An ad-hoc coalition of anti-imperialist organizations located in the United States has published the following call for protests in the following week of U.S. and NATO’s aggressive actions directed at Russia, building up to demonstrations and a webinar on Feb. 5:

We must act now to stop the war with Russia over Ukraine, a war that would risk becoming a dangerous conflict between nuclear states. As people residing in the United States, we have a special responsibility to call upon the U.S. government to:

- Stop the war with Russia
- Stop the NATO expansion
- Stop sending weapons to Ukraine and the European Union
- Obey international laws and the U.N. Charter
- Resolve the current conflict within the United Nations Security Council
- De-escalate the threat of a nuclear war

Once again, our world is facing an imminent threat of war between two major nuclear powers. As in the past, the United States is using the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as the vehicle to wage war in clear violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The Biden administration is currently flying $200 million worth of weapons and other “lethal aid” to Ukraine and has 8,500 U.S. troops on standby to enter that country. “Nonessential” U.S. diplomatic personnel and their families are being withdrawn from the country. The corporate media is lock-step in its portrayal of Russia as the enemy who is about to invade Ukraine. These actions constitute a de facto declaration of war, while the corporate media fan the flame of war.

This current escalation of aggression against Russia through expansion of NATO’s presence into Ukraine is a serious threat to world peace and requires a unified and rapid response by antiwar organizations to stop a major war.

To that end, we, the undersigned groups, have agreed to support a day of action on Feb. 5, 2022, with our mentioned demands on the United States government.

In the week of Jan. 30 to Feb. 5, we will hold visibility actions by holding signs and banners in well-trafficked areas such as major intersections or highway overpasses that raise awareness of this urgent crisis and urge the President to stop

Continued on page 8

What’s at stake with SCOTUS nomination

On the eve of Black History Month—February—President Joe Biden announced his intentions of nominating an African American woman to replace the soon-to-be-retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer. Sitting on the court now are six men and three women. All justices have life tenure, until either retirement or death. Three members are generally considered “liberal” and the rest “conservative” in their views.

If a Black woman wins the nomination with Senate approval, she will only be the third Black woman to even sit on the bench since the court’s founding in 1789—the other two are the late Thurgood Marshall and Clarence Thomas. She would join three other women as justices—Sonia Sotomayor, who is Latinx, Elena Kagan and Amy Coney Barrett. Out of a total 115 Supreme Court justices, 108 have been white men; two have been Black men; and five have been women.

Civil rights and women’s organizations are understandably excited by the prospects of this nomination, considering the fact that this will be the first Black woman to hold such a position. Both nationality and gender are social and historical considerations.

Such a nomination would be groundbreaking. The right to political representation grew out of the radical Reconstruction period following the U.S. Civil War, when formerly enslaved people of African descent fought for bourgeois democratic rights—the right to vote, education, 40 acres and a mule, and other rights that white men generally enjoyed. These rights were either short-lived or never came to fruition, due to the violent counterrevolution led by the remnants of the Confederacy, coupled with the betrayal by the U.S. government.

Continued on page 8

Leonard Peltier & COVID-19

Mumia Abu-Jamal on New Freedom Movement

OH, IF IT WEREN'T FOR THAT DASTARDLY JOE MANCHIN, I'LL BE HELPING PEOPLE RIGHT NOW. EVictions, CLImate change, student debt, voter suppression...

WAIT... MY IMPERIALIST SENSE IS TINGLING... I'M PICKING UP SOMETHING... ABOUT RUSSIA... UKRAINE... NATO... NORD STREAM 2...

Background to U.S. war threats

Starbucks, Amazon union surge

Strikes in Washington, Colorado, Mississippi
Cement workers strike transnational corporations

By Jim McMahan

Seattle

A major strike by concrete mixer drivers and cement plant workers against cement company bosses has shut down much of Seattle's $2.3 billion construction industry. The workers are members of Teamsters Local 174.

They are striking against wages that don't match up with the high cost of housing in the area and against unfair labor practices by the bosses. The workers are on the seventh week of their strike. The strike started with 34 people on Nov. 10 and has spread rapidly. The workers have been without a contract with the stonewalling bosses since July 31.

Better pay is an issue for the cement workers, as well as other construction unions striking in Seattle. “We're building a city we literally can’t afford to live in,” said one striker. Low wages and lack of affordable housing are issues the construction workers share with the anti-gentrification campaigns of the Black community, Black Lives Matter and the working class in general. (The Nation, Jan. 21)

“Why has the Seattle construction unions failed to mobilize the power of the workers to defend the workers and oppressed here and guarantee basic human needs. Capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be produced all wealth in society, and this wealth should be distributed to the working people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for ever-greater profits. The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out the stonewalling bosses since July 31.

Some workers call it a general strike because of its effect on vital industry! Some suspect the bosses are trying to bust the Seattle construction unions that have had several strikes recently during a construction boom.

The union launched its industrywide strike at six big companies: Gary Merlino Construction, Stoneway Concrete, Cadman, CalPortland, Salmon Bay Sand & Gravel, and Lehigh Cement. When the striking Teamsters extended their picket line to Lehigh Cement Company—a huge plant at the Port of Everett—this action shut down all operations there, with members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union honoring the Teamsters picket line.

The bosses' arrogance and refusal to negotiate has been met with the strikers' escalation. (teamsters174.org)

Concrete mixer drivers, dump truck drivers and cement plant workers walk off the job in Seattle after bosses “fail to bargain in good faith.”

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Amazon worker organizing accelerates with union voting

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Headlines screamed alarm Jan. 26 in Canada, as workers and supporters rallied outside of Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg: ‘Amazon Union Has Sufficient Signatures for New York Election!’

What we are seeing today is an eruption of worker organizing that is accelerating the fight to be represented by a union and gain safety on the job, living wages, adequate health care and other improvements for all workers.

In Staten Island, New York, and Bessemer, Alabama, workers at Amazon distribution centers are gearing up for union election votes authorized by the National Labor Relations Board. In Staten Island, the independent Amazon Union has demonstrated through card signing that there is now sufficient interest for an NLRB election, after having withdrawn their petition late in 2021 to build greater numbers. Besides giving a go-ahead for the election, the NLRB found that management at the Amazon warehouse in Staten Island has been illegally surveilling and threatening workers.

