UKRAINE: NO TO THE U.S. PROXY WAR AND FASCIST COUP

By Jeff Mackler

We begin with some hard facts and context that are today tragically absent from the assessments of large sectors of the left and antiwar movements in the U.S. and worldwide.

2014 Maidan Square fascist rooftop snipers

The Ukraine tragedy began in February 2014 when rooftop fascist snipers opened fire on Maidan Square Kiev protestors assembled to resist the Victor Yanukovych government’s corruption and austerity measures. The fascists murdered almost 100 in cold blood, including some of their own for good measure. Yanukovych, the elected president, was instantly blamed and pilloried by the world’s corporate media, paving the political road for what followed. He fled for his life.

These facts were attested to by U.S. representative to the European Union, Victoria Nuland. They were based on her taped remarks. The transcript is readily available on the internet. Nuland revealed that the rooftop assassins were of the fascist Svoboda Party and Right Sector ilk and not Yanukovych’s police or military. The armed thugs had come from across Ukraine and beyond to dominate the Maidan events. U.S. Senator John McCain shared the stage with fascist orator and Svoboda Party leader, Oleh Tyahnybok, while Nuland handed out U.S. friendship cookies. McCain roused the crowd with promises of “democracy, freedom and independence,” contingent, of course, on Ukraine’s reversing the government’s already-bailout bailout agreements with Russia.

The fascist Svoboda Party leader, Andriy Parubiy led the storming of the Ukrainian parliament, the Rada, baring the two largest and majority parties from entrance. Some were previously armed and trained at U.S.-organized training camps in western Ukraine. Others secured weapons by storming local police stations.

The fascists declared themselves the new government

The March 5, 2014 on-line British Channel 4 news account told the story well: “The man facing down Putin’s aggression as secretary of the Ukrainian National Security and Defence Council is Andriy Parubiy. He oversees national security for the nation, having previously served as [self-appointed] ‘security commandant’ during the anti-government protests in Kiev.”

Channel 4 identified Parubiy as a member of fascist Svoboda Party and a founder of its pro-Nazi predecessor, the Social National Party, which traces its roots to the pro-Nazi Ukrainian movements of WWII. The British television station’s account continued: “Overseeing the armed forces alongside Parubiy as the Deputy Secretary of National Security is Dmytro Yarosh, the leader of the Right Sector—a group of hardline nationalist streetfighters, who previously boasted they were ready for armed struggle to free Ukraine.”

Other Svoboda neo-Nazi leaders instantly “elected” to the top echelons of the coup government were Deputy Prime Minister Oleksandry Sych, Ecology Minister Andriy Mokhnyk, Agriculture Minister Ihor Shvaika, and acting Prosecutor General Oleh Mkalnitsky. In 2016 Parubiy became Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament.

The fascists in power instantly banned the Russian language from schools and public institutions. They ordered the Ukrainian Army, replete with its now formally integrated fascist Azov, Aidar, Dnipro and Tornado battalions, to march on the Donbas in the east to take control of this largely Russian-speaking population. Now with “government” approval, they attacked anti-coup demonstrators across the country. In Odessa, they murdered 48 coup protestors outright, setting a trade union building afire and slaughtering survivors, who were compelled to leap off the flaming edifice. The coup “government” and its subsequent manifestations, formally “rehabilitated” the infamous WWII-era fascist leader Stephan Bandera, designating major streets in his name. Bandera was a Nazis collaborator whose troops slaughtered tens of thousands of Ukrainian Jews at the onset of the war when Hitler’s troops entered Ukraine.

All leftwing parties were banned by the coup government. The bailout agreements negotiated by the Yanukovych government with Russia, on terms far less onerous than those offered by the European Union, were revoked, and instead, an economically punishing “Association Agreement” with the European Union, that largely subordinated Ukraine to the -dominated International Monetary Fund, was approved.

U.S. appoints Ukraine president

The question then was immediately posed. Who would take Yanukovych’s place? Nuland and the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt, made that decision. Again, in her own taped remarks, Nuland named Arseniy (Continued on pg 3)

Women’s Rage: My Body, My Choice

by Ann Montague and Lisa Leonard

The leaked draft opinion by a majority of Supreme Court Justices supporting overturning the 1973 Roe v. Wade abortion rights decision has fueled the anger of women across the country. Furious women immediately surged the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court to denounce the court’s intention to overturn half a century of legal abortion rights.

The following days saw hundreds of thousands mobilize across the country. The simple fact of women’s anger so alarmed some city officials that they decided to bring out the troops. The Los Angeles Police placed all officers on High Alert. In Washington D.C. police set up barricades and activated their Civil Disturbance Unit. Frightened leaders of the Women’s March, that had organized mass protests in the millions following the 2016 Donald Trump election, listed hundreds of scheduled marches across the country, but warned that their organization assumed no legal liability for potential damage. They and most of the traditional women’s organizations, including (Continued on pg 5)
By Chris Hedges

Alice Walker was disinvited to the Bay Area Book Festival after Zionist groups threatened to carry out protests. The public and presenters are complicit in her blacklisting if they attend.

There is a steep price to pay for having a conscience and more importantly the courage to act on it. The bounds of hell pin you to the cross, hammering nails into your hands and feet as they grin like the Cheshire cat and mouth bromides about respect for human rights, freedom of expression and diversity. I have watched this happen for some time to Alice Walker, one of the most gifted and courageous writers in America. Walker, who was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction for her novel The Color Purple, has felt the bitter sting of racism. She refuses to be silent about the plight of the oppressed, including the Palestinians.

“When I come out with a book, or anything that will take me before the public, the world, I am assailed as this person I don’t recognize,” she said when I interviewed her by phone to keep track of all the attacks over the decades, I wouldn’t be able to keep working. I am happy people are standing up. It is all of us. Not just me. They are trying to shut us down, shut us up, erase us. That reality is important.”

The Bay Area Book Festival delivered the latest salvo against Walker. The organizers, many of whom are not even Jewish, canceled an event because she praised the writings of the New Age author David Icke and called his book And the Truth Shall Set You Free “bizarre.” Icke has denied critics’ charges of anti-Semitism. The festival organizers twisted themselves into contortions to say they were not charging Walker with anti-Semitism. She was banned because she is a “controversial writer” who I suspect few members of the committee have read. The poet and writer Honoré Fanonne Jeffers, who Walker was to interview, withdrew from the festival in protest.

Walker, a supporter of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, has been a very public advocate for Palestinian rights and a critic of Israel for many years. Her friendship with Icke has long been part of the public record. She hid nothing. It is not as if the festival organizers suddenly discovered a secret about Walker. They sought to capitalize on her celebrity and then, when they felt the heat from the Israel lobby, capitulated to the mob to humiliate her.

“I don’t know these people,” Walker said of the festival organizers who disinvited her.

“It feels like the south. You know they are out there in the community, and they have their positions, but all you see are sheets. That’s what this is. It’s like being back in the south.”

Banning writers because of books they liken in interest to is a whole point of a book festival. Should I be banned because I advise Louis-Ferdinand Céline’s masterpieces Journey to the End of the Night, Death in the Installment Plan, and Castle to Castle, despite his virulent anti-Semitism, which even after World War II he refused to relinquish? Should I be banned for linking Josh Kellner’s Catch-22, which I recently read, and which is rabidly misogynistic? Should I be banned for loving William Butler Yeats, who, like Ezra Pound, many of whose poems I have also committed to memory, was a fascist collaborator? Should I be banned because I revere Hannah Arendt, whose attitudes towards African-Americans were paternalistic, at best, and arguably racist? Should I be banned because I cherish books by C.S. Lewis, Norman Mailer and D.H. Lawrence, who were homophobic?

We must try as well clean sweep library shelves if the attitudes of writers we read mean we are denied a right to speak. And let’s not even get started with the Bible, which I studied as a seminar at Harvard Divinity School. God repeatedly demands righteous acts of genocide, transforming the Nile into blood so the Egyptians will suffer from thirst. God sends swarms of locusts and flies to torment the Egyptians, along with hail, fire and thunder to destroy all plants and trees. God orders the firstborn in every Egyptian household killed so all will know “that the Lord God is among the Egyptians and Israel.” The killing goes on until “there was not a house where one was not dead.”

The Bible contains much of this divinely sanctioned slaughtering of non-believers. It endorses slavery and the beating of enslaved people. It condones the execution of homosexuals and women who commit adultery. It views women as property and approves the right of fathers to sell their daughters. But the Bible also remains, with all these contradictions and moral failings, a great religious, ethical and moral document. Even the most flawed books often have something to teach us.

Organizers of the festival attacked Walker for her poem “It is Our Frightful Duty.” They accuse Walker of channeling Icke’s alleged anti-Semitism into her writing, as if Walker is unable to think for herself. The attack on the poem, which is a gross misreading of its intent, exposes the lie that Walker’s position on Israel and Palestine had nothing to do with her being disinvited.

