back – only in the face of more pow-
er.” Malcolm added: “I believe that there will be a clash between those who want

freedom, justice and equality for every-

one and those who want to continue the systems of exploitation.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. too: “Since we know that the system will not change the rules, we are going to have to change the system.”

The instant largely cosmetic concess-

ions won to date in a matter of days and weeks affirm what Douglas, Malcolm and Martin learned from bitter struggle – with regard to Malcolm X and Dr. King, at the cost of their lives.

SYSTEMIC RACISM in U.S. society will be fundamentally altered only with profound changes in the social order of the few, and disband the racist institutions of police power can only be envisioned in this context – in a political, social and economic frame-

work where the Strillions spent on the in-

stitutions of racist police repression can be deployed to defend and safeguard our inmates and our society – where the Strillions spent on bailing out the corporate elite, and the Strillions more transferred to them in “tax reform” bills will be spent on re-building the nation’s poor neigh-

borhoods, inner cities, and tribal lands. The movement we aspire to bring forth in alliance with all exploited working people will fight for:

* Free quality health care and educa-

tion for all from the cradle to the grave, including generalized virus testing and PPE now!

* An end to all evictions and foreclo-

osures during this COVID-19 pandemic and depression-era!! Limitations on rent to no more than 20 percent of household income!

* Billions for human needs not endless wars of intervention.

* An end to racist deportations. Tear down the walls! Full amnesty and equal rights for ALL! No more deportations!

* An end to the violence and discrim-

ination against women and LGBTQI+

people.

* Save the earth! Stop the impending fossil fuel-induced climate catastrophe. Nationalize the entire fossil fuel corpo-

rate sector and transition to a safe, ecologically sustainable energy system. Jobs for all at a living wage for all replaced workers during the transi-
tion! No to environmental racism and to toxic waste dumping!

* Unity! UNITY! UNITY!

* The courageous spectacle of unprece-

dented numbers of inspired white youth standing firm and side by side with their Black, Latinx and Native American sis-
ters and brothers, in defiance of curfews, police and racist attack dogs, is a model that should be emulated around the globe with the im-

expected, unthinkable yesterday is on the order of the day today!

Alice Walker, author, poet, activist

Glen Ford, Black Agenda Report

Pam Africa, Int’l Cen. for Self-Determination And Friends of Mumia

Cliff Conner, author, The Tragedy of American Science

Jeff Mackler, Socialist Action

Joe Lombardo, UNAC

Michael Steven Smith, host WBAL radio’s “Law and Disorder”
That Russia paid the Taliban financial bounties to kill 18 U.S. and “coalition” soldiers in Afghanistan is in dispute to say the least. Both Democrats and Republicans in Congress along with official U.S. intelligence agencies on the veracity of this latest New Cold War episode. The July 9 New York Times reported, “The C.I.A. — as well as analysts at the National Counterterrorism Center — expressed medium or moderate confidence in that conclusion. The National Security Agency, which puts greater stock in surveillance intercepts, was more skeptical, officials have said.”

As with the Democrats’ Russiagate charges that Vladimir Putin and Company rigged the 2016 elections—without a shred of evidence of a single ballot box or computer voting machine manipulation anywhere in the U.S.—today’s Cold War Democratic Party tops are leading the charge in demanding that the U.S. increase its sanctions on Russia, while accusing President Trump of being soft on “tyrants” the world over. Bi-partisan bluster and bluff aside on “tyrants” the world over.

Further, Afghanistan’s lithium reserves, produces more than 90 percent of heroin in the world. The war continues to this day. Not for free spiritedness or the alleged “peace” treaty with the Islamic theocratic Taliban, who occupy much of rural Afghanistan. The latter negotiations are meant to be held up due to the Taliban’s failure to agree to release some U.S. prisoners.

The above figures, except for the 360,000 indirectly killed during the U.S. war, are the official tally of the U.S. Defense Department. They omit the estimated 55,000 dead among the U.S.-trained and financed Afghan Army forces as well as the dead and wounded among the U.S.-orchestrated “coalition” of a dozen nations brought on board to lend an “international” appearance to the “war on terror.” We add to the horror the dead and wounded in neighboring Pakistan, where a contingent of some 2,000 U.S. troops remains in Afghanistan, half of them mercenaries and “contractors” organized by enterprising U.S. corporations in the business of death and destruction for profit. We add to the horrid the dead and wounded in neighboring Pakistan, where a contingent of some 2,000 U.S. troops remains in Afghanistan, half of them mercenaries and “contractors” organized by enterprising U.S. corporations in the business of death and destruction for profit.