Union founder and leader Chris Smalls said in a widely quoted statement, “I think this one will definitely be the one to get over the hump and be the first union for Amazon.”

Meanwhile in Bessemer, a union re-vote is fast approaching for representation by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU). Ballots go out Feb. 4, and the re-vote tally is expected to begin March 28.

Nearly half of the 6,000 eligible voters are new to the Albany warehouse since the last vote reported in April 2021, due to Amazon’s very high turnover. The NLRB ordered the re-vote after finding that Amazon improperly influenced the original vote. That’s bureaucratic language for the use of vicious, sneaky and intimidating union-busting tactics.

tenant one point, within a one-week period, five stores, with ballots going out to three additional stores in the area.

December marked a milestone for workers in the U.S. and a revival of the labor movement, led by workers at Starbucks here in Buffalo. This day the Starbucks store on Elmwood Avenue became the first unionized corporate-owned Starbucks in New York. This was followed by another victory at the Cheektowaga location in Buffalo, the store that I work at. These wins set off a chain reaction of stores filing for a union election.

What we are seeing here is the working class beginning to become aware of itself as a class with common interests and common oppressors.

Starbucks stoops to the level of Amazon.

December 9 marked a milestone for workers at Starbucks and Amazon, who, since the COVID-19 pandemic, have created a situation at the store on Elmwood Avenue became the first unionized corporate-owned Starbucks in New York. Area unions dating back a history of strong and often radical multinational unions dating back to the early 20th century. The North Alabama Labor Council is putting together door-to-door “house calls” with RWDSU members to convince Amazon workers to vote for the union.

A recent RWDSU video features Bessemer workers with handwritten signs about why they support the union. One wears a United Mine Workers “We Are One” class-war camouflage shirt. This coal miner’s sign says, “I am voting union because— I have seen the strength of solidarity.” (Full video here: tinyurl.com/pq6skaht)

He is one of over 1,000 steadfast union coal miners in nearby Brookwood, Alabama, who are entering their eleventh month on strike against Warrior Met Coal and BlackRock venture capital. For these workers, like the striker in the video, a job at Amazon can be a way to make ends meet and to strengthen cross-union solidarity.

Union supporters in New York and Alabama are hoping to win the vote for union representation. But like the miners, Amazon workers may still have to withhold their labor power to get their rights.

Search Workers World to find extensive reporting on these struggles.

February 22, 2022

By Arjus Red

This is based on a talk given to a Workers World Party plenum Jan. 28 by the author, a worker organizer with Starbucks Workers United in Buffalo, New York.

Union date: 31: According to SB Workers United and More Perfect Union on twitter, 60 stores across 19 states have filed for a union election. In Buffalo, where the Starbucks surge started with a union-yes vote Dec. 28, contract bargaining began for the Elmwood and Genesee stores. A management charge against to three additional stores in the area.

As recently as Jan. 28, I heard about two stores in Philadelphia that filed. At one point, within a one-week period, five stores filed in succession.

What is motivating many Starbucks workers to unionize is a fundamental belief that they should be a say in how the workers and the idea that a company doesn’t have to be as bad as Amazon or Walmart for the workers to deserve a union. Many stores that have filed for union representation have explicitly stated this in their letters to Starbucks CEO Kevin Johnson — that the decision to unionize is based on principle and not a specific list of hardships and grievances.

Shift in class consciousness

This to me, is evidence of a shifting in the collective class consciousness of many workers. This is a major development for the working class, something that is vitally important for building a militant movement towards socialism. What we are seeing here is the working class beginning to become aware of itself as a class with common interests and common oppressors.

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Grocery workers win big in King Soopers strike

By Viviana Weinstein

Pickets were called off at 6 a.m. Jan. 20, as United Food and Commercial Workers Local 7 reached a tentative three-year contract agreement with King Soopers grocery chain after a 10-day strike.

The new contract benefits 8,000 workers in 76 stores in Colorado. King Soopers is a subsidiary of the enormous Kroger food corporation.

Elaborate negotiations to vote approved the contract Jan. 24, celebrating it as a substantial win. The contract addressed major concerns workers had about wages, including the wage suppression of part-time pay, part-time work and the inability to gain full-time employment, health care, safety, hazard pay and third-party unionization.

According to the settlement, most workers will receive a wage increase of at least $5 an hour, with some positions increasing more than $5 an hour. Ramp-up safety measures will be put in place to protect the workers from violence by customers, as well from dangers of COVID-19 infection.

King Soopers has agreed to add 10 new full-time workers within the first 90 days of the contract and a faster pace to move part-time workers to move to full-time. This will address the key issue of job outsourcing. The company will pay a larger share of worker health care costs as well.

The company paid workers $2 an hour in pandemic hazard pay for only 2 months, while making $4 billion in profits in 2021. The huge gap between company riches and underpaid labor was not lost on essential workers trying to survive on low wages and part-time hours. Many are food insecure, and 14% have been homeless during 2021, according to a study of 10,000 Kroger workers in Colorado, California and Washington. (In The Nation Jan. 11)

Chances for a successful strike increased every day, as community members brought food and money and joined the picket line in the freezing snow.

To show love and support for the workers, the community did not cross the picket line and did not shop in the King Sooper, where stores were emptied of people!

Outrage grew when the corporation placed hundreds of TV ads using company management as “actors” praising the corporation. With workers walking the picket line in extreme cold, people were repulsed by the ads.

King Soopers went to court Jan. 19 and received a restraining order to limit the number of picketers to 10 at any store, restricting the right to speech of picketers. Yet neighbors kept joining the line! At this writer’s local store, there were at least 30 strikers on the line, with police looking on but not stopping their march.

“Strikes absolutely work,” said UFWC Local 7 leader Kim Cordova. “It shows the company they can’t run without the workers. The real power is with the people. We hope we set the bar so other workers follow suit; and so that when enough is enough, they take a stand.” (Denver Post, Jan. 25)
Leonard Peltier speaks on COVID-19

Leonard Peltier, a leader of the American Indian Movement, participated in the 1973 occupation of Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota in 1973. In 1975, he was framed for the shooting death of two FBI agents. The agents and one Native American lay dead after an armed attack on the reservation by more than 150 federal agents, vigilantes and local police.
Peltier was convicted for the deaths of the two agents but had no physical evidence against him. He has steadfastly maintained his innocence. Leonard Peltier must be freed now!