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“My Walker’s 2017 poem “It is Our (Frightful) Duty to Study the Talmud” encourages people to use multigle and Youtube to “follow the trail of “The Talmud” as its poison belatedly winds its way into our collective consciousness. Some of what you find will sound “too crazy to be true.” Unfortunately those bits are likely “To be true.” A New York Magazine essay by writer Nytah Bunch (who identifies as Black and Jewish) describes her reaction to Walker’s support of Icke and this poem.”

The poem calls out these hate-filled religious texts. “All of it. The Christian, the Jewish, The Muslim, even the Christian Church.”

Walker reminds us in the poem that these texts have been used throughout millennia to sanctify subjugation, dehumanization and murder. Slaveholders defended the enslavements of Blacks by citing numerous passages in the Old and the New Testaments, including Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians where, equating slavery, God, Paul writes, “Slaves, be obedient to your human masters with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ.”

Israel seeks, in the same way, to legitimize its colonial-settler project by citing the Old Testament and the Talmud, the primary source of Jewish law. Never mind that Palestine was a Muslim country from the 7th century until it was seized by military force in 1948. The Old Testament, in the hands of Zionists, is a deed to Palestinian land.

Walker exorcises this religious chauvinism and mythology. She warns that theoecracies, which sacralize state power, are dangerous. In the poem, she highlights passages in the Talmud used to condemn those outside the faith. Jews must repudiate these sections in the Talmud and the Old Testament, as those of us who are Christians must repudiate the hateful passages in the Bible. When these religious scruples are weaponized by zealots—Christian, Muslim or Jewish—they propagate evil.

Walker writes: I will not be squirming eternally in hot excrement, for his “crime” of throwing the bankers Out of the Temple? For loving, standing with, And defending

The poor? Was his mother, Mary, A whore?

Goyim (as) meant to be slaves of Jews, and not only

That, but to enjoy it?

Are there three years old (and a day) girls eligible for marriage and intercourse?

Are young boys fair game for rape?

Must even the best of the Goyim (as, again) be killed?

Pause a moment and think what this could mean

Or already has meant

In our own lifetime."

Walker was invited to the festival to interview Honoré Fanonne Jeffers about her work, not to give a lecture on anti-Semitism, but no matter. (Continued on pg 3)
(Cont. from pg 2, Alice Walker)

She ran afoul of the thought police, who are always vigilant about catering to smear campaigns against Israeli critics but blithely ignore the virulent and overt racism that maintain that I can be friends with whoever I like.” Walker told me. “The attachment to this belief that this person is evil is strange. He’s not.”

I worked for two years as a reporter in Ukraine, where I interviewed and spied out over Israelis about Arabs and Palestinians, who used racist tropes to sanctify Israeli apartheid and gratuitous violence against Palestinians. Israeli policy orders, secret assassinations, drone attacks, artillery strikes, tank assaults and naval bombardments on the largely defenseless population in Gaza. Israeli blithely dismisses those it murders, including children, as unworthy of life, drawing on poisonous religious edicts. It is risible that Israel and its US supporters can posit themselves as anti-racists, obturating the right to cancel Walker. It is the equivalent of allowing the Klan to vet speakers lists.

Tseet Ha’Melech by Rabbi Yitzhak and Rabbi Yoel Elitzur is one of innumerable examples of the deep racism embedded in Israeli culture. The book provides rabbinical advice to Israeli soldiers and officers in the occupied Palestinian territories. It describes non-Jews as “uncompassionate by nature” and justifiably exterminated to “curb their evil inclinations.” If we kill a gentile who has violated one of the seven commandments of [Noah]...there is nothing wrong with the murder.” It assures troops that it is morally legitimate to kill non-Jewish children. “There is justification for killing babies if it is clear they will grow up to harm us, and in such a situation they may be harmed deliberately, and not only during combat with adults.” The Biblical prohibition on murder, Yitzhak and Elitzur write, “refers only to a Jew who kills a Jew, and not to a Jew who kills a gentile, even if that gentile is one of the righteous among the nations.” They even say it is “permissible” to kill Jewish dissidents. A Jewish dissident, the rabbis write, is a rodef. A rodef, according to traditional Jewish law, is someone who is “pursuing” another Jew to murder him or her. It is the duty of a Jew to kill a rodef if the rodef is told to cease the threatening behavior and does not. Vidal Amir, who assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995, argued that the din rodef, or “law of the pursuer,” justified Rabin’s murder.

Walker is the best among us. She is one of our most gifted and lyrical writers. She stands unequivocally with the crucified of the earth. She sees her own pain in the pain of others. She demands justice. She pays the price.

We strongly condemn the Bay Area Book Festival’s decision to cancel Alice Walker’s participation in its charges of anti-Semitism that falsely equate opposition to discriminatory policies of Zionist Israel with hatred of Jewish people. We stand unequivocally against the Book Festival’s shameful and slanderous statements - which are just the latest in a long line of concerted Zionist attacks on prominent Black intellectuals who espouse solidarity with the Palestinian (Continued on pg 3)

Cont. from pg 1, Ukraine

patriot, the ultra-nationalist, anti-Russian formation. The Europeans, especially the Germans, wanted a more moderate figure to head Ukraine. They favored Vitaliy Klitschko, pro-Russian politician with more moderate views than Yatsenyuk. During the hacked call, Nuland blurted out, “**F** the EU,” and, of course, the U.S. pick, Yatsenyuk, became the Prime Minister of Ukraine, forming a coalition governing majority with the fascist Svoboda Party. The coup’s finance minister was U.S. citizen and high-ranking diplomat, Natalie Jaresko, who was granted Ukrainian citizenship the day after the coup. Joe Biden’s son took a position on the board of Ukraine’s largest national gas company earning a monthly salary of $50,000.

Nuland remarked in her intercepted phone call, that Vice President Joseph Biden, in charge of the Ukraine events at that time, would give the ultimate “atra boy” to the coup leaders. U.S. military base established in Ukraine

Shortly after the 2014 coup, in 2015, the coup-makers established the so-called International Peacekeeping and Security Center, a U.S.-run western Ukraine military base, near the Polish border, that had been, according to the March 15, 2022 New York Times, “a hub for Western military troops to train Ukrainian forces since 2015.” The Times added, “Troops from the United States, Britain, Canada, Poland, Sweden and Denmark, among others, have trained 35,000 Ukrainians there under a project called “Operation Unifier.” This is the “operation” that aimed to forcibly “unite” western Ukraine with Russia. The Russian-speaking eastern and southern populations that rejected the fascist coup. U.S. paid troops included the modern-day descendants of the privatized Blackwater forces of Erik Prince that slaughtered civilians in Iraq during that “weapons of mass destruction” regime change war that killed 1.5 million Iraqis. With the exception of Sweden, all the above nations are NATO affiliates, training, arming and financing non-NATO Ukraine to wage war on behalf of NATO’s U.S. puppet master. Ukrainian Army desertions

Here we add that the official Ukrainian armies in the east and south also rejected the 2014 coup as they did orders from the coup government to turn their guns on the Russian-speaking population. Indeed, with near zero exceptions the Ukrainian soldiers deserted the Ukrainian Army and joined the Russian Army without a shot being fired. None of the overwhelmingly Russian-speaking population in Crimea. They voted 97 percent to affiliate with Russia in a referendum result contested by virtually everyone.

The turncoat was about to do it. The March 14, 2022 Times article concludes, “But Western nations withdrew their forces ahead of Russia’s [February, 2022] invasion of Ukraine. Since then, the base has been used by Ukraine to recruit and organize the thousands of foreigners [from 28 nations] who have arrived in the country and volunteered to help defend it.” This single paragraph comes close to defying rational explanation, unless, of course, it is The Times’ explanation of the instantaneous transformation of a secret U.S./NATO military base operating on Ukrainian territory into a hastily Ukrainian-run base aimed at training the Ukrainian version of jihadist terrorists. No doubt these instantly discovered “foreign fighters” suddenly followed to defend “Ukraine’s freedom” are akin to these jihadists.

Eco-Criminality - a poem
By Julia Wright
May 19, 2022
nothing lost
nothing gained
tanks from Iraq are shipped home - human remains unclaimed - for domestic police use to un-protest and dis-serve our communities
nothing is lost
all is recycled
the mass torturer at Abu Ghraib who smiled photographing himself
committing his daily deeds became a prison guard at SCI Greene
on Mumia’s deathrow, all is recycled
no barbaric skills should be wasted
today in Atica prison it is alleged an officer claims the “cleanup” in Buffalo is “too soon”? and so the vicious circle goes unbroken
we all know the name of the terrorist war domesticated here - their fear of our ecology of love and the Love we share across bars across tracks across borders across race may all the eco-criminals everywhere be accountable
Julia Wright is the daughter of novelist Richard Wright and activist Annalee Scher. Based in Paris, France, she is a leading activist campaigning for the freedom of innocent political prisoner/journalist/ social justice fighter, Mumia Abu-Jamal

Online Petition with 4,000 signatures: Antizionism Is Not Antisemitism
We, the undersigned, include a growing list of community leaders, writers, artists, journalists, academics, workers, social justice advocates and organizations who call on the Bay Area Book Festival to immediately rescind its invitation to lifelong civil and human rights fighter, antiwar activist, feminist and world-renowned Pulitizer Prize-winning author of The Color Purple, Alice Walker to participate in their May 7-8, 2022 annual festival in Berkeley, CA.