Need we recall that the U.S. war on Afghanistan, launched in 2001 following the September 11 bombing of the World Trade Center, began when the Afghan government was charged, not with any role in the Trade Center bombing, but with harboring Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda associates, who were alleged to be hiding out in caves in the Afghan mountains. During the Soviet Union’s 1979-89 war of intervention in Afghanistan — a deadly war violated that poor nation’s right to self-determination — bin Laden’s al-Qaeda forces and those of some of the seven factions of the jihadist Mujahidin were armed and financed by the U.S. government. Bin Laden, who later claimed responsibility for the 9/11 attack, was assassinated by U.S. Navy SEALS in Pakistan in 2011. But the U.S. war continues to this day. Not for freedom and democracy, to be sure, but for “geopolitical advantage” — that is, booty.

Since the U.S. war began in 2001, Afghan, 80 percent rural countryside, has been the world’s leading illicit opium producer. Its opium poppy harvest produces more than 90 percent of heroin globally and more than 95 percent of the European supply. More land is used for opium in Afghanistan than is used for cocoa cultivation in all of Latin America. Further, Afghanistan’s lithium reserves, worth trillions of dollars, are the most valuable in the world, ahead of Bolivia. Since 2011, the Pentagon’s financial arm has been in negotiations with various corporate entities as to which will be granted mining contracts. Similarly, Afghanistan’s gold, niobium, cobalt and other minerals may well transform this poorest of the poor nations on earth into a global foreign-owned mining hub. As with the U.S. war and occupation of Iraq, where oil was the booty, the Pentagon’s U.S. corporate favorites are likely to end up with the lion’s share. The U.S. fights for lithium and gold and perhaps a hand in the lucrative drug trade, as it did in partnership in the 1980s with the Columbian Medellín cartel… and freedom too.

The U.S. war on Syria continues

Today, the U.S./NATO-orchestrated war against Syria, with the support of jihadist military forces trained and armed at U.S. military bases in Turkey, continues, albeit with more limited goals as compared to the previous U.S. objective of total conquest and permanent occupation. That war, beginning in 2012, saw U.S.-financed, armed and trained forces from Saudi Arabia and elsewhere at one point occupying more than two-thirds of the country. At that moment, the U.S. was openly presiding over conferences in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere with its invited guests assembled to discuss the permanent division of Syria and its resources in the context of the expected imminent departure of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

With U.S.-backed jihadist forces, including al-Qaeda and its formerly associated al Nusra Front firing missiles into the capital city of Damascus, few believed that the outcome would be otherwise. As with Iraq, following the U.S. removal of the Saddam Hussein government at a cost of 1.5 million Iraq lives, Syria’s resources, if not its geographic borders, were to be divided by the imperial U.S. in a manner not too dissimilar from the French and British division of the Middle East imposed after WWI. Delegitimated Syria, however, decided otherwise. As a poor and oppressed nation, it justly exercised its right to self-determination and asked its allies for assistance. These included Iran, Russia and the Hezbollah forces in Lebanon that years earlier had defeated the Israeli attempt at conquest. The U.S.-war against Syria has cost the lives of 60,000 Syrian soldiers and an estimated 500,000 civilians. But with the help of its allies, Syria successfully turned back and defeated the U.S./NATO-backed jihadist invaders, who by brute force sought to impose their version of Sharia law on a reluctant population. Over the course of two years, these jihadists were driven from one occupied city and region after another. A major poll of Syria’s population organized by ORB International, a London-based Gallop-affiliated organization, during these years indicated that the U.S./NATO forces and all of their “coalition of the willing” jihadist allies had the support of less than nine percent of Syria’s people. In contrast, the Assad government, pilloried and demonized by the U.S. media and falsely accused of using poison gas on its opponents, had the support of a significant majority.

Today, with the exception of the northwestern province of Idlib, bordering on Turkey, where the remnants of al-Qaeda and its allies are protected and armed by the U.S., NATO and Turkey, all of Syria remains under the al-Assad government’s control, minus the fertile and oil-rich northeastern region bordering on Turkey where a contingent of some 2,000 U.S. troops remain to protect U.S. “interests.” “We’re keeping the oil,” proclaimed the moron imperial President Trump when he was attacked by the Democrats for removing most of the U.S. forces from Syria! Meanwhile the U.S. and its NATO allies openly threaten to bomb Syria to smithereens should it move to liberate its nation from its imperialist-backed occupiers. An estimated half of Syria’s population was driven into internal or external exile during this imperial war of mass murder and destruction of Syria’s infrastructure. And the horror continues to this day, as the U.S.’ unilateral-imposed sanctions have reduced Syria’s economy to barely survival levels.
AMLO and Trump: A Meeting of the Desperate

BY MANUEL AGUILAR MORA

The outlook cannot be bleaker. A Covid-19 health pandemic that is at its highest, with a large number of infections, hospitalizations and around 650 deaths per day and whose effects do not stop growing, so much so that deaths are forecast by the end of the year to double or plus the current ones (more than 52,000 today), the worst economic crisis – depression – in 90 years, exponential increase in violence and an AMLO government that continues without evaluating the radical social and political change that these events have meant with respect to his start of government in December 2019. His Fourth Transformation (4T) is sinking because obviously to face the colossal problems that such events mean, it is far from enough to undertake the construction of the Maya Train, the Santa Lucia airport and the Tabasco refinery, the iconic projects to which the president clings almost inexplicably, showing an optimism that sounds completely false and forced.