There is a new international petition campaign to win Peltier’s freedom due to his COVID-19 infection. There is also a campaign to demand immediate clemency from President Joe Biden.

Reach the International Leonard Peltier Defense Committee here: whoshealondepeltier.info

To sign the petition: tinyurl.com/zpqyyfz

From inside prison

Leonard Peltier

By Judy Greenspan

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic currently raging through the jail, prison and detention centers of this country, Leonard Peltier (Turtle Mountain Band, Chippewa Nation), an Indigenous leader and political prisoner, has issued a cry for help.
Peltier, 77 years old, who has been imprisoned for 45 years, was reported as having tested positive for COVID-19 on Jan. 28. The prison had previously refused to give him the booster shot. (Huffington Post, January 28)
Peltier is currently incarcerated in a high-security federal penitentiary in Florida, USP Coleman I, along with 1,334 other people. The prison is in lockdown because of the pandemic, which means no contact with other people within the facility and no visitation from anyone externally.

In an online statement in the Jan. 23 HuffPost, Peltier urges the prison abolition movement and human rights activists to expose the brutality and inhumanity of the current lockdown of incarcerated people during COVID-19. His plea echoes the voices of many people behind the walls:

COVID has turned Coleman Prison back to the Dark Ages. I remember a time at Marion USP when I was put in solitary for so long — when 72 hours could make you start to forget who you were — I once wrote down who I was on the concrete floor under my bed, so if I forgot, I could read it back to myself. I trusted my last cigarette for a pencil. I’d rush to the door when a guard left the meager plate of food, just to see a glimpse of another human being — Even if it was one that hated me, it was another human and good for my mind for a minute.

I’m in hell, and there is no way to deal with it but to take it as long as you can. I clong to the belief that people are out there doing what they can to change our circumstances in here. The fear and stress are taking a toll on everyone, including the staff. You can see it in their faces and hear it in their voices. The whole institution is on LOCKDOWN.

In and out of lockdown last year at least meant a shower every third day, a meal beyond a sandwich wet with a little peanut butter — but now with COVID for an excuse, nothing. No phone, no window, no fresh air — no humans to gather — no loved ones’ voices. No relief. Left alone and without attention is like a torture chamber for the sick and old.

Let these words energize new movements today and enrich our living histories by reconnecting with the freedom struggles of our youth. Many of us are elders; yet we rejoice in the freedom movement emerging anew today as a result of the torture and murder of George Floyd, for true struggles from generation to generation.

This call comes as mass incarceration has metastasized into a system that has bled state budgets dry and has resulted in the caging of the elderly and, up till recently, the juvenile population. It has also resulted in unbridled cruelty like women giving birth in shackles and chains, people being held in solitary confinement for decades. Surprisingly, prisons have become worse over time, not better — and bigger than we could even have imagined. We therefore need more prison support movements, not less — and prison abolition has to now be on the table. We want freedom. We want Freedom. So say we all.

Thank you, Munsa. Thank you, Black Panther Party Commemoration Committee. Thank you, Labor Action Committee. Thank you all.

In love and not fear, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

The Black Panther Commemoration Committee New York was formed on the 37th anniversary of the founding of the Black Panther Party in 1966. The committee organizes the goals of the Black Panther Party, its Ten Point Platform and Program.

On the picket line

By Marie Kelly

In Mississippi, rural school bus drivers strike — and win!

The pandemic has created a health crisis for workers who do not have the luxury of shifting to other jobs or taking a furlough with pay until the worst is over. Workers still engaging with the general public are at high risk of exposure to COVID-19.

In fact many such workers have fallen ill and are unable to return to work or have left their positions to seek a safer employment situation. The labor shortages now spanning industries like health care, education, manufacturing, hospitality and transportation have exposed the poor working conditions of these essential workers.

Fed up with their treatment by the bosses, many of these workers have been protesting poor safety measures, low wages and irregular hours. They have seen they can win concessions when they organize and withhold their labor power.

A stunning example of such a win came Jan. 27 from school bus drivers in a rural county in Mississippi, who serve a mostly African American student population.

The Jefferson Davis County School Board tried to solve their bus driver shortage by hiring temporary drivers and paying them $25 an hour — when the average salary for school bus drivers in the county is $12 to $15 an hour.

The next day, regular drivers went on strike — for only one hour — to protest this unfair development. The short strike was a warning — with drivers getting all students to school that day.

The same evening, the school board held an emergency meeting and voted unanimously to increase the regular drivers’ wage to $20 an hour. To win a raise of $5 to $7 an hour with a one-hour strike — quite a victory!

Mumia Abu-Jamal’s comments are recorded by prisonradio.org.

The great Caribbean revolutionary Franz Fanon wrote in his now-classic work, “The Wretched of the Earth,” the following call to action: “Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it, in relative opacity. That mission is now before us.” What mission? To free prisoners of the empire, not just myself but others, some of whom we all know, some of whom we know not, people like Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, Mundo “Ed Distributed” Langa, Sundiata Acoli, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Mumia Abu-Jamal’s Pan-Africanism or taking a furlough with pay until the worst is over.

ers who do not have the luxury of shifting to other jobs know, some of whom we know not, people like Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, Mundo “Ed Distributed” Langa, Sundiata Acoli, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Mumia Abu-Jamal’s Pan-Africanism...
By G. Dunkel

The last week of January, two moderately severe earthquakes shook southwest Haiti in the department of Nippes. An official said 191 homes were destroyed, and 591, at least two people were killed. Dozens of people were injured and had to go to the hospital, including a number of students at school on the time. The AP reported on the news on the 10th. “People are scared to go back into their homes.” These earthquakes were aftershocks from a far more powerful earthquake in the same area. After Aug. 14, killing more than 2,200 people and destroying or damaging some 137,500 homes.