SOCIALIST ACTION JUNE/JULY/AUGUST 3

Activism is the rent I pay for living this planet. Alice Walker —

Alice Walker —
Musk, Twitter, Google: Censorship and the National Security State

By Barry Sheppard

The world’s richest man, Elon Musk, is buying the social media company Twitter for $44 billion. If he was in Russia, Western propaganda would call him an “oligarch” but since he in the United States he is referred to as a very successful businessman, a euphemism for a capitalist who owns about $265 billion total wealth.

The top 1 percent of the population own more total wealth than the bottom 90 percent, and Musk is the top of the top.

The deal could still fall through, but assuming that doesn’t happen, what will be Musk’s take of Twitter likely mean? He says he wants Twitter to be a place of “free speech.”

The far right Republicans and armed groups like the Proud Boys have used the slogan of “free speech” to justify their views and even violent actions like the January 6, 2020 takeover of Congress.

Republicans have expressed relief and approval of the takeover, as they assume Musk will drop Twitter’s censorship of Republican claims that the 2020 election was stolen from Trump, etc. and reinstate reactionary Twitter accounts presently blocked, etc.

The far right Tucker Carlson, whose program on Fox News is the most widely followed of all news commentaries and who is a fountain of views taken up by the Republican hard white racist base of about 60 million voters, expressed glee, as did other reactionaries.

Leading figures on QAnon, the weird internet network of over one million solid Trump supporters, who among other things hold that the Democrats are behind a Satanic nation-wide ring of pedophiles.

Musk hails from South Africa’s apartheid era

What Musk will do can be seen from his right-wing political views.

He emigrated from apartheid South Africa. Among other things he brought with him was anti-Black racism. He increased his fortune by founding the Tesla electric car company, whose main factory in the U.S. is in Fremont, California.

His extremely racist treatment of Black workers at the plant and its suppliers has been well documented and has resulted in a lawsuit against him by some 4,000 Black workers.

Alan MacLeod, writing in Mint Press News in April, reports, “Earlier this month, Google AdSense sent a message to a myriad of publishers, including Mint Press News, informing us that ‘Due to the war in Ukraine, we will暂停 monetization of content that exploits, dismisses, or condones the war.’ This content, it went on to say, ‘includes, but is not limited to, claims that imply victims are responsible for their tragedies, similar instead of victim-blaming, such as claims that Ukraine ... is deliberately attacking its own citizens.’

Since the New York Times ran an article demonstrating (with photos and first-hand reporting on the ground) that Ukraine used cluster bombs against Ukrainian villages, under Google’s rules referring to that reporting is verboten.

Also blocked is referring to the well known fact that since Ukrainian nationalists staged a coup to overthrow the elected Ukrainian president in 2014, the Russian government has launched a civil war against its Russian-speaking citizens in eastern Ukraine, a civil war that continues to this day in the Donbas where Ukraine’s rulers are completely cut off from the rest of the country.

Even the left-liberal Nation magazine recognizes that there has been a civil war “between west and east” in Ukraine since shortly after the coup in 2014.

Macleod explains, “This builds on a similar message Google’s subsidiary YouTube released last month, which had already permanently banned more than a thousand channels and 15,000 videos on the subject.”

The US. correctly denounces Putin for censoring outside news about the war, but has itself banned Russian state media such as RT America, whose entire catalog has been blocked throughout the world, and whose broadcasting across the U.S. has been shut down.

Americans are not allowed to know what is happening in Russia!}

“Censorship is the last resort of desperate and unpopular regimes. It magically appears to make crisis go away,” wrote journalist Chris Hedges who criticizes Biden from the left.

“It comforts the powerful with the narrative they want to hear, one fed back to them by courtyards in the media, government agencies, think tanks, and academia.” This cannot only be said of Putin, but of the U.S. too.

Hedges added, “YouTube disappeared six years of my RT show, ‘On Contact,’ although not one episode dealt with Russia. It is not a secret why my show vanished. It gave voice to writers and dissidents, including Noam Chomsky and Cornel West, as well as activists fighting against US. Occupation in Rebelion, Black Lives Matter, third [political] parties and the prison abolitionist movement.”

Ban on debunking the Bucha massacre

Smaller independent commentators were also purged. MacLeod reported, “My stream last night on RBN [an energy consulting firm] was censored on YouTube after debunking the Bucha massacre narrative [in Ukraine] ... Unreal censorship going on right now,” wrote Nick from the Revolutionary Black Network.

“My video ‘Bucha: More Lies’ has been deleted by YouTube because the content is not ‘disent allowed!’” Chilean-American journalist Pepe Gonzalez Lira added.

“Other social media platforms have pursued similar policies. Twitter temporarily suspended its account of former weapons inspector Scott Ritter over his comments on Bucha and journalist Pepe Escoz for his support for Russia’s invasion.”

It should also be noted that Mint Press News opposes Russia’s invasion but also supported and profited from through NATO’s expansion to militarily threaten Russia. “Biden’s Hands Are Bloody As Putin’s” was one headline.

Facebook’s ban on exposing the facts

Facebook blocked all discussion of the Ukrainian Azov Battalion, which was formed by far right racist armed groups, which were prominent in the 2014 coup one group at the time prominently displayed at the demonstrations leading up to the coup the Confederation flag and a flag of Ukrainian groups that cooperates with the German Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union.

After the coup, the Azov Battalion was the spearhead of the Ukrainian nationalist army in its civil war against the “Russians.”

In February, Facebook reversed it ban on discussion of the Battalion and allowed praising and promotion of the group — as long as it was in the context of “killing Russians. Discussion of its fascist character remained banned.

In April, the New York Times published a hit piece on antiwar journalist Ben Norton, accusing him of spreading a “conspiracy theory” that the U.S. was involved in the 2014 coup. This in spite of the NYT having said as much at the time of the coup.

It was a U.S. diplomat who appointed the first president of the new Ukrainian government after the coup.

The close alliance of Big Tech with the U.S. National Security State was openly stated as a late盛开 by Google in April by national security officials, including former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, former CIA directors John Mcgolm and Michael Morell and also former director of the National Security Agency (NSA) Admiral Michael Rogers.

They warned that regulating or breaking up the big tech monopolies would be a “threat to the entire tech platformos to... push back on the Kremlin.”

“The United States will need to rely (Continued on next page)
Imprisoned Wikileaks founder Julian Assange faces extradition from the UK to the US on spurious charges that he violated the 1917 Espionage Act. Assange’s crime is that he exposed US war crimes in Iraq, Afghanistan, Guantnamo, and beyond.

Upon Assange’s legal team filing appeal documents in London on May 18, 2022, activists and advocates around the world joined to tell UK Home Secretary Priti Patel: DON’T EXTRADITE JULIAN ASSANGE!

Assange’s wife, Stella Assange, announced the defense team’s official filing while warning that the stakes were high: “The U.S. government is trying to silence – and even kill Julian.” She asserted that her husband was being persecuted for “carrying out a core journalistic mission: telling the truth.” Citing documents that revealed CIA plans to assassinate Assange and the CIA’s contracting with Spanish spy agencies to secretly record Assange’s conversations while he was granted asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, she charged that “The U.S. plotted to murder Julian because he exposed and brought U.S. atrocities into the public domain and because he is the key witness, the [principal] indicator, and the cause of enormous embarrassment to successive U.S. governments.”

She added, “Julian was just doing his job, which was to publish the truth about wrongdoing. His loyalty is the same as that which all journalists should have: to the public. Not to the spy agencies of a foreign power.”

Support for Assange is mounting around the world. Recently, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the 46-nation Council of Europe called on the UK not to extradite Assange to the US.

More than 26 peace and justice organizations and 2,500 activists signed a statement calling for the immediate release of Assange, praising him for contributing to global peace. (See assangedefense.org) Alice Walker, the national co-chair of Assange Defense in the U.S. stated: “Julian fought for justice by exposing how the United States conducted horrific wars of conquest in Iraq and Afghanistan. Millions died in these wars, mostly civilians. Assange believed that knowledge of U.S. war crimes belonged to us, the people, to decide for ourselves what should happen in our name. And now it’s time for us to fight for him.”

British Labour Member of Parliament Jeremy Corbyn stated, “Journalism is not a crime,” contrasting Assange’s confinement with the freedom of the war criminals he exposed. “Wikiileaks exposed crimes of U.S. empire in Afghanistan, Iraq, and beyond. The perpetrators of these crimes walk free; often still prominent public figures in the U.S., U.K., and elsewhere,” Corbyn added. “They should be held accountable for the lives they destroyed and the futures they stole.”