It is in this scenario in which we must place the initiative of AMLO, which he himself announced, of his visit to Donald Trump on July 6, 7 and 8. Initially, this visit had been conceived as a way to celebrate the implementation on July 1 of the “free trade agreement” between Mexico, the United States (USA) and Canada (USMCA, known in Mexico as “T-MEC”). But the confirmed absence of Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau at the meeting is the demonstration that it is a meeting in which the pretext of the T-MEC will serve, while the Mexican and U.S. presidents discuss other issues. The exercise of secret diplomacy that these two bourgeois politicians are experts in practicing conceals what will be their talks and discussions.

The numerous arguments that have motivated this controversial meeting, for and against its undertaking on the part of the Mexican president, are of all kinds. Those who consider it negative, by a calculatedly unfortunate initiative of AMLO due to the complex and difficult political situation in which the U.S. government finds itself, in the midst of the electoral campaign, are palpably the majority. He certainly has defenders among his Morena [López-Obrador’s party] supporters, but his position is very weak. Many strongly criticized President Peña Nieto when, in 2016, he invited to Los Pinos the then still only candidate Donald Trump. How can they not do the same when accepting the invitation to Washington of a president so discredited in his own country that all signs and polls indicate that he will be defeated in his re-election attempt in November?

AMLO explained that his visit “is going to be a political meeting in the good sense of what politics is.” But such an attitude before his meeting with Trump is completely out of place, because the U.S. president is not just any “political” character. The actions of his government have culminated in the last hundred days that have shaken the neighboring country are the facts that mark his criminal clumsiness in handling the Covid-19 pandemic with 182,000 deaths and his racist arrogance in the face of massive protests instigated by the murder of George Floyd, an African American man asphyxiated by a Minnesota police officer. To meet with this gangster of U.S. politics, a public enemy of the planet, believing that he will respect “The good sense of politics” is an attitude bordering on naivety.

A cunning politician like AMLO cannot help but appreciate the risk he takes with his visit. Why, in spite of everything, does he do it? He has stated bluntly that he does not intend to meddle in “partisan” politics and has explicitly said that he will not meet with Democratic candidate Joe Biden, who in three months will almost certainly be elected as Trump’s successor. That is why, whether AMLO wants it or not, the situation in which Trump finds himself makes it so that his visit appears as an endorsement of Trump’s re-election. Trump is focused on securing his re-election, and all political activity he undertakes is focused on that goal. He will use AMLO’s visit to gain supporters in the “Hispanic” sectors among which Mexican workers or descendants of Mexicans are in the majority. In this way, AMLO will not be able to avoid being splashed by Trump’s failure in November, a failure that Agent Orange himself announced when he said last week publicly and without evidence that the 2020 presidential election will be “the most corrupt in the history of our country”. Why? Because he will be defeated.

Nationalism and Anti-Imperialism

AMLO, he himself says, does not feel good in the wide and foreign world outside of Mexico. But clearly his foreign policy advisers, starting with Chancellor Marcelo Ebrard, who should know more than his boss, seem incapable of influencing him. The trip to Washington is the first planned foreign policy action that AMLO has undertaken, it is also the evidence of his political and ideological gangsterism. His “nationalism” is very narrow and even accommodating. Before becoming president, he wrote a pamphlet titled “Hey, Trump.” In it, he criticized the racist and discriminatory attitude that Trump has always had against Mexico and Mexicans, insulting both as no other U.S. president had done. As president, AMLO has not even dared to criticize Trump. Since accepting that Mexico’s National Guard become an assistant to the U.S. Border Patrol on the two borders on Mexico – northern and southern – to stop and control the flow of Central American immigrants to the United States, AMLO has boasted of having the best relations with the ogre from the White House.

Precisely the implementation of T-MEC is evidence of the farce of AMLO’s anti-neoliberal discourse, since its approval represents the continuity of the previous NAFTA, signed by his number one political enemy, the super-neoliberal [former President Carlos] Salinas de Gortari. The T-MEC represents a version of the previous treaty with derivative changes that maintain the essential subordination of the Mexican economy to that of the United States. Just to mention a key aspect of this subordination and exploitation, we can refer to what is document- ed by ECLAC [Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean] in only one of the productive sectors: the average wage received by workers in the automotive industry in Mexico is $2.88 per hour, while their counterparts in American earn about $24 in the same amount of time; manufacturing in Mexico, instead of the U.S., generates “labor savings” for companies of between $600 to $700 per vehicle. The resulting profits are extraordinary if we simply multiply these figures by the number of vehicles produced in the country: 3,500,000 in 2018. The government has a strong commitment to T-MEC but without foundation. The previous 25 years of NAFTA did not signify any more significant progress in the Mexican economy, which barely grew, with an average in the period of 2.0 percent. Inequality became abys- mal. Capitalism remains the great obstacle to the true progress of the people of Mexico. But for AMLO, who maintains that “the class struggle” does not operate in Mexico, this colossal display of exploitation that makes any other type of corruption small is part of the “business as usual” of economic functioning. That is why, under pressure from the large imperialist corporations, the confinement in the maquiladora zones in the north of the country was so quickly concluded, and that is why Susana Prieto, the leader of the Matamoros maquiladora workers (mostly women) was also arrested (and (continued on page 9)
...U.S. war machine persists in the pandemic