Nippes is still recovering from the August earthquake. The U.N. estimates that 800,000 people lost either their home or its contents. The area is the most rural with the least infrastructure. Farmers lost their fields, and fishers lost their docks, boats and drying racks.

The assassination of President Jovenel Moïse on July 7, 2021, is linked to the political instability in Haiti, further aggravated by social violence coming from heavily armed individuals concentrated in the drug trade and rapidly rising inflation. The government rights and fear, with 43% of the Haitian people, according to the U.N.’s Food and Agricultural Organization, suffering from food insecurity — they regularly don’t get enough calories. (tinyurl.com/vej9v76g)

While there are no official statistics on hungry Haitians fleeing to other Caribbean countries, there are anecdotal reports of 1,000 being rounded up in the Bahamas, carrying their belongings. In Jamaica and many Haitians being arrested in the Dominican Republic. The U.S. Coast Guard has made two intercepts this year, one of 88 people and the other of two people, and two groups of Haitians managed to make landings in the Florida Keys in December 2021.

Political maneuvering

President Moïse didn’t hold elections when they were legally required, which won him votes in the slums of the big city and the countryside, for the bourgeoisie, is to hold elections. (For Haiti’s workers and peasants, socialism would be a desirable solution, but that is not a legal option under the current pro-imperialist regime.)

The fact of the bourgeoisie around Henry has an election election proposed that they act out. He has met with the American embassy officials and by the Burnside, Florida Keys in December 2021.

First-hand report: The truth about Nicaragua’s revolution

By Arjae Red

Based on a talk by the author at a Jan. 30 webinar, hosted by the Alliance for Global Justice, entitled “Nicaragua: Sandinista National Revolution.” The author, a Workers World Party member, traveled with a delegation from U.S. to attend the Jan. 10 inauguration of Nicaragua’s elected leaders.

I have to be honest. Before I came to Nicaragua for the first time on this delegation, I knew very little about the country and had just basic information about its history. It’s one thing to be able to read about a revolution and another to be able to see it unfold with your own eyes.

I could see the progress which has been made in Nicaragua since the revolution: the improvement of education and health care; expansion of roads and water infrastructure; and the achievement of near total food self-sufficiency. These are great achievements that can’t be understated, not only compared to prerevolutionary Nicaragua but when compared to the U.S.

But Nicaragua hasn’t built up its infrastructure with wealth and resources plundered from the U.S. It has done. People have done it through cooperation. The country has been largely self-sufficient. The U.S. has never done this, despite the crushing pressure of U.S. sanctions. Nicaragua’s Sandinista revolution is evidence that another way forward is possible.

Popular support for Sandinista leaders

The biggest highlight of a trip to Nicaragua was seeing a country where the government has the enthusiastic support of the people. This is unheard of in the U.S. The Sandinista government keeps the best interests of the people at the forefront of everything that happens.

We saw people who were excited about electing a president that they actually have faith in and believe in. Nicaraguans elect their leadership by leaps and bounds than any country before the vote. He calls himself a “restorative justice” candidate they hate, more than they vote for one they actually like.

It was so refreshing to see a country where the revolutionary government and the unions and other worker organizations work hand in hand, rather than against each other. I am a Starbucks worker in Buffalo, New York, and my store just recently became the second unionized store in the U.S. This was something we had to fight for tooth and nail, and we definitely didn’t have any help from our government. We were left to do it alone. The National Labor Relations Board dragging its feet every step of the way. Most of the time the NLRB is oppositional to our organizing.

Gains for women, workers and Indigenous peoples

In Nicaragua, I got to see how the unions and labor organizations like the ATC (Rural Workers Association) are taking an active role in organizing workers and training the new union leaders. I learned how women’s liberation is a focus of the revolution and the labor movement.

We were able to visit a cooperative run entirely by women. We learned about how they struggled against both the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship and internal divisions in their communities. Now they have made much progress towards eliminating misogyny and have shown their communities are led by women. I learned how Nicaragua has carved out a point of bridging the gap with different social classes, like the Caribbean coast, that has been less developed and cut off from the rest of the country. The government is building highways and other infrastructure, as well as providing teachers and food for students.

And the government is giving about 30% of Nicaragua’s land back to Indigenous peoples. This sets a fantastic example that people in settler-colonial countries like the U.S. should pay close attention to.

I also learned how excited Nicaraguans are to have a renewed relationship with the People’s Republic of China. Nicaragua views this as an opportunity to finally be able to play a larger part in a multipolar world. They can forge their own path and are not being forced to submit to U.S. imperialism and its affiliated multinational companies. Nicaragua is looking to cooperate with other countries on the basis of mutual benefit, unlike the U.S., and resistance to imperialism.

Defend sanctioned countries!

My name is Charles and I am a former student at the Florida Keys in Del Rio, Texas, September 2021.

Thousands of Haitian migrants, fleeing hunger, natural disaster and instability in their country, have been deported or expelled by the U.S., here by the Border Patrol in Del Rio, Texas, September 2021.

This is the real story. Tell your friends, family and coworkers about the sanctions. They are the true cause of this suffering. Tell them about the Sandinistas. Tell your friends, family and coworkers about the sanctions. They are the true cause of this suffering. Tell them about the Sandinistas. Tell your friends, family and coworkers about the sanctions. They are the true cause of this suffering. Tell them about the Sandinistas.

By G. Dunkel

First-hand report: The truth about Nicaragua’s revolution

By Arjae Red

Based on a talk by the author at a Jan. 30 webinar, hosted by the Alliance for Global Justice, entitled “Nicaragua: Sandinista National Revolution.” The author, a Workers World Party member, traveled with a delegation from U.S. to attend the Jan. 10 inauguration of Nicaragua’s elected leaders.

I have to be honest. Before I came to Nicaragua for the first time on this delegation, I knew very little about the country and had just basic information about its history. It’s one thing to be able to read about a revolution and another to be able to see it unfold with your own eyes.

I could see the progress which has been made in Nicaragua since the revolution: the improvement of education and health care; expansion of roads and water infrastructure; and the achievement of near total food self-sufficiency. These are great achievements that can’t be understated, not only compared to prerevolutionary Nicaragua but when compared to the U.S.