Stella Assange concluded, “The U.S. wants to imprison Assange for 175 years for publishing evidence that the country that is trying to extradite him committed war crimes and covered them up; that it committed gross violations that killed tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children; that it tortured and rendered; that it bombed children, had death squads, and murdered Reuters journalists in cold blood; that it bribed foreign officials and bullied less powerful countries into harming their own citizens, and that it also corrupted allied nations’ judicial inquiries into U.S. wrongdoing.”

Julian and Stella Assange, who share two small children, were recently wed in Belmarsh Prison. To support Julian Assange in the U.S. contact: assangedefense.org

(Continued from pg 1, Women’s Rage) The National Organization for Women and the National Abortion Rights Action Coalition, announced a $150 million war chest to elect pro-choice candidates, that “Democrats. But hundreds of the protests were independently organized and gave voice to militant activists who pointed to the need for ever-increasing and massive protests to win the fight for abortion rights as opposed to the round of subordination to the vacuous promises of posturing politicians.

Failure of Democratic Party

The anger in the streets was focused on the majority of the Supreme Court justices that voted to overturn the right to abortion that had been in effect for a half century. But equally responsible for the present defeat is the Democratic Party, that never codified Roe v. Wade into federal law. A token Democratic Party proposal to do so was defeated in congress in mid-May by a single vote when the Democrats again failed to muster their own party majority, not to mention to win the 60 votes required to overcome a Republican filibuster. Indeed, this was planned only to pique the Democrats as defendants in the fight to maintain women’s rights with the approach of the mid-term elections.

Year after year, even when Democrats controlled both houses of congress and the presidency, they failed defeat the notorious and repeatedly reauthorized Hyde Amendment to House Appropriations bill. Hyde bans using federal money (Medicaid) to pay for abortion.

These issues were all addressed at the Supreme Court and at the powerful protest everywhere as women demanded for a protection of abortion in the Chants of, “Shame on Joe,” “My Body, My Choice” and “No Justice, No Peace,” were the order of the day.

History of Roe v. Wade

Roe v. Wade was decided in 1973 by a conservative court at a conservative time in history because there was a powerful independent Women’s Liberation movement demanding “Free Abortion on Demand.” Hundreds of thousands periodically mobilized, winning the great majority of the population to support the legal right abortion. Prior to Roe the illegal, dangerous, and deadly back alley and/or cost hanger abortions took the lives countless women, especially poor women and women of oppressed nationalities.

For decades since the Democratic Party has been haranguing women to finance and support Democrats to protect “choice” (an innocuous term). But Democrats have done little to support abortion rights, as state after state, with court approval, has steadily sought to obliterate previous gains and, today, ban abortion outright pending an anti-choice state legislation.

One of the largest initial protests was in Boston, where thousands turned out in a matter of days. Thousands more pro-choice cities across the country. Boston was the major center for the militant Women’s Liberation movement in 1973. Boston activist, Claire Grossi, reminded the cheering crowd of the militant heroines who led the way.

“Roe v. Wade was won in 1973 on the basis of mass protests led by women. We hold the power to defend abortion rights. Right here in the streets is where we leverage our power.”

Undoubtedly the Democratic Party aims to demobilize our movement and channel it into deadend electoral arena. At this moment, however, women are in no mood to be told what to do by anyone, including party bosses. The outrage is too great! (Cont. from pg 11, COVID Capitalism) The free health care Labor leaders have stood by for over 2 years, failing to act on the slogan of “an injury to one is an injury all!” while thousands of their members perished and more are at risk.

For collective action

If the all-permeating nature of capitalism creates in the social soil conditions that create, class, gender, and disability, Covid-19 has seeped into these cracks, opened them wider, and dug them deeper. It has made more visible to anyone willing to bear witness all which the market ignores, deems expendable, and will readily sacrifice: working people in all their beautiful rainbow colors, genders spectrums, and abilities. Crises of such world-altering magnitude can be-plus beyond + that can also be an opportunity to imagine a better world that can be won when the systems’ very victims bridge the gaps between collective action in collective mass actions to win critical social changes in this Covid-19 weary times:

1. Free universal health care, 2. Universal vaccination, 3. Free testing, systematized or contact tracing; 4. Paid sick leave for the infected until they test negative, and free treatment for anyone infected by Covid; 4. Decrease in number of work hours with no decrease in pay in order to allow people to have the time to attend to the daily burdens of life; 5. Stop the bickering between the various branches of government with a focus on poor, working class, disabled BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) communities, 8. Covid-disability benefits at a living wage, pegged to the cost of living, 9. Rebuild the public health system, 10. Stop overcrowding among the incarcerated. For Covid-safety, abolish the racist, classist prison-industrial complex.

(Cont. from pg 3, Alice Walker Petition) People. Attacks on other Black people, prominent in public life include, but are not limited to Angela Davis, Michelle Alexander, Marc Lamont Hill, Cornell West, and even the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

We assert that defense of the Palestinian people, who suffer the daily horrors imposed on them by the racist, colonial, apartheid, settler state of Israel, has nothing to do with the pro-American views and practices of Jew-hating anti-Semites, whose vitriol and violent deeds increasingly permeate political life in the US and around the world.
Inventive militant teams or revolutionary parties?

The Bureau text asks, “How do we train workers to counter the productivist madness on which their daily existence depends? This is the crucial question. The answer can only come from struggles and the convergence of struggles. We have to work systematically on this, which implies building inventive militant teams in the different social movements, capable of exciting and accumulating experience, knowledge and know-how.” [Emphasis in italics added.]

Again, “militant teams” not revolutionary parties!

And who is to lead these “teams”? The Bureau text is clear. “We need an ecologist transition programme for a just degrowth that abolishes exploitation and oppression. The chances of success will depend on the uncompromising radicality of the struggles of those who are practically at the forefront of the ecologist struggle today: youth, indigenous peoples, peasants and women.”

The working class as the revolutionary subject

What about the working class? Here the Bureau text departs from its purported transitional method aimed at the mobilization of the broad working class and instead postulates that the future struggles will be led by vaguely-defined forces, that is, “youth, indigenous peoples, peasants and women.”

Again, the relationship of these forces to the construction of Leninist parties is absent.

Tragically, today’s climate movement is largely dominated by corporate-funded NGOs, most often devoid of working class character.

Glasgow debate and the reformist NGO’s

Glasgow’s COP26 debate, billed as the “most inclusive” ever, was controlled solely by the elite corporate monocapital and their government representatives while the so-called civil society NGOs, who has been promised input to partake in the “negotiations,” were relegated to a chosen few who were granted last minute tickets to “participate” as powerless “watch dog observers.” How could it be otherwise?

Vasem Essop, executive director of Climate Action Network (CAN) stated, naively at best, at the time, “Civil society voices are critical to the outcome of COP, but we’ve not been able to do our jobs. If participation and inclusion are the measure of legitimacy, then we’re on very shaky grounds.” CAN represents more than 1,500 organizations in over 130 countries. It is one of two environmental “centres” – loose networks of NGOs including youth groups, trade unions, indigenous peoples, business, agriculture, and gender – recognized by the UN. Its leaders seek “representation” and “inclusion” alongside the world’s elite to decide matters of world import!

Any conception that the Bureau’s Transitional Program, however excellent in its demands and working class degrowth focus, will find common ground with these petty-bourgeois, staff-dominated, corporate-funded NGOs is pure fantasy.

This is not to say that we should have rejected support and participation for Glasgow’s mass mobilization, where 100,000 marched, participated, not to mention the millions who mobilized around the world immediately prior to the previous, COP25 in Paris – there were 400,000 in New York City to protest COP25 – it is only to mark that our objective is the construction of massive independent working class based movements and, again, the simultaneous construction of Leninist parties. In the U.S. the COP25 mobilizations were led by NGOs that featured almost exclusively Democratic Party speakers.

An independent movement

During the Vietnam War era and for decades after, when FI sections played key roles in the largely youthful antiwar, social justice, anti-racist mobilizations, our key demands aimed at fostering independent working class-oriented mobilizations. With regard to U.S. imperialist wars we demanded, “U.S. Out Now!” In the course of this mass work, FI sections simultaneously built and rebuilt their parties based on the Leninist model and attracted the best fighters, including working class youth who went on to play important roles in the trade union upsurges during that period.

Critical role of youth

Today’s youth are undoubtedly at the forefront of the ongoing climate mobilizations. In Glasgow, they were more than receptive to the radical remarks of Swedish climate youth activist Greta Thunberg, who spoke at the student strike rally during the “Fridays For Future” march of 10,000 who rallied at Glasgow’s city center: Said Thunberg, “We don’t need any more distant, non-binding pledges. We don’t need any more empty promises. Policymakers’ apparently belief that our world can survive a 2.7°C or 3°C hotter world. Yet that is all we are getting and no, that is not radical to say it. It’s pure madness.”

