

Pension cut becomes French law Unions fight back

By G. Dunkel

Following the April 14 rubber-stamp approval by France's Constitutional Council, on April 15 President Emmanuel Macron signed into law the unpopular "reform" bill cutting workers' pensions.

The General Confederation of Labor (CGT), the most militant of the union federations in the "Bloc" of eight union confederations leading the fight against pension changes, immediately called for protest actions at the end of April. The united workers' movement called for a massive response on May Day, a traditional day of mass worker demonstrations in France that this year promises to go beyond symbolic protest.

After Macron signed the pension plan into law, he invited the unions to meet with him to talk about how it would be implemented. They turned him down cold and said they would meet neither with him nor any member of his government, unless withdrawing the new



Caen, France, April 13. Banner reads 'No to working longer!'

pension plan was on the table.

The Constitutional Council, a cabal of pro-capitalist former politicians, and Macron ignored the millions of French

workers, both active and retired, youth and students, farmers and other progressives, who took to the streets April 13 to protest. The CC approved the new

pension system, with a few minor objections, and disapproved a request to hold a popular referendum on this issue.

April 13 was the 12th day of nationwide protests and strikes since Jan. 19, which have brought millions of workers, active and retired, plus students and youth into the streets.

France's unions, which have led the protests since Macron introduced the attack on pensions in January, quickly said that the people's struggle was going to continue against this "unjust and brutal law." They supported the blockades, local strikes and protests and disruptions that began within a few hours after the CC announced its decision.

Refinery workers are already on strike, as are the sanitation workers in Paris. The unions have maintained united opposition in spite of Macron's attempts to break their alliance apart. Macron's offensive included personal attacks on Laurent Berger, the moderate head of the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT).

Macron rejects democracy

While the French bourgeoisie exalts France's democratic roots, Macron jammed through the new pension rules — something affecting everyone working in France — by maneuvers to limit discussion.

Public opinion polls indicated that some 90% of active workers in France oppose this new system that raises the age to qualify for "full retirement" from 62 to 64 years old. The law reinforces current lower pensions for women, workers with low-income careers and people with disabilities. Polls showed that about 70% of the general French public oppose the changes.

Even right-center Republicans in Parliament felt the mass pressure. The bill was doomed to failure in the National Assembly. Prime Minister Élisabeth Borne then invoked Article 49.3 of the French constitution, which allows the government to bypass democratic norms by skipping a vote in the Assembly.

Workers, angered by these authoritarian steps and buoyed by popular support, acted April 13. Members of the small militant union Sud-Rail occupied the offices of LVMH, the large owner of very profitable

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Court ruling against abortion pills calls for mass movement!



April 15, 2023, Seattle

WW PHOTO: JIM MCMAHAN



April 15, 2023, Washington, DC

By Kathy Durkin

Demonstrations took place across the country to protest the reactionary ruling by a federal judge in Texas to overturn the Federal Drug Administration's approval of mifepristone, one of two drugs used to induce medication abortions. A subsequent ruling has left the drug partially available, but with many restrictions. Thousands of people took to the streets in numerous cities April 15 to protest yet another attack on reproductive rights.

Millions of people are outraged at the reactionary courts. Medication is used safely in over half of abortions in the U.S. today. Now the court battle and the fate of mifepristone have shifted to the majority anti-abortion Supreme Court.

Build a united mass fight-back movement to keep and expand reproductive rights by any and all means necessary: Rally! March! Sit-in! Boycott! Network! But act now! □

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30 year anniversary of
Lucasville Uprising

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30 years later Free the Lucasville Uprising defendants!

By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland

April 11 was the 30th anniversary of the 1993 prison rebellion at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility in Lucasville, Ohio.

The heroic uprising began with what was intended as a nonviolent protest against forcing Sunni