But Nicaragua hasn’t built up its infrastructure with wealth and resources plundered from the U.S. It has done. People have done it through cooperation. The country has been largely self-sufficient. The U.S. has never done this, despite the crushing pressure of U.S. sanctions. Nicaragua’s Sandinista revolution is evidence that another way forward is possible.

Popular support for Sandinista leaders

The biggest highlight of a trip to Nicaragua was seeing a country where the government has the enthusiastic support of the people. This is unheard of in the U.S. The Sandinista government keeps the best interests of the people at the forefront of everything that happens.

We saw people who were excited about electing a president that they actually have faith in and believe in. Nicaraguans elect their leadership by leaps and bounds than any country before the vote. He calls himself a “restorative justice” candidate they hate, more than they vote for one they actually like.

It was so refreshing to see a country where the revolutionary government and the unions and other worker organizations work hand in hand, rather than against each other. I am a Starbucks worker in Buffalo, New York, and my store just recently became the second unionized store in the U.S. This was something we had to fight for tooth and nail, and we definitely didn’t have any help from our government. We were left to do it alone. The National Labor Relations Board dragging its feet every step of the way. Most of the time the NLRB is oppositional to our organizing.

Gains for women, workers and Indigenous peoples

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The world is being drawn into a new cold war. The escalating conflicts over Taiwan, Kashmir, Ukraine and Hong Kong have all too clearly demonstrated this. The major powers are aligning forces, forging alliances and preparing for confrontations that go beyond mere economic competition and may spill over into military confrontation.

What attitude should the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist left have toward this issue? Is it possible to maintain a position of neutrality and equi-distance with regard to economic competition and political confrontations that go beyond mere economic interests? Taiwan and Ukraine are evidence of this.

Cold war. The escalating conflicts over the European Union and Japan on the other hand, are a pretext for attack. Raposo’s response is “empty rhetoric” or holding protests “without practical significance” in the face of “trampled human rights” implies an inequality that these comments (and others) cannot actually express. Otherwise, such an accusation would force us to demand a consequence from them, that is, a greater and harsher intervention than they already carry out.

Moreover, the squeeze extends to Belarus and the recent “wishes” of Georgia, and even Finland and Sweden to join NATO. Since 1990, despite the assurances given by Ronald Reagan and George H. Bush, expansionist policies (naive or ill-intentioned) by Eastern European countries have joined NATO. With Gorbachev we had another favorable attitude of imperialism.

Human rights

President Jimmy Carter, in the late 1970s, pulled the “defense of human rights” out of the hat. Imperialism started to practice the same acts of aggression as others, but under a new guise. And it has succeeded, it must be acknowledged, in a large part of world public opinion, which has been stunned by crimes disguised as good “humanitarian” actions aimed at overthrowing “dictators” who mistreat “their own people.”

Do social problems in Belarus, Kazakhstan or elsewhere trigger popular protest? No one cares. Even in China, in neutral Tibet, people are silly and rightly so. But it would be very naive not to see the interest (and at times, overt or covert) of the imperialist West in these events. Obviously, the social problems within these countries cannot legitimize the political actions and military sanctions or military actions of imperialism.

Now, it has been under the guise of human rights, humanitarian aid, etc., that the Triad has involved itself in the Triad, as Samir Amin called it for a well-known reason: They threaten the Triad’s hegemony over the world.

Aggressors and defenders

To condemn some (the U.S.) for pursuing imperialist plans and being hypocritical, we condemn others (Russia and China) for being dictators and violators of human rights is a Solomonic attitude that does not address the problem that the world faces today and, in the face of which, the revolutionary left may take sides.

The reasons why the West may be right are (always) on the offensive to constrain, undermine and, if possible, break up (politically and territorially) Russia and China. And the latter respond as they can to defend themselves from this siege. The former attack; the latter defend themselves from aggression. Without making this distinction, nothing becomes clear; and the revolutionary left, who are the enemies who serve the goals of imperialism by giving the imperialists a pretext for attack. Raposo’s response serves to answer anyone on the left who tries to align themselves with (or even identify with) China on one side and the U.S., European Union and Japan on the other.

Translation: John Catalinotto.

Ukraine and NATO

The Ukrainian issue began in 2014 with a coup promoted by the U.S. and the EU, based on Ukrainian fascist forces, which overthrew a formally legitimate government and put power of Bolsonaro, agent. This was followed by the “request” of the new Ukrainian authorities for the EU and NATO membership. The latter reaction, whether in reclaiming Crimea, supporting the rebel republics of Donetsk and Lugansk or in applying military pressures, economic sanctions or terrorism was to eliminate the terrorist groups, repress those suspected of collaborating with the separatists and promote actions to isolate those groups and suspects from the bulk of the population – namely by creating isolation camps, that the “Chinese call social reeducation centers” or “vocational training centers,” that and Westerners, for obvious reasons, call “concentration camps.”

Development

This is the repressive side of the answer. But the Chinese authorities did not stop there: They reinforced the region’s economic and cultural development plans to remove the bases for the protests and separatist vehemence.

Some figures: Xinjiang’s per capita income is $7,868, while in the Indian region of Kashmir – also Muslim and also with a history of terrorism and separatism – it is $1,342. From 2014 to 2019, Xinjiang’s GDP grew at an average annual rate of 7.2%. School attendance is 99.9%, and medical coverage is 99.7% (Maitreya Blushal, RT, July 2021). Recently, China has declared extreme poverty eliminated in Xinjiang, as in Tibet.

Will this policy of repression-integration lead to the dilution of Uighur identity in China as a whole, as the well-meaning Western consciences lament? Perhaps it will. But this is an inevitable path for any country that cherishes its independence. China’s national integrity (political and territorial) is a key factor for its independent development, that is, development without imperialist tutelage.

To claim that a “genocide” is taking place in Xinjiang (the term was coined by Mike Pompeo, Donald Trump’s Secretary of State) not only has no support in proven facts but has all the traits of another piece of the U.S.-led campaign to demonize China. If the opinion of the so-called international community counts for anything, the number of U.N. countries that have supported this China policy far outnumber those that condemn it at the behest of the U.S. and the Europeans.