Thunberg told the UK Guardian soon after: “Science doesn’t lie. If we are to stay below the targets set in the 2015 Paris agreement – and thereby minimize the risks of setting off irreversible chain reactions beyond human control – we need immediate, drastic, annual emission reductions unlike anything the world has ever seen. And since we don’t have the technological solutions which alone will do anything close to that in the foreseeable future, it means we have to make fundamental changes to our (Continued on next page)
And further, said Thorton “The 1.5°C limit was a last-minute breakthrough at the Paris COP in 2015 and was agreed only as an aspiration and not a policy. Two years later (in October 2018) it was officially adopted in a Special Report on Global Warming published by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). The Report concluded that the 1.5°C limit was entirely possible within the facilities of the existing industrial model but would require unprecedented effort in all aspects of society to implement. The IPCC also warned that we have just 12 years to do so before the 1.5°C increase could be reached as soon as 2030.”

Thorton’s dire warnings over a year ago of approaching catastrophe made no mention of degrowth. They were based, however, on scientific estimates that in a rational society deadly temperature thresholds could be avoided by present technologies. The Bureau’s transitional demand conceptions have the great and additional merit of highlighting the emergency nature the our times and at aiming to assure working people that the capitalist movement’s so-called ‘losses’ are not to be implemented at their expense. But again, again and again, they are divorced from any party-building perspective, thus relegating their appeal to a small handful of doctrinaire imperialist parties that the FI majority aims to enter, subordinate itself to, and build in order to gain “influence”, largely in the strategic and political arena.

The challenge ahead

Today the anger and rising consciousness of increasing millions and billions of working people and their allies that the predatory capitalist-imperialist system does not represent their interests is on the rise. Workers face massive capitalist-imposed austerity, relentless unemployment, miserable housing, mounting evictions, endless wars, systemic racism, sexism and LGBTQI+ repression, horrific pandemics, disgusting capitalist greed and profligating and overt and immediate climate threats to their lives and the lives of their children.

The tasks ahead for revolutionaries include the re-building and massive re-organization of their national liberation movement and all social justice organizations in alliance with oppressed people everywhere. It will require the forging and exercising of working class power in the streets, at the point of production and in the political arena – aimed at challenging capitalist rule itself. The FI’s return to the strategy of Leninist party building stands before us as never before.

Join Socialist Action!

Socialist Action is a national organization of activists committed to the emancipation of workers and the oppressed. We strive to revitalize the antiwar, environmental, labor, anti-racist, feminist, student, and other social movements with a mass movement perspective. We are specially opposed under capitalism – which private profit-based capitalist 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. That is why we call for workers in the U.S. to break from the Democratic and Republican parties to build a labor party based on revitalized democratic fighting trade union alliances in the opposed and exploited. We support the struggle of those who are specially opposed under capitalism – which private profit-based capitalist system is driving down living standards and threatens all life on this planet.

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murders armed, trained, financed and deployed by the U.S./NATO/Gulf State monarchies to take down the Syrian government in that ten-year failed U.S. regime change wars died in that U.S. regime change horror. By all accounts, today’s Ukrainian “freedom fighters” were drawn from the ranks of Europe’s growing fascist and far right formations.

Imperialist obsession

From 2015 to just before the Russian invasion, that is, for seven years, the U.S. and its NATO partners continued their training and financing, inside Ukraine, the coup government’s war against the Russian-speaking population. That war has killed some 14,000 people in the Donbas and wounded 50,000, mostly civilians. That the victims are piloted for defending their lives and for seeking and obtaining Russian aid, constitutes yet another travesty of fundamental human and democratic rights, not to mention the right of an oppressed people to self-determination, that is, to be free from annihilation at the hands of the U.S.-inspired Ukrainian coup government.

Refugee crisis

We will add here that in addition to the refugee tragedy of some two-plus million Ukrainians fleeing the war to the west, more than 1 million Russian-speaking Ukrainians have fled to the east, that is, to Russia. We stand in full solidarity with the terrified war refugees fleeing to the east and west. Yet we stand in solidarity with U.S. and its NATO government and its U.S.-dominated NATO imperialist alliance, centrally responsible for the still unfolding Ukrainian refugee crisis. We stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian government that we categorically rejec the coup government’s segregating out Ukrainians of African and Middle East origin, who have been shunted to the end of the line in registration and access to social services, while nationalist supremacists refuse to accept immigrants “who don’t look like U.S.” Yesterday’s Polish and Hungarian NATO partners, and others, chanted that “Ukrainian immigrant venom helped power them to office, have become today’s instant converts to the U.S. “humanitarian” orchestrated agenda!

Russian fascist invasion polls

An April 2, 2022 front-page article by Anton Trojanovskiy, Moscow Bureau Chief for The New York Times, previously Moscow Bureau Chief of The Washington Post, apparently missed the eye of U.S. government censors. Entitled, “Shaken at First, Many Russians Now Rally Behind Putin’s Invasion,” the piece noted: “The public’s endorsement of the war lacks the patriotic groundswell that greeted the annexation of Crimea in 2014. But polls released this week by Russia’s most respected independent pollster, Levada, showed Mr. Putin’s approval rating hitting 83 percent, up from 69 percent in January. Eighty-one percent said they supported the war, describing the need to protect the Russian population as its primary justification.” [Emphasis in italics added.] That some three-quarters of a million Russian-speaking Ukrainians, mostly from the beleaguered Donbas region, were killed or severely attacked, undoubtedly weighed heavily on the poll results. That Levada is described as “Russia’s most respected independent pollster,” is even more revealing. For the past eight years, prior to the Russian invasion, a state of perpetual war has prevailed in the Donbas region, with the U.S. government backing the reconstituted and ever U.S./NATO reinforced Ukrainian Army’s unrelenting attacks on the occupied territories of the fascist troops that have been formally incorporated into the Ukrainian Army and National Guard.

Putin’s current popularity notwithstanding, there can be no justification for his repression of dissent, including those who disagree with his war policies, including some of our own comrades. Putin’s corruption and misrule. In the U.S., Biden’s repression takes on the character of the classic iron fist in a velvet glove, where the virtual monopoly of the corporate media enforces an Orwellian consensus. We must add, that Biden’s approval ratings, barely 40 percent, tells us in Shakespeare’s words, “All is not well in Denmark.”

The Minsk Protocols

The early post-2014 coup years were punctuated by a series of negotiations referred to as the Minsk Protocols. Signed on February 15, 2015, after negotiations between the Ukrainian coup government, Russia, Germany, France, and China, were purportedly aimed at stopping the violence between Russia’s annexation of Crimea and the subsequent outbreak of a negotiated settlement. Some 100 “ceasefire” agreements were repeatedly violated, while the fascist-led Ukrainian military wreaked untold horror and destruction on millions on the population. Pressured by the U.S., the Ukrainian government refused to implement the Minsk-projected elections in Luhansk and Donetsk regions, as certified by a generals’ Council resolution, the essence of the Minsk accords was to preserve the territorial integrity of Ukraine via a federalization process that would return the Donbas to local, regional autonomy. The latter implied that the resources of a federated Donbas, especially its vast fossil fuel reserves, and access to pipelines, would be under the control of local/regional governments, a proposition that the U.S. outright rejected. U.S. imperialism has since shifted the Ukrainian goaiplots, in essence, moving to obliterating controlling capital of the Donbas, Russian support in the east in favor of the U.S. corporate oil monopolies yet another U.S. imperialist oil war if there ever was one.

Welcome to the embrace of the imperialist war machine

Today, admission to the good graces of the U.S. imperialist establishment requires hailing the “democratic” U.S.-led war effort: the ”need” for the call of the invitation. We decline to condemn the beleaguered Donbas people for asking for Russian aid and receiving it. We decline to condemn the Ukrainian and Russian-speaking populations’ opposition to the U.S.-engineered fascist coup and its U.S./NATO perpetuation. We decline to condone NATO’s expansion into Ukraine and its establishing nuclear weapons along Russia’s 1500-mile border. That 27 million Russians died in fighting Hitler’s fascist WWIl invasion has not been obliterated from Russian popular consciousness.

We decline to join the near-ending bi-partisan war cries, echoed daily by virtually every U.S. corporation, every military contractor, every oil behemoth, every major media outlet and imperialist politician, to make war without hesitation. If there is any U.S. debate over the war among the corporate parties it is whether to risk nuclear war in their belief that the current “deterrence zone” over Ukraine, a doomsday scenario if there ever was one. Meanwhile, President Biden’s $33 billion pledge to Ukraine’s military was up to $40 billion in a mere six months in Congress, while Biden took the stage at a Lockheed-Martin plant to encourage workers to spare no effort in manufacturing deadly Javelin anti-tank missiles.