(continued from page 7)

The U.S. destruction of Iran

The U.S. and Israeli governments bare no secrets. They have publicly and frequently stated that Iran's nuclear facilities a decade ago, which had been reduced to near worthlessness.

Venezuela under renewed attack

In late June, Trump’s Special Representative for Venezuela, Elliott Abrams, announced yet another round of sanctions – but not just on Venezuela, which is not a top priority for the Trump administration. The sanctions, according to a former UN rapporteur, including blockage of food and medical supplies, cost the lives of 100,000 Venezuelans. U.S. sanctions and acts of war against the people of Venezuela are international crimes.

Flaunting his Cold War credentials, Joseph Biden said recently, “Trump talks tough on Venezuela, but admires thugs and dictators like Nicolas Maduro.”

Biden then re-affirmed his support for the Guaidó coup.

(continued from page 8)

vied the details:

“Abrahams has managed to force Lon- don-based Lloyd’s Registrariat to with- draw insurance and registration to ships of the state, which were part of the blockade, meaning they are unable to dock anywhere in the world. ‘It’s just not worth the hassle or the risk for [companies],’ he gleefully told Reuters. ‘[If] there are people who don’t cooperate… We’ll go after the ship, the ship owner, the ship’s captain.’ U.S. citizens breaking the embargo already face 30 years in prison.”

McLeod continues: “Washington’s financial war is based on the belief that the Venezuelan economy to a standstill, with oil exports at their lowest in mod- ern history… Sanctions are a bi-partisan endeavor, beginning under President Obama in 2015, who declared a ‘national emergency’ due to the ‘unusual and ex- treme threat’ against the United States.”

Not to be outdone, the Democrats hoped for president-in-waiting, Joseph Biden, to follow, but not on Venezuela, but admires thugs and dictators like Nicolas Maduro. As President, I will stand with the Venezuelan peo- ple to seize their wealth, and not with the oligarchs.”

(continued from page 7)

The U.S. secret surveillance intelligence apparatus has no rival on earth. It’s “enemies” and “allies” of the moment are nearly defenseless in its wake. In the name of its “national security,” the U.S. maintains the capacity to spy on its en- tire population, if not the world’s, 1,100 U.S. military bases in 80 countries stand ready to launch nuclear war. So did the United Kingdom, France and Russia combined have 30. China has 11.

Despite the horror of the world’s most deadly pandemic in a century has cap- tured world headlines, the U.S. war ma- chine operates uninterrupted today with the glare of terrible deeds largely obscured from public view.

U.S. ranks first in COVID-19 cases

The endless U.S. imperial drive for power and profit is not limited to the in- ternational stage. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. has seen new daily cases in the U.S. “plateaued” for a few weeks at 22,000 per day, all fif- ty states remain near full capacity. The sci- entific community, began to implement plans for a return to work. Capitalism’s wage slaves were deemed expendable in containing the virus, as long as their labor. Human lives, in the U.S. and the world over are subordinate to capital- ist interests.

The U.S. stands first in the world in the number of COVID-19 infections, accounting for more than one quarter of the world’s total cases. With the “safe” reopening criteria deployed, the daily infection rate has soared to 70,000 with daily deaths once again over 1,000 and climbing!

Just last Tuesday, the New York Times reported that the U.S. has a death rate of 44.11 per 100,000 people that ranks fourth-worst in the world among the countries most affected by the coronavirus!

Just as systemic – that is, institutional racism is imbedded in the very fabric of the U.S. society, so are its imperatives to war, exploitation, environmental de- struction and climate catastrophe in all its myriad and horrific forms. Today, for the first time in a very long while, mass forces are emerging in the U.S. and worldwide to challenge capitalism’s domi- nant economic logic and to forge a future where the multiple horsemen of the capitalist apocalypse are forever ban- ished and human beings – the vast ma- jority as opposed to the billionaire elite – build a new world where freedom, jus- tice and social equality reign across the globe. For the socialista future! Join us!

AMLO-Trump meeting

already released.