Hong Kong

The protests in Hong Kong have been given the status of a “people’s struggle for democracy.” It remains to be asked what this “democracy” is all about. The social sectors that have engaged in the protests constitute a middle (and not so middle) class, clinging to the privileges afforded to it by Hong Kong’s special status as a "former British colony".
Capitalist Russia: a target, not a superpower

By Sara Flounders

This article, originally published July 12, 2017, by Workers World, remains timely in February 2022 as the U.S. threatens war at the Russian border with Ukraine and ramp up China-baiting in an attempt to break up agreements being forged between nations seeking to remain independent of U.S. imperialism. See also "Russia’s demands challenge NATO’s threats," Workers World, Jan. 5.

The corporate media’s constant use of Cold War terminology to describe the meeting of the U.S. and Russian presidents as a “meeting of the minds” masks the present relationship of forces. U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir V. Putin met at the Group of 20 Summit on July 7, 2017, in Hamburg, Germany.

Old preconceptions and terms must be challenged in order to have an accurate view of the present international situation. Russia today, as a capitalist country, is not even a fifth-rate economic power. The Russian Empire, as small as it was, was larger than the economies of Brazil, South Korea or Canada. According to World Bank and International Monetary Fund measurements, Russia is literally living off its own leftovers in its gross domestic product. This measurement is the market value of goods and services.

Today’s Russian Federation is a vastly different state — socially, politically, economically and militarily — from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of even 27 years ago. It is important to understand what Russia is today in order to understand the real nature of the constant Russia-baiting in the media. In stockpiled nuclear weapons from the Cold War, the U.S. and the Russian Federation may have somewhat even nuclear firepower — more than enough to incinerate the world in one launch. But U.S. military expenditures are estimated at 36% to almost 50% of total global military expenditures. Russia’s expenditures are 4% to 5% of the global total.

The Pentagon maintains more than 800 military bases around the world and 300,000 troops stationed outside the U.S. Russia has a naval base in Syria and a few communication centers in former Soviet republics. The U.S. Navy has 30 aircraft carriers, each of which includes jet aircraft, helicopters, destroyers and nuclear subs. Russia has one 27-year-old carrier propelled with oil and coal burners rather than a nuclear reactor.

Russia’s resources a target

Russia is a target of U.S. imperialism because of its vast resources. Eighty percent of Russian exports abroad are now in raw materials, primarily gas and oil. The petroleum industry in Russia is one of the largest in the world. It is the largest exporter of natural gas. Coal, iron, chromium, precious metals, lumber and cedars are other major exports.

This marks Russia’s economy especially vulnerable to global commodity swings and drastic downturns. There is an insatiable drive to control Russia’s great wealth by the largest banks and international corporations. All representatives of the U.S. and Western imperialist ruling class are desperate to have unlimited access to this great stream of profits, which they had finally laid their hands on just a few years ago. Remember: Imperialism’s very survival depends on expansion and profit.

As long as Russian politicians and privates were totally compliant with the devastating looting of the country, they were showered with glowing media coverage. The Group of 7, the largest imperialist countries, invited Russia to join.

The problem for the new capitalist oligarchs is that when the Soviet state was overthrown, there was no room for a new capitalist power in the global economy. All the banks and multinational corporations aggressively moved in to take advantage of the chaos.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, U.S. imperialism and the Western imperialist powers expected to have totally free rein to loot Russia at will. In almost 15 years they did have a free band. The results in Russia were devastating.

Cost of capitalist restoration

Privatization campaigns of the 1990s facilitated the transfer of significant Soviet-era wealth to a relatively small group of Russian business oligarchs. These pirates were willing to make the most corrupt deals with the West to maintain their stolen wealth.

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The destruction of the second superpower, which had championed the anti-colonial movement and later the third-world cause — largely closed off the scope for different alliances and sources of aid and sharply increased their dependence on the West. NGOs as Western missionaries

Into the economic chaos and social dislocation came not only Western bankers, stockbrokers, real estate schemers and speculators. Every major corporation, including Russian banks, the Soros foundations, religious groups and the U.S. Agency for International Development was in the market for reform. NGOs and funded nongovernmental organizations. These NGOs set up staffs and funded schools, religious organizations and publications to promote capitalist values, Western "democracy" and civil society and to glorify competition and private property. They wrote textbooks and handbooks and were thoroughly enmeshed with Western capitalism.

The Yale Center for the Study of Globalization reported in 2009, “For developing countries in particular, the destruction of the second superpower, which had championed the anti-colonial movement and later the third-world cause — largely closed off the scope for different alliances and sources of aid and sharply increased their dependence on the West.”

Ukraine and ramps up China-baiting in February 2022 as the U.S. threatens war at the Russian border with Ukraine and ramp up China-baiting in an attempt to break up agreements being forged between nations seeking to remain independent of U.S. imperialism. See also "Russia’s demands challenge NATO’s threats," Workers World, Jan. 5.

The bankers’ policy was about subjugating and reconquering not only Russia but all the countries of the former socialist bloc, including Russia, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics. In order to lock this violent and chaotic transformation in place, the U.S.-commanded military alliance, NATO, was expanded to include every East European country and former Soviet republic, right up to the borders of Russia’s Black Sea Fleet and only warm-water port, would be seized by the U.S. and Russia. A total threat was demanded by the bankers.

U.S. and EU seizures of Ukraine

When Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych was negotiating about Ukraine’s entrance into the EU, the EU refused to allow Ukraine to continue trading with Russia. It demanded that Ukraine join NATO. This meant that the Crimea, the home of Russia’s Black Sea Fleet and only warm-water port, would be handed over to NATO.

To carry out a coup against the elected Ukrainian government, the Euromaidan movement, led by neoliberals and fascists, received enormous Western support and funding. The reactionary movement seized the center of the capital, Kiev, and held it for three months. U.S. and European media and politicians poured into the Euromaidan with unapologetic support.

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Continued on page 9
What's at stake with SCOTUS nomination

Continued from page 1

Consider that the right to vote today is slowly but surely being weakened by the ultraright.

A sordid history of racist reaction

From a class point of view, even if a Black woman were to become a chief justice, it would not change the balance of power between the so-called liberal and so-called conservative positions. Even with this reality, racist senators, like Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell from Kentucky, have already threatened to lead an opposition vote in the Senate of the nominee, averting Biden of accommodating the “radical left.”