For an independent socialist Ukraine

We harbor no illusions in the class and politics of Putin’s Russia. We seek a popular, lesser capitalist-imperialist state headed by a predatory capitalist class of Stalinist origin. Putin’s statements citing Czarist Russia’s Great White Russian Empire’s imperial class of Tsars, the tsars’ repudiation of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky’s historic championing of an independent socialist Ukraine must be condemned by all Jacobins. We have no truck with Russia’s 83 billion capitalist elite as we have none with the 780+ U.S. billionaires and China’s 1000! With revision that today’s neo-fascist and far right newfound U.S. allies in Poland and Hungary were yesterday’s Putin admirers. We note with contempt Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky’s newly-proclaimed affinity for Zionist Israel’s model of a militarized state aimed at the subjugation of oppressed people.

Russia’s government is no friend of working people. The recent Russian Army intervention in Kazakhstan to crush a nationwide working class rebellion informs us once again placing political confidence in any capitalist government or leader is inimical to fundamental socialist principles.

The fight for an independent socialist Ukraine today resides only with the workers of Ukraine and Russia and never with their capitalist oppressors, whether in Ukraine, Russia or NATO. The construction today, of mass socialist opposition, however, has its own roots in breaking the capitalist-imperialist stranglehold on every aspect of public life, is the starting point for a socialist Ukraine free from every form of exploitation, oppression and denial of human dignity.

Any notion that political or military support to the present U.S.-puppet lead of Russia’s capitalist war participants as guarantor of Ukrainian independence is as fundamentally flawed as granting support to any of the myriad U.S.-installed governments the world over.

Self-determination for Ukraine’s oppressed Russian-speaking minorities

The U.S. imperialist government, with 1,100 military bases around the world in 110 countries is by far the world’s greatest purveyor of force and violence. In contrast China maintains a single military base outside its borders – in Djibouti, at the Horn of Africa, while Russia maintains some seven military bases, mostly in former Soviet Republics and one in Syria. U.S. imperialism spends more on its military – at least $1 trillion annually, including the CIA budget — than most of the world combined. This U.S./NATO capitalist/imperialist states do not negate our responsibility to assess their actions in the context of unfolding events. We do not object to the reality of the events that transpired in Ukraine since the 2014 U.S.-instigated fascist coup and place an equal sign between U.S. and Russian imperialism, we would be gravely mistaken. We would be substituting the proposition that whoever fired the first shot is to be categorically condemned, rather than assessing what caused that shot to be fired. That U.S. imperialism planned and orchestrated a fascist-led coup aimed in part at obliterating the minority Russian-speaking population, 30 percent of the population, that a Ukrainian nationalist government seeks to orchestrate Ukraine’s affiliation to NATO, replete with nuclear weapons on Russia’s doorstep, cannot be removed from any serious appraisal. We are neutral with regard to Ukraine’s oppressed Russian-speaking population’s right to exist, that is, their right to self-determination. They have legitimately sought Russian aid. We do not object to Russia’s providing it even if Putin’s motives for extending it are dubious to say the least.

In summary, this right of all poor and oppressed nations to be free from imperialist war and conquest. This principle fully applies to all beleaguered nations, including Syria, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Afghanistan. In Syria, the Bashar al Assad government fell victim to a U.S./NATO/Gulf State monopoly 10-year war that slaughtered 500,000 civilians and displaced 10 million people, while occupying three-quarters of Syria, poised to take Damascus and with the U.S. government’s Secretary of State at that moment, John Kerry, preparing to install, yet another fascist state, state by the U.S., the Syrians, exercising their right to self- determination, asked for Russian aid. The result was the defeat of that U.S. regime change horror.

U.S. Out Now! U.S. Hands off Ukraine! Abolish NATO! 

No to U.S./NATO nuclear war-threatening “missiles” over Ukraine! Self-determination for the people of Donbas!

For an independent socialist Ukraine

No to U.S.-backed fascist coups and the establishment of U.S. puppet governments!

No to U.S. oil wars everywhere! $5 billion for Ukraine – not a penny for war! For a rapid transition to a safe, clean, fossil fuel free worker-controlled energy system that guarantees quality employment and human dignity.

Close all military bases the world over with the beginning of the 1,100 U.S. bases in 110 countries, followed by Russia’s seven bases and China’s single base in Djibouti!
Amazon Workers Electrify Labor

By Marty Goodman

"This is a revolution!" said Chris Smalls, the Amazon Labor Union's President to a jubilant rally of Amazon workers and supporters in New York City's Staten Island. Smalls and the ALU organizing committee, a diverse group of young Amazon workers, battled for union recognition against an over $1 trillion corporate monster at its JFK8 facility of 8,000 workers and won. Beating back a $4.3 million union-busting campaign, victory was declared on April 1st, workers voting 2,654 to 2,131 to unionize.

"We shook up the labor movement," said Derrick Palmer, ALU vice president of organizing. "This is history in the making." Worker James De Ville, "They tried to force people who are immigrants, or young people with little job experience, away from fighting back. But it backfired." Putting it simply, ALU secretary Karen Ponce told an April 8 press conference, "We kicked Amazon's management and union busters' ass."

The ALU promised in the course of its campaign that it would fight for a wage increase to $30 per hour, job security, paid sick leave, extended break time and a free shuttle service to work. At an April rally, Smalls declared, "This is a Black led union. Staten Island is the first Amazon location to unionize. Founded by Jeff Bezos, who’s personal wealth is $172 billion, Amazon unleashed its dirty tricks against an Amazon JFK8 Union. They didn’t expect it at all. And now they’re giving us everything that they’ve got here at LD5. They successfully rallied some anti-union workers, so we had to fight a lot of misinformation and rumors and lies." Organizers reported racist, sexist and homophobic slanders against the ALU.

"Every worker who votes yes for the union—JFK8 and LD5—is a hero," said Smalls. "Can you imagine standing up to one of the richest companies in the world?" After that loss Small announced that the union would hold a national meeting with workers from more than 100 other Amazon locations in late June.

Amazon’s robo world

In March 2020, Smalls, who is African-American and a former supervisor at JFK8, walked out in protest over Amazon’s virtually non-existent COVID precautions and cover-up of worker COVID positive cases. In keeping with Amazon’s union-busting strategy it did not allow ALU worker-organizers into its mandatory anti-union propaganda meetings. When ALU president Chris Smalls came onsite to give out food and answer questions, Amazon had Smalls and two co-workers arrested. Smalls was fired for "trespassing." Soon after he began recruiting for what would become the ALU.

According to a recent report by the union sponsored Strategic Organizing Center, workers at Amazon were injured at more than twice the rate of workers at other company’s warehouses in 2021 based on Amazon’s own figures. In 2021, Amazon employed one-third of all warehouse workers in the U.S., but sustained nearly half of all injuries. Amazon’s workers are driven by robots; workers must meet production quotas determined by algorithmic formulas determined by Jeff Bezos’s greed. Amazon has refused to share its' algorithmic formulas for examination. Legislation has been proposed to curb the secrecy and inhuman pace at Amazon. Conditions are so bad, “the turnover among its work force was roughly 150 percent a year,” the New York Times reported in 2021. "That rate is almost double the retail and logistics industries."

While Amazon propaganda babbles about improving safety, "Earth’s Safest Place to Work," injuries at its U.S. warehouses were up by about 20% between 2020 and 2021, most of them considered serious. The study’s blamed Amazon’s "obsession with speed" as a main cause of the problem. Earlier this year, the company apologized for denying that its drivers are forced to urinate in plastic bottles to meet outrageous schedules. Nationaly, there are more than 50 unfair labor practices pending against Amazon.

Building the contract fight

A ruthless corporate golett like Amazon will take every opportunity to trick and bully workers. A winning strategy would include mass meetings, a fighting working class perspective that includes strike preparation and independence from both capitalist parties. Union democracy coupled with an aggressive class-struggle union strategy and broad labor solidarity will be key to winning that critical first contract.

At an April 4th ALU press conference capitalist politicians like Senator Bernie Sanders and Congresswoman Houser Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and others appeared pledging support. Yet, like all such vacuous promises that support always evaporates as the struggle intensifies.

On May 5, Smalls and other labor reps met with President Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris before Smalls testified at a Senate hearing. Seeing the meeting as just another opportunity for Biden to pretend that he’s pro-labor he quoted civil-rights activist John Lewis when he told Chris Smalls that he represents “good trouble.” The phoniness of this hack, anti-labor corporate politician was quickly shown at a White House press conference when administration officials walked back Biden’s “good trouble” comment while pledging to America’s corporate rulers that the Biden administration took no position on labor conflicts! Indeed, “pro-labor” Biden recently re-awarded a $10 billion federal contract to Amazon, contrary to his earlier pledge not to award federal contracts to companies that engage in anti-union campaigns. A union backed study found that the extent of taxpayer government giveaways in tax breaks and loans awarded Amazon to be at least $4.2 billion in the last decade, including $720 million in 2021.