AMLO’s “nationalistic” conception gets along very well with the imperialist pol- icy of his senior partner in Washington. But for all his electoral success, he will lose because he has bet on a loser. The rea- son is that the urgency of Washington’s support is crucial from an economic and political point of view. That’s why the contradictions will be on this sec- ond anniversary of his electoral victory

The true anti-imperialist policy is be- ing forged in the process that the situa- tion itself promotes to be helplessness in Mexico and in the United States. The mobilizations that shook U.S. policy on the occasion of the re-election of the Mexican president. Instead, the most exploited layers of workers in the U.S.A. This last sector is the one that, after the renunciation of President Geor- gia to the leading contributor of power to the Mexican economy, ahead of the dollars of tourism and oil. They despise AMLO, with his foe denominated by Trump. They are the sectors of the coalitions, commun- ities, alliances of California, Texas, Ari- zona, New Mexico, Illinois, New York, Oregon and so many other places whose immigrant advocacy lead- ers, the “Dreamers,” groups and unions, are all very critical of Trump and are on no way view his meeting with AMLO as positive.

The meeting between Trump and AMLO, in which both desperate politi- cians need each other, is a conjunctur- al meeting, with no future, from which the only beneficiary is the people of Mexico nor those of the United States.

Manuel Aguilar Mora is a militant of the Communist Party of the U.S. Professor at the Autonomous University of Mexico City (UACM), in 1968 he joined the Communist Party of the U.S. He was the head of the editorial board of the world literature fight alongside José Revuel- tas. He was the founder of the Revolu- tionary Workers Party (PRT). Author of numerous books on the political and so- cial history of Mexico.
Cops Snatch 3 Black Lives Matter - Toronto Activists

BY SAM ERIC

Three activists from Black Lives Matter - Toronto (BLM-TO) were snatched off downtown Toronto streets on Saturday, July 18, by an enraged Toronto Police Service (TPS). The abductions occurred around 11 a.m. after a peaceful protest and art instal laundry that included pink paint being thrown on symbols of Canadian colonialism and white supremacy. Shortly thereafter, the official Twitter account of @BLM.TO described the situation and issued a call for accomplices to converge on TPS 52 Division to free the activists.

After failing to kneel the crowd at Queen’s Park, and thwarted in their efforts by BLM-TO event marshals, the cops settled on abduction of three Black activists that they could get their hands on. An hour after the abductions took place BLM-TO was not even able to ascertain the whereabouts of the arrested attendees of the event, let alone ensure they had access to counsel. It was subsequently revealed that after driving around the city for three hours with the hostages the cops brought them to 52 Division on Dundas West. It was at least another two hours later after the activists were granted access to legal counsel.

By this time the crowd outside of cop house #52 swelled into the hundreds. At 6 p.m. a large rally was held to clarify the situation, charge the TPS with gestapo and intimidation tactics, and again demand not only the release of the activists that day but also to defund, disarm, dismantle and abolish the Toronto Police Services. Participants asserted that the protest and budding encampment would continue until all of the taken activists were released by the cops. The line was drawn when one of the speakers emphatically stated “if they [TPS] take one more of our people we will burn this station down”.

Festive music, dancing and food-sharing, interspersed by speeches, chants and cultural displays of Indigenous song and music, continued into the night. In one tense moment a police supervisor emerged to discover that his officers had allowed the protestors, who were loud and militant, too close to the door. He took it upon himself to start pushing on the line of protestors at the front lobby, which solicited the entire crowd of hundreds outside 52 Division quickly to push the line of protestors at the front lobby, allowing the protestors, who were loud and militant, to get inside, and demanding, and obtaining the release of the three hostages — but not without a fight.

Rodney Diverlus, co-founder of BLM-TO, broke down the previous day’s events when he stated “we have seen less action from the police when we don’t.” He identified the police who were killed in interactions with police since April of 2020. Diverlus then re-stated the demand around defunding the police which include first defunding, demilitarization, disarming and dismantling. They pointed to a billion-dollar police budget in the City of Toronto and the immediate need to redirect a minimum of 50% of it to social services and community needs. Related demands include the end of mass surveillance, cops out of schools, an end to the special constable program, cops out of the TTC, the end of paid policing programs and the end of plainclothes officers.

Diverlus and BLM-TO voiced to the TPS: “We’re not going anywhere, and this will only, the pressure will only grow, and we won’t stop until you are defunded, until you are dismantled.” Another BLM-TO member stated: “This art-based peaceful protest was drawing attention to the genocidal violence and racist histories of these statues, but also of the system of policing and prison in Canada.”

“Why was pink paint on that statue more important than Black Queer Women?...Her life did not matter more than that fucking statue” said a BLM-TO organizer.

The status and history of Egerton Ryerson, John Macdonald and King Edward VII were identified within the space of the colonial white supremacy they inhabit and represent. Peaceful activists engaged in an art installation, challenging the legacy of these royals, scyphoforms and technocrats, were brutally targeted by the state. But it turned out to be a complete failure on the part of TPS.