Whoever sits on this court, like with lower courts, will not change the class character of this body. Just like the presidency, along with Democrats and Republicans in Congress, SCOTUS exists to legally uphold the private property rights of the billionaire ruling class and most importantly its laws that undermine the rights of untold millions of working and oppressed peoples. If SCOTUS makes any progressive decisions, like the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision to desegregate schools or the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision — where an all-male, majority Republican court granted the right to abortion — a mass movement forced them to do so. It was SCOTUS which upheld the notorious Dred Scott decision in 1857 that denied full citizenship to Black people held in bondage. This court legalized segregation throughout the U.S. in Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896.

Solidarity with the most oppressed

Fighting white supremacy is decisive to building class solidarity. This can never be taken for granted by the working-class and oppressed people with the ideological tools needed to achieve liberation, beyond mere pay raises and contractual benefits.” (workers.org/2022/01/60928)

Continued from page 3

Starbucks union drive reflects growing class consciousness

As I wrote in my January 4 article in Workers World: “From a socialist perspective, this development in the consciousness of the working class cannot be overstated. We are seeing workers become more collectively aware of our world-historic role as agents of change in society, the only force that can bring about a revolutionary break — the individual right to political representation of the most oppressed, even in a bourgeois institution like SCOTUS, must be defended against the most racist elements like the neConnelis and die-hard Trumpists. To criticize and dismiss this right, denied for hundreds of years since the days of slavery, will do much more harm than good in building the class solidarity needed to overturn capitalist institutions that block the way of guaranteeing all forms of social equality.”

U.S. puts Europe in the trenches against the invented enemy

By Manlio Dinucci

Published Jan. 25 in Il Manifesto, in the author’s “Art of War” column.

“As a precautionary measure against a possible Russian invasion of Ukraine,” the U.S. State Department ordered the evacuation of family members and part of the staff from the U.S. Embassy in Kiev, which with 900 officials is among the largest in Europe, and raised the warning to U.S. citizens not to go to Ukraine due to a level 3 risk, the maximum.

Immediately afterwards the British Foreign Office announced, with the same motivation, by withdrawal of staff from the British Embassy in Kiev.

These operations of psychological warfare, aimed at creating alarm about an imminent Russian invasion of Ukraine and the three Baltic republics, set the scene for a further and even more dangerous U.S.-NATO escalation against Russia.

The White House announced that President [Joe] Biden was “deploying several thousand U.S. troops, warships and aircraft to NATO countries in the Baltics and Eastern Europe.” Initially, 8,500 U.S. troops are expected to arrive, joining the 4,000 already in Poland and allowed thousands more, extending their permanent deployment to the Baltic, as Latvia has requested.

Official rail convey are already transporting U.S. tanks from Poland to Ukraine, whose armed forces have been trained for years and are, in fact, commanded by hundreds of U.S. military advisers and instructors, blamed on others from NATO. Washington, which last year promised Kiev $3 billion in aid, is, according to informal official amount of $560 million, has authorized Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to transfer U.S. weapons in their possession to Ukraine, in particular Javelin missiles. Other armaments are provided by Great Britain and the Czech Republic.

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essential a territory of speculative capi-
talism, a banking center and world trade
plc.
Hong Kong’s service sector accounts for
86.5% of the territory’s GDP and industry
only 4%, which accounts for the socia-
ally unstable and economically weak
population and inhabitants. It is one of the richest areas
in Asia and the world with a per capita GDP of $37,191, compared to China’s average of 488,400.

Not surprising is the nostalgia for British colonialization or the repeated call for U.S. intervention, which the protest-
ers never hid. The movement was essen-
tially a reaction against full integration of
Hong Kong into China.

But beyond this internal origin, with its
motivations, there is something more
more. The extremes the protests reached
would have been impossible without the exclusion of the movement from
outside, as was apparent. Still, the
case was handled with restraint by the
Chinese state, not least because they
evidently did not want to turn the protes-
tors into “pro-democracy” martyrs.

A figure above suspicion [of sympa-
thics and agents of foreign powers] García
Leandro, former governor of Macau, said in
2019 (Portuguese News Agency Lusa), “Beijing has maintained a great
deal of restraint” He added, “You get the feeling that there is a little hand
from outside pushing there.” Suspects?
I don’t want to speculate, but it’s clear that there may be Taiwan there;
there may be the United States there.

Once again, to not see, or to devalue,
the hand of the West in the matter—and
to consider everything that happened as
entirely genuine, spontaneous and “pop-
ular” – would be not only to ignore the facts,
but also to ignore that practically
all social movements, practically every-
where in the world, are inevitably over-
shadowed by the interests and hegemony
of the Trip.

As comparisons also speak, the “heavy
sentences” for the Hong Kong activists’
charges of opinion are a far cry from the
punishment of persecution, character
destruction and possible life imprison-
ment meted out by the U.S. and its ac-
alytics, from Panama’s 
– Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann,
Foreign Minister of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government.

WAR without victory

Panamá, 1964:

Continúa de la página 10

asesinado y tirado su cadáver en el
Corredor de Colón. A todo lo cual siguió
tiempo y que hoy se siente sobre el
país: se impuso el criterio, hasta ese
tiempo se inspiró por el modelo de
las colonias de la Zona, que ha empezado
a mostrar signos de resistencia, de
que había que acabar con el estatuto colonial
de 1903, derogar el Hay–Bunau Varilla y
negociar un nuevo tratado sobre el Canal de
Panamá, que eliminara la “Zona”, las bases militares y trasapar la adminis-
tración de la vía acuática en un plazo prudente.
El Tratado, a sus cinco años, en 1967 reflejó esas demandas, pese a sus
menudeadas y al Pacto de Neutralidad.
La prosperidad económica que hoy cum-
ple sobre el país se debe, sin duda alguna,
a la Gesta del 9 de Enero, por estar con
ánimo que los líderes populares del
país, en todos los frentes, estén en
la campaña, en el Partido de la Unión,
que está en el poder.