At the White House meeting Smalls directly asked President Biden to press Amazon to recognize his union. Biden declined to respond. Building solidarity with Amazon workers, not merely token appearances by union bureaucrats at press conferences, will be the duty of the entire labor movement. The struggle against Amazon intersects with other struggles, such as Amazon’s sale of facial identification technology to Homeland Security to enable deporting immigrants and its sale of high-tech billion-dollar programs to observe and identify Palestinians in apartheid Israel.

Workers in the U.S. may be on the cusp of a big labor upsurge. In 2021, petitions to hold union elections were up more than 50 percent over the previous year during the six months ending in March, on pace to reach its highest point in at least a decade. Successful organizing struggles at Amazon, Starbucks and other locations continue to grow. Angry younger workers in particular are stepping up to play militant leadership roles, many with BLMI protest experience.

Justice Medina, a member of the ALU Organizing Committee, told Socialist Action, “Capitalist production keeps expanding, they keep exploiting workers, they treat them like garbage and keep throwing them to the curb. They’ll keep doing that for their own profits until they’re forced to stop. We’re fighting for people over profits. We are fighting back as workers.”

As capitalism’s crises deepen, accompanied by ever-more severe and broad-ranging attacks on working people, a new wave of class struggle fightback may be upon us. Join us to become an active participant.
Abortion Is a Right: Organize for Reproductive Justice!

By Akiva, Raya and Tine, Cincinnati Socialist Workers Organization

The statement below is by Cincinnati Socialist Workers Organization. Socialist Action is in full agreement with the statement and its call for mass action to fight for abortion rights.

The US Supreme Court has voted to overturn abortion rights. While this is only a draft decision and may yet be modified before it takes effect, it should serve as a spur to organizing and declaration of war by the reactionary Supreme Court against the basic rights to bodily autonomy and reproductive freedom. This decision is not a surprise, the Court is stacked with right-wing hatchet men chosen for their utter hatred and contempt for exploited and oppressed people and the right-wing of the US capitalist class has been seeking to ban abortion for years. Abortions are already de facto inaccessible for many working class people and the paper thin legal right to them has been constantly under siege. We must organize to fight for abortion rights and reproductive justice for all.

The fight cannot continue to rely on the failed liberal strategy that has dominated efforts to defend abortion access in the recent period. This is a strategy of many capitalist class and the paper thin legal right to them has been constantly under siege. We must organize to fight for abortion rights and reproductive justice for all.

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U.S. COVID Capitalism Kills One Million

By Marc Rome

“Capitalism is a death cult!” seems to pop up every so often on social media. Political and economic leaders at every level of society seem resigned to mass death by Covid-19. A death cult is defined by the psychologist John Zimbardo as one that requires demonstrations of faith involving the risk of death. The point is to not strictly interpret this definition as it applies to today’s macabre reality, but to highlight that mass death is supposedly synonymous with capitalist rule. It could be said that the late Madeline Albright, former U.S. Secretary of State and pursuer of mass death, succumbed to the system’s cold essence. When asked whether the 1.5 million Iraqis killed by the U.S. military during a war justified on Saddam Hussein’s non-existent nuclear ambitions or mass destruction she stated, “It was worth it.”

In the last two years since the coronavirus pandemic began its global death march, U.S. capitalism has decided that it would be a virus if mass murder were its own making are worth it. Profit tops all! In a world in which the true global Covid-19 death toll is 18.2 million, capitalism has made striking resemblance to how it appeared upon its arrival over 300 years ago: “Dreping from every pore,” to borrow from the Communist Manifesto, “with blood and dirt.”

The average life expectancy for white people in the U.S. has declined by 1.13 years during the pandemic. For Black and Latinx people, it has declined by 2 and 3 years respectively. As dominant ideologies generally pervade mass consciousness, the anti-vaccination movement and adjacent co-thinkers, too, have embraced this suicidal war. Capitalist mind control, by myriad social and political forces, chief among them the near-monopoly pharmaceutical industry’s profit drive and capitalist’s ever-promoted hyper-individualist culture, ever employed to justify sending unprotected and increasing economically exploited workers to labor at their factories and other workplaces.

Each election cycle, no matter which wing of the billionaire elite prevails, fails to address their lived experience of economic preciosity. Attendees despair driven drug addiction epidemics created by Big Pharma, and the normalization that physical and mental health crises should be managed individually through privatized health systems. These operate at great financial costs, which continue to mount as free Covid testing has expired for the 31.1 million without health insurance. That the U.S. capitalist-imperialist state, the richest nation on earth, denies free medical care to all is a telling indictment in and of itself of the entire system.

From Trumpp’s Surgeon General Paul Alexander stating that, “we want them infected,” for their strategy of achieving “herd immunity” to so-called progressive Alexandra Ocasio Cortez grimly heralding victory of legislation that funds Covid-related funerals (in stark contrast to her refusal to the fight for the partial but still costly reform Medicare For All) to the decision by governments at almost every level to drop virtually all Covid protective mandates to the January 20 Supreme Court decision that killed a national (albeit incomplete) vaccine mandate and the Democrats decision to drop $15.6 billion in Covid-related funding in the recent $1.5 trillion dollar federal spending bill, the most powerful political institutions and leaders have made it clear that there will be no quarter for the masses suffering the Covid-19 crisis.

Anthony Fauci, the nation’s top infectious disease expert and Biden administration advisor, spoke for the entire capitalist class, which chanted at the Center for Disease Control’s (CDC) October 9-19 deploring vaccine safety concerns. The CDC, with Fauci’s nod, halved the number of productive (read, profit making) work hours to a 5-day quarantine period in order to “get people back to work faster.” One in three people are still infectious after 5 days! The American Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten, genuflected before the altar of the all-mighty economy, and then offered as sacrifices the lives and careers of the entire society! “Kids, our society, our communities need very much to do whatever we can to create normalcy,” she said in a January New York Times opinion piece advocating back to school regardless of the Covid consequence.

Airlane industry bosses could not have interpreted Fauci’s statement as anything but the opening they’ve been waiting for. A Trump-appointed judge approved their masked mandate appeal. President Biden quickly abided by the ruling and said that for those traveling by way of plane, train, or bus, it was “up to them” to wear a mask. Cold comfort for bus drivers whose ranks have fallen victim to the virus in 10 states or to the 220 Amalgamated Transit Union workers who died a similar fate.

The rash jettisoning of nearly all Covid-19 safety measures at the behest of corporate giants and governments at all levels is beyond disgusting considering the recent tsunami wave of Omicron (BA.1) variant. At its crest in January, daily cases several times surpassed one million and average case counts lingered at 800,000/day for weeks. Covid hospitalization reached the highest number since the pandemic began, causing severe strain at hospitals across the country, exacerbated by staffing shortages for frontline health care workers falling ill. In some cases, nurses who tested positive were being forced to come back to work even before their quarantine time has expired. From late August through mid-March, the U.S. daily death toll was never less than 1000. For two weeks, when Omicron was at its worst, between the end of January and early February, daily deaths were as high as 3900 (February 4).

With only 44 percent of the population having received a booster vaccine, the end of virtually all other mitigating Covid safety precautions, and hospitalizations on the rise, the current relatively low daily death toll in the U.S. will begin an upward trend.

Is Omicron the final variant? A recent piece in the New York Times made a scientifically sound case for the continued evolution of coronavirus, which points toward perilous health and safety outcomes for workers and communities globally. The prediction outlined in that piece has been confirmed: the current surge in cases in New York City is driven by two new Omicron sub-variants. A new virus subtype has been found in China. The recommendations of Omicron variants will decline as dominant at these or other subvariant take hold in a world that is only 58 percent fully vaccinated. With 395 million confirmed global cases, and at least double that number, the virus has ample hosts to infect, mutate, and lead to more deadly outcomes.

Vaccine apartheid

Globally, 70 percent of rich nations are fully vaccinated while among the poorest nations it is a mere 5 percent. Vaccine apartheid is a major factor in why the virus has become endemic. As Marxist thinker and epidemiologist Rob Wallace pointed out in the Socialist Action webinar, Covid and Capitalism, the global inequity in vaccine distribution has allowed “variants to emerge in a way that will subsequently allow pathogens, the virus, to escape vaccines that we have in place.” Thus, new variants, like Delta and Omicron, won’t necessarily originate from parts of the globe – India and South Africa, respectively — that are largely unvaccinated; the wide-open-playing field afforded to the virus in an unevenly vaccinated world created by the conditions in relatively highly vaccinated New York City to also become a viable petri dish for new variants.

The type of global response needed to mitigate mass suffering by Covid has been hampered by the by the dominance by the top 0.01 percent, including The World Health Organization (WHO), which began on the basis of, “an open medicine model,” according to Rob Wallace. United Nations Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, have exerted profound control over NGOs globally, like the WHO, which is 70 percent funded by capitalist foundations. “Gates imposed what’s called a Covid-19 Act Accelerator, which is ostensibly going to distribute vaccines at discounted prices to 20 percent of the poorest nations,” continued Wallace, “but based entirely on the intellectual property rights model,” ensuring that patents will remain intact to protect their [billionaire] profits.