Like the federal agents in the streets of the USA, the crowd’s reaction of the security forces of the ruling class only made the people’s resolve stronger. These statues will be taken down, and so will the TPS.

Note: The 3 Artist/Activists have been charged with mischief under $5000 and conspiracy. We call for the immediate dropping of all charges and an investigation into the TPS and their gestapo-like intimidation tactics, along with their immediate disarming, defunding, dismantling and abolishment.
SA Canada Remembers Joe Flexer

We print here excerpts from an essay in remembrance of Joe Flexer (1933-2000) by Barry Weisleder, Federal Secretary of Socialist Action-Canada. For the full essay, go to socialistaction.ca.

Joe’s son Dani told the Toronto Star that Joe “became a communist and a mechanic at about the same time, at about (age) 15.” His ideas took him from his native Brooklyn, New York to the Middle East where he joined an Israeli Kibbutz in the 1950s. His principles compelled him to break with Zionism, and to champion the fight for Palestinian self-determination. In Israel, Joe was, unhapply a soldier, and most happily, a labour militant and communist. In the mid-1960s, Joe returned to North America, lived in Winnipeg and briefly in Montreal, and became an important figure in the movement against the war in Vietnam and on the socialist left. Joe settled in Toronto in the early 1970s. He became a provincial organizer for the Trotskyist Waffle movement in the New Democratic Party. I believe that one of his political traits was his deep sympathy for the radical socialist wing of the Waffle in Ontario. Some of its key elements exhibited the growing influence of Marxist and Trotskyist ideas.

But a funny thing happened to Joe between the meeting hall, the library, and the bar. He became convinced that the Canadian nationalist and left-reformist leaders of the Waffle were wrong, and that the young revolutionaries, fresh from the anti-war, student and feminist movements, were much more his political cup of tea. Always an ardent internationalist, this was no great leap for Joe, the Canadian nationalist, to help to founded the Red Circle, a Marxist group, and then the Waffle. When Ontario NDP Leader Stephen Lewis issued the famous ultimatum to the Waffle in 1972, and the Waffle debated what to do and then walked out of the NDP, Joe and the Red Circle campaigned as part of the Stay and Fight Caucus. But the repression of the Waffle took its toll, and for a generation the NDP was depleted of intellectual ferment and radical activism.

It was in this period that I met Joe. This was the beginning of a thirty-year relationship between us, one that matured into a very close political collaboration and comradeship, one that intensified over the years and which was the biggest single political influence on my life. Joe helped to founded the Red Circle, a Marxist group, and then the Waffle. When Ontario NDP Leader Stephen Lewis issued the famous ultimatum to the Waffle in 1972, and the Waffle debated what to do and then walked out of the NDP, Joe and the Red Circle campaigned as part of the Stay and Fight Caucus. But the repression of the Waffle took its toll, and for a generation the NDP was depleted of intellectual ferment and radical activism.

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This book presents a harrowing well-researched description of Washington’s war against immigrants on the Mexican border. The author is an investigative journalist and documentary filmmaker. Frey was born in Tijuana, Mexico. His parents moved across the border to southern California in 1965, where he could see Tijuana as a child. His mother was Mexican, and his father was a United States citizen, so he was a U.S. citizen too, which enabled him to move fairly freely back and forth between the U.S. and Mexico.

Americans are well aware of Trump’s cruel treatment of immigrants and asylum seekers at the border. Less well known is how the stage was set for Trump’s war against immigrants by previous administrations.

A qualitative turning point came in 1986. Under the Reagan administration, as immigration from Mexico grew, with what became known as the “amnesty bill” because it allowed legal status for many undocumented immigrants who had worked in the U.S. for years and had put down roots.

“But the bill did not address the root causes of the migration … [The bill’s authors] also made sure to provide for a militaristic approach to border enforcement. [It] would be fortified with physical barriers, and more border guards and border guards would be deployed” Frey writes.

“If the United States was going to grant an exception to codified immigration law by granting amnesty, it was going to make sure, by sheer force, that migrants would not come illegally again.” But, of course, they continued to come anyway.

Frey also says, “Southern California was the destination for undocumented immigrants, and they would gain access to the United States through Tijuana and cross into San Diego … But in the late eighties and early nineties, this pristine area became one of the main centers for the militarization of the border with Mexico.”

Under the administration of George H.W. Bush, 1989-93, the size of the Border Patrol was doubled and seven hundred miles of new border fencing was built. But the real militarization of the border began under Bill Clinton as immigration continued to grow along with anti-immigration sentiment whipped up by the Republicans.

Sensing a winning issue, Clinton out-Republicanized the Republicans on immigration. Under Clinton’s order, the Border Patrol issued the Border Patrol Strategic Plan 1994 and Beyond – National Strategy, which became known as the “preservation through deterrence strategy,” which is still being employed today.