The U.S.-led effort to overturn the
government in Syria threatens to take
another major trading partner away from
Russia. Russia’s only naval facility on
the Mediterranean is in Syria. The
appeal of the Syrian government
for Russia for assistance, after four years
of war, tens of thousands of mercenaries
and funded extremist forces, and a year
of U.S. and 10 other countries bombing
Syria, has now led to daily confrontations.

There is a broad agreement that if U.S.
plans succeed in overthrowing the govern-
ment in Syria, following the upsurges
that have occurred in Iraq and Libya, then
Russia and Iran are undoubtedly next on
the list.

Russia’s assistance to Syria is of a
defensive character. Self-defense is a
critical link in the global axis of resis-
tance and not only because it is neces-
sity. Without Russian help, Syria would
have fallen.

But with significant Western funding for
development blocked, new avenues have
opened. Russia is increasingly relying
for China for loans, is now providing 60,000
tons of wheat per month to Venezuela
and has canceled Cuba’s $30 billion
Soviet-era debt.

The growing web of trade and economic
relations among economic formations
like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China,
South Africa) and the Shanghai Cooperation
Organization, the Bolivarian Alliance for
the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) and
the Chinese One Belt One Road proposal
are all signs of growing efforts among
many targeted countries to fight isolation
and resist imperialist dismemberment.

During discussion about global warm-
ing at the G20 meeting, it was the U.S.
colossus that appeared increasingly
isolated.

Sole superpower status has new, protected coalition

Military expenditures continually drain
every needed social program in the U.S.
But they are extremely profitable for the
largest corporations, such as DynCorp International, Boeing, Lockheed Martin
and Raytheon.

According to the World Health
Organization, U.S. life expectancy,
ranked 37 globally, is one of the
lowest in developed countries. It is the same
for basic education; at 38th, the United
States ranks behind every major industri-
alized country.

The infant mortality, maternity care, housing and infrastruc-
ture reflect the true cost at home of
U.S. imperialism’s determination to loot
the world.
Hay fracasos a los que se le coge el gusto, digo yo; ¿cómo puede ser posible que los derrotados se regeneren en formas nuevas de fracaso? ¿Será como sensación de que algún día resultados, después de tanto intentarlo?

Así ha nacido Cuba Próxima, heredera del fracaso de Cuba Posible, un proyecto que Roberto Veiga fundó durante el auge de la Operación Soberanía y la Siembra de movimiento estudiantil de los años 50, por sus sectores más combativos, que dependía de ella.

Peter Hakim, presidente emérito y miembro principal de Diálogo Interamericano, comité con sede en Washington que acaba asuntos del Hemisferio Occidental, integra actualmente el Consejo Asesor Internacional de la Paz Panamericana (MUR) de Floyd Britton.

Por Pedro Jorge Velázquez.

Cuba Próxima apostará –según declara– “por la formación de un país próspero, libre, laborioso, generoso, democrático”. O sea, no reconocen que Cuba sea nada de eso, ni siquiera que seamos un pueblo labrador, porque todo el que trabaje para y con los humildes, para y con la Revolución, no es para ellos un obrador, no es para ellos un fundador. “Para fundar, para crear, para ser laborioso, hay asco que servir al imperio. ¿Qué raro!”

Ahora, para rozar aún más el ridículo, han creado un “gobierno en la sombra”. Sí, exactamente, al estilo Juan Guaidó, con la diferencia de que en este caso hay varios autoproclamados implicados: Roberto Veiga, presidente; Carlos Cabrera, vicepresidente; Alexei Padilla, coordinador de comunicación; Massiel Rubio, de cultura... y una lista larga de investiduras; pero, aunque usted no lo crea, funciona en sus cabezas, porque basados en ella cobran y construyen contra el socialismo cubano y la igualdad social.

La derecha se declara, muestra su verdadera identidad. Ya no podrán más vestirse de izquierda quienes han pasado tiempo en el exilio, quienes han pisado la papa, con sus entelequias sobre la desigualdad que nunca han puesto en práctica, ni han luchado para que se haga. Sin embargo, ahora terminan agrupándose con lo que siempre han querido derogar nuestras consecuencias más precisas: las que se unen al plan bélico imperial del imperio para destruirlas.

“Llevamos quizá demasiado tiempo intentando un experimento que no funciona, pero los cubanos necesitan saber cómo debieran nuestros opositores”, así han presentado este gobierno antiproclamado, donde sólo hay algo en común: la ambición de poder, el ego hipnótico que desconoce el sacrificio colectivo que hacemos como pueblo para buscar una profundización del Estado socialista de derecho, para el cual ellos no han apor- tado ni un comino, y sin embargo, buscan su destrucción definitiva.

La próxima no será colonizada

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Una revolución popular antimonopolista

Panamá, 9 de Enero de 1964: Una revolución popular antimonopolista

Por Olmedo Beluche.

El 9 de Enero marcó un punto de quiebre de la política norteamericana en Panamá. En 1964 Panamá estalló, aunque fue la suma de acontecimientos que de alguna manera sentían riezas que la oligarquía panameña había pintado en la cara de este nueva organización surgida por el gobierno de Estados Unidos, que se vio con el traje de “ONG”, y que esperó tranquilamente a que la era de Biden llegara para mostrarles a los senadores y las señoras que desde desgracias del primer mundo pretenden pasar por encima de la voluntad de los pueblos.

Peter Hakim, presidente emérito y miembro principal de Diálogo Interamericano, comité con sede en Washington que acaba asuntos del Hemisferio Occidental, integra actualmente el Consejo Asesor Internacional de la Paz Panamericana (MUR) de Floyd Britton.

Una columna enorme de gente, entre ellos los padres de los estudiantes del Instituto Nacional, de la bandera manchada por los “zonianos”, de la brutal represión de la soldadesca yanqui, el pueblo panameño reventó de indignación y se hizo presente en espontáneo, con el único fin de crocer la fuerza en el Palacio de las Garzas.

Días en que todo el mundo se arrepintió de su historia, de la promesa y el fracaso, de la ambición de poder, el ego hipnótico que desconoce el sacrificio colectivo que hacemos como pueblo para buscar una profundización del Estado socialista de derecho, para el cual ellos no han apor- tado ni un comino, y sin embargo, buscan su destrucción definitiva.

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