U.S. vaccine mandate and organized labor

Last summer, when national vaccine mandates were being implemented, there was an alarming glimmer of hope. The Occupational Health and Safety Agency officially presided over the since stuck down mandates for 83 million private sector workers, 10 million public health workers, and 35 million government workers (a recent ruling has reinstated the vaccine mandate for government workers), there was reason to believe that the worst outcomes of the pandemic could be avoided. Polls showing that the vaccine mandate had a 60 percent national approval rating were still more reason for optimism given that Covid vaccines remain an effective modality against severe disease and death.

Labor was stepping up, too. The 2.1- million member Service Employees International Union came out in support of universal vaccination. Teachers in Chicago, San Francisco, and Oakland launched modest but yet critical mobilizations demanding Covid safety for students, teachers, and their communities, winning some safety concessions. Students in New York City and Oakland staged walkouts and protests demanding more safety.

Yet, a sizable minority of labor cried foul and opposed the mandate. Some said it violated their personal autonomy; others cited religious beliefs. Still others called them a violation of union contracts, outraged that management imposed a scientifically iron clad safety measure. Vaccine resistant workers and a layer of labor bureaucrats didn’t win the first battles, but their demands are now the order of the day and enjoy the backing of the U.S. capitalist class.

In retrospect, this moment of historic defeat for labor was predetermined by glaring absence of any mass mobilization of consequence by organized labor to demand health and safety for all workers, not to mention (continued on pg 5).

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By Barry Weisleder, Federal Secretary, Socialist Canada

[Editor’s note: We reprint below the Toronto May Day celebration rally remarks of Barry Weisleder, Federal Secretary of our sister party, Socialist Action Canada. The speech includes a brief reference to the war in Ukraine that is not the view of Socialist Action in the U.S., as presented on pg 1, 8 and 9]

Good evening, comrades, siblings and friends. International Workers’ Day, unlike Labour Day in September, is the occasion to celebrate not only workers’ solidarity and our past gains, but the struggle for socialism. May Day is rooted in the quest for a world without war, without capitalist exploitation and oppression. Socialist Action has been at the forefront of May First actions for decades. Clearly, on May Day 2022, despite big challenges, there are positive signs. Young people are organizing unions. Witness the breakthrough at Amazon in the U.S. Witness the successful unionization drive at WestJet, a flag carrier, and Calgary’s Canada Goose in Winnipeg, various Starbucks locations, at a Vancouver hotel, and a near-win at Staples in Oakville. Celebrate the election of a new pro-worker provincial president of the Ontario Public Service Employees’ Union, and the triumph of Teamsters for a Democratic Union candidates across North America. Note the significant support for Workers’ Action Movement candidates at recent Canadian Labor Congress and Ontario Federation of Labor conventions, and the re-election of revolutionary socialists to leading positions in OPSEU and the Public Service Alliance. The so-called Great Resignation shows that young workers are fed up with low-wage, insecure jobs, and they’re fighting back.

But there is no denying the fact that these are tough times. Inter-imperialist rivalry dominates the headlines. The war in Ukraine, triggered by the expansion of NATO to the borders of Russia, threatens nuclear war. Russia’s brutal and horrendous invasion has strengthened rightist forces in Ukraine and beyond. Anti-war protests, still relatively small, struggle to highlight the crimes of Washington, London, Paris, Ottawa and their imperialist allies. We stand with anti-war activists in Russia and in the west.

The U.S.-led Cold War against China, a sign of declining American economic hegemony, can easily grow into a hot war with catastrophic consequences for humanity. First and foremost, we oppose the war moves of our own ruling class. The answer is not so-called multipolarity and identification with opposing authoritarian regimes. The answer is workers’ revolutionary self-organization, from the bottom up, for world socialist transformation.

Rapid global warming caused by fossil-fueled capitalism, puts all life on Earth at risk. The world faces multiple unavoidable climate hazards over the next two decades with global warming of 1.5°C. Risks for society will increase, including to infrastructure and low-lying coastal settlements. Increased heatwaves, droughts and floods already exceed the tolerance of plants and animals, driving mass mortalities in species such as trees and corals. Weather extremes are occurring simultaneously, causing cascading disasters that are increasingly impossible to manage. Millions are exposed to acute food and water insecurity, especially in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, on small islands, and in the Arctic.

The pandemic arising from deforestation and the expansion of agribusiness is not disappearing. Coronavirus cases over 450 million; deaths over 18 million. Less than 20 percent of the peoples of the less developed countries are vaccinated on any level. As these times of protection ensure mega profits for Big Pharma, and future waves of fatal Covid variants. In Ontario’s 14 largest hospital systems over 2,900 health care workers are currently off sick due to COVID, resulting in surgery cancellations or delays and reduced emergency department hours.

Price inflation is surging at a 31-year high. Workers and peasants, the world over, are being impoverished to the point of severe sickness, starvation and death, while billionaires are becoming trillionaires. Necessary restrictions on travel and indoor gatherings are being lifted, in some cases too rapidly, even recklessly. Prioritizing profit over people, big business governments risk pandemic regression. Bourgeois politicians claim to care – while they buy oil pipelines, trample Indigenous people, and sell weapons of mass destruction. Inequality surges. Haters stoke fears. Racism, sexism and homophobia rise, promoting authoritarian rule, and wage wars of imperialist plunder. Human civilization is at risk. The choice is Socialism or Barbarism. If we are to survive, revolutionary change and international working class solidarity are critical.

Today we stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people, for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against the Zionist apartheid state, and with Cuba, Iran and Iran against imperialist intervention. We condemn the criminal blockade imposed by Ottawa, Washington and the E.U. who target countries for regime change because they stand in the way of imperial super-profits.

The capitalist rulers cut funding to public health services and medical research. They failed to provide protective gear and paid extensive sick leave. They limit brave personal care workers to part-time hours, low wages, and no benefits. They close borders to starving millions displaced by war and climate change. This is mass murder, rooted in capitalism.

There is an alternative to this genocidal war between imperialist and humanistic and cooperative alternative: Socialism. But a major obstacle to socialism is the conservative, bureaucratic leadership of the unions and the New Democratic Party (NDP). The labour fakers must be replaced by class struggle militants. Socialist Action is at the forefront of the Workers’ Action Movement and the DGB which won the NDP to the fight for a $20/ hour minimum wage. WAM says: Stop concessions bargaining. No to two-tier wages/benefits. Hands off our pensions. Mass job action to end austerity. Make the rich pay for the pandemic. Smash racism, sexism and homophobia in the work place and in the unions. Defund the police.

We demand that NDP leader Jagmeet Singh and the NDP break with the minority federal Liberal government. The Liberal-NDP pact means Singh will vote for increases in war spending and war profits. He will back wars in which working class families die or become refugees. Singh’s commitment to provide the Liberals with “confidence and supply” implies endorsement for beefing up the Canadian Forces to participate in NATO wars, as it did in Afghanistan, the Balkans and Libya. It involves backing the NATO puppet regime in Kyiv; providing lethal aid to Nazi battalions battering the Donetsk; shipping weapons to the Saudi monarchy pulverizing Yemen; and boosting the Israeli Apartheid state. It means backing any moves by Trudeau to complete the TMX pipeline, and to continue under-funding health care and ignoring the needs of Indigenous people.

We say: Organize the unorganized. No to union raiding. For international working class action against trade wars, hot wars, repression and military occupation. For union democracy. Pay union officials a worker’s wage. To achieve socialism, we advance transitional demands to increase the confidence and capacity of the working class to achieve gains, to win power.

Socialist Action demands Basic Income for all, regardless of immigration status. Nationalize Big Pharma and all private Long-Term Care facilities. Put a moratorium on residential rents and mortgage payments. No evictions. Cancel student debt. Make education free. Expropriate the big landlords. Build quality, accessible social housing on a mass scale. Nationalize the telecoms! The time is fresh. Expropriate the big banks, the giant oil and gas corporations. Move rapidly to green, sustainable energy, under public ownership and workers’ control.

Only a socialist revolution, led by a mass revolutionary workers’ party, deeply rooted in the majority class, can overcome the power of the elite. Only in a socialist society can we unleash the full potential of humanity, in harmony with nature.

No individual or party can accomplish this task alone. That is why Socialist Action is committed to the tactic of the united front. Broad unity in action, on a specific set of demands, magnifies the power of the grassroots. For that reason, Socialist Action helped to initiate the Municipal Socialist Alliance in Toronto and Peel, and Vote Socialist Vancouver. We eagerly participate in united front campaigns such as those of the Canadian BDS Coalition, the Canada Peace Network, the Canadian Network on Cuba, plus anti-poverty, anti-fascist, pro-feminist, pro-choice, pro-queer, pro-Indigenous actions.

We invite you to join Socialist Action Workers’ Day rallies and marches on Sunday, May 1st in Toronto and across the country. We warmly invite you to join Socialist Action. Have a bright, red May Day! Long live international workers’ solidarity! Long live the world socialist revolution!