The strategy was to build up fencing and recruit Border Patrol agents at the border between El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Mexico, and to do the same between Tijuana and San Diego. Federal agents entering the U.S. without documents to cross the border in the inhospitable and sometimes scorching hot terrain of mountain and desert.

The trek across this terrain is long and difficult. Many die along the way, most often from dehydration – this is the “deterrence.” The border between El Paso and Juarez is the Rio Grande, crossed by bridges. Some try to evade the Border Patrol by swimming or using rafts to cross the river, and there are drownings – another “deterrence.”

It isn’t known how many migrants have died in the deserts and mountains since “prevention through deterrence” was implemented, for reasons Frey explains.

Trump tours a section of the border wall on July 23. (Evan Vucci/AP)

The Roots of Trump’s Immigration Policy

By Barry Sheppard

Sand and Blood: America’s Stealth War on the Mexico Border

(Bold Type Books, 2019)

By John Carlos Frey

The Roots of Trump’s Immigration Policy

By Barry Sheppard

This first five years of their stay in the U.S. Also in that year, Clinton signed the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, after the World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombings. The Act allowed the government to increase prosecutions and arrests of suspected “terrorists.” But it also allowed immigrants, legal or otherwise, to be apprehended and detained without due process, if they were convicted of certain felonies. As a result, the number of immigrants held in be deported.

Clinton also made it even harder for migrants to apply for legal documents to enter. The reason there are so many immigrants crossing the border without documents, is that it can take years – even two decades – to get legal documents, if immigrants from Mexico and points South.

Also under Clinton, the military increasingly was used at the border to enforce anti-immigrant laws. The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 said the military cannot be used as a police force domestically – unless the Congress or the President authorizes. The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 was the first law against immigrants on the border, in all against the Congress or the President.

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the “War on Terror” was launched justifying the war against Afghanistan and Iraq, and with attacks on civil liberties domestically.

The border with Mexico was falsely claimed to be an entry point for terrorists, and the militarization was greatly increased. Under George W. Bush, the annual budget for the Border Patrol jumped from $1 billion to $2 billion. Under Obama, the amount continued to rise and is now around $4 billion.

Bush established the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP), which took over all functions of Customs, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), including the Border Patrol, creating the largest police force in the country – some 60,000. It was composed of Customs and Border Patrol agents, and immigration inspectors. ICE did not fall under the CBP, but was part of DHS.

The George W. Bush administration added another law, making crossing the border without papers a crime for the first time.

The Bush administration’s cruel border policies required no new laws. The laws passed under Clinton and Bush – which policies were continued and expanded by Obama – sufficed.

Under Obama, ICE ballooned to 20,000 employees, with 400 offices around the country. Its duties morphed to include a massive immigrant detention center complex, and deportation force, with budgets and facilities that operate throughout the country, but also in the border area where the Border Patrol operates.

Obama continued the legacy of all U.S. presidents and administrations since Ronald Reagan, making life more difficult for immigrants,” Frey writes. “Obama’s rate of deportations of immigrants already established in the country was higher than any president before or since. During his eight years in office, Obama deported more than five million people, and, so far [2019] even Trump has not beat that record.

Obama also expanded his business of detention facilities for women with their children,” as a response to an influx of thousands of Central Americans fleeing violence in their countries. The stage was set by both Democrats and Republicans for the openly racist Trump, to keep the border against immigrants on the border, in all against the terror.

The horrific consequences we see today. End the raids and deportations! Immigrants have the right to live freely back and forth between the U.S. and Mexico.
Hundreds in Philly Demand: Free Mumia!

By Jeff Mackler

Three hundred activists mobilized on July 4 at Philadelphia’s City Hall to demand “Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and All Political Prisoners.” Pam Africa, chair of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, addressed the rally and welcomed the outpouring of a new generation of anti-racist activists. Africa noted that July 4ths for Mumia Abu-Jamal’s freedom had been organized annually for decades to mark the racist admonitions to the jury in 1982 by the presiding judge to hurry their deliberations so that they could go home to celebrate the holiday. They did so and found Abu-Jamal guilty on July 2 and imposed the death penalty a day later. The July 4th rally was initiated by a broad range of organizations supporting Abu-Jamal’s freedom struggle.

Imprisoned since 1981 on frame-up murder charges of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner, Mumia, as he is known by friends and supporters worldwide, has been for decades a leading critic of the racist criminal “justice” system in all its myriad aspects.

Mumia’s tormentor Frank Rizzo

The July 4 protest occupied the very plaza where a statue of Philadelphia’s white supremacist chief of Police and then Mayor, Frank Rizzo, was dramatically taken down in the wake of the mass national mobilizations that forced the removal of statues honoring racist figures from the Civil War era to the present. Rizzo, indeed, as Philadelphia police chief, early on threatened Mumia with police retaliation following Mumia’s central role as an award-winning journalist covering the U.S. Justice Department’s filing corruption charges against and securing prison sentences for a number of Philadelphia cops charged with engaging in prostitution rings, drugs and other such ventures. Then a radio journalist, Mumia was similarly central to the defense of the MOVE human and animal rights organization, whose members were persecuted by racist police and whose Powelton Village, West Philadelphia commune was attacked by police in 1978. Nine MOVE members were arrested and subsequently sentenced to prison terms exceeding 40 years. Rizzo later bombed the MOVE house, killing 11 people. Indeed, it was Rizzo, who publically stated that Mumia “would be held responsible” for his journalistic attacks on Philadelphia police. Shortly after, Mumia became a victim of the horrific police/court frame-up trial that ended with a death penalty sentence.

Following decades of litigation and a massive national and international movement that included the largest demonstrations ever for a political prisoner — 25,000 in each in San Francisco and Philadelphia in 1999 — Mumia defeated two court-ordered attempts at his execution and finally won a decision that took him off death row in 2011, when his death penalty sentence was reversed due to fundamentally flawed instructions to the jury. Yet he remained in prison, where he is currently serving a life si-no-prison sentence.

New appeal rights won

Two years ago, this sentence itself was brought into question when Philadelphia Common Pleas Judge Leon Tucker, the first Black judge to become involved in Mumia’s case, ordered a review of all the decisions against Mumia by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Tucker’s ruling, effectively re-opened Mumia’s case. Mumia had previously exhausted all his appeals. Citing the 2018 U.S. Supreme Court decision that a prosecutor in Mumia’s case is District Attorney Ronald Castille, who later becomes a judge, cannot rule in a case that he previously prosecuted, Castille, who later became a Pennsylvania Supreme Court judge, refused to recuse himself from ruling in Mumia’s appeal, ignoring Mumia’s demand in an appeal in his antechambers before entering the courtroom, in front of another judge and award-winning court stenographer Terry Maurer Carter, “Yeah, I’m going to help ‘em fry the n****rz.” Mumia’s trial was so replete with massive suppression of evidence of innocence, intimidation of witnesses, exclusion of Black jurors, lying police testimony — including literally driving exculpatory eyewitnesses out of town and hiding testimony of an eyewitness who saw Faulkner’s murder and two men fleeing the scene while unusual “King’s Bench” petition filed by Daniel Faulkner’s widow, Maureen Faulkner, who alleged that the current Philadelphia District Attorney, Larry Krasner, who declined to challenge the Tucker ruling reopening Mumia’s appeals, was guilty of bias in hiring staff members who were Mumia supporters. Faulkner, supported by the Fraternal Order of Police, which has campaigned for Mumia’s execution since 1981, demanded that Krasner be removed. In March 2020, the PA Supreme Court appoint-
NYC Mayor Busts “Occupy City Hall”

By Marty Goodman

At 4 a.m. on July 22, hundreds of New York City cops in riot gear descended on Occupy City Hall (OCH), the anti-racist encampment in lower Manhattan inhabited by about 70 protesters and homeless persons.

OCH was demanding that NYPD’s $6 billion budget be cut by at least $1 billion in fiscal 2021. The NY City Council passed a sham $1 billion NYPD budget cut on June 30. After the vote, however, many remained in the park as part of OCH. On July 22, cops said they gave OCH 10 minutes to vacate, then quickly cleared the park. The NYPD claimed that there were about seven arrests, mostly for failure to disperse and one for throwing.

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But by linking arms and with tremendous bravery, OCH managed to prevent a police rout and held their ground.

Occupy City Hall

Occupy City Hall or Abolition Plaza was located in a park immediately adjacent to NY City Hall. It was founded on June 24 by hundreds of anti-racist activists, including the non-profit VOCAL NY, which demanded a $1 billion cut in next year’s NYPD budget. Some in OCH were calling for abolishing the NYPD. The NY City Council, dominated by Democrats, passed a $1 billion cut on June 30. The so-called cut, with the backing of the mayor, a self-described “Democratic Socialist,” was a sham, essentially transferring $1 billion to the Education Department to oversee policing in schools. City Comptroller Scott Stringer called the changes in police spending “a bait-and-switch and a par-then-thin excuse for reform.”

The budgetary reform, plus police practice reforms recently enacted by the City and State were the ruling class’s panicked reaction to the size and militancy of mass mobilizations. But, in no way can some of these necessary reforms (if ever properly enforced under capitalism!) ever eliminate systemic cop racism, the product of a sick U.S. capitalist system, or more fundamentally, change who has control of the police: the capital-ists or the working class and oppressed communities? (“NY Cop Reforms? The Whole System Has to Go!” by July SA) Socialist Action says, “Disarm, disband and dismantle the racist cops! Black community control of the police!”

NYC outside City Hall in July. (David Dee Delgado/Getty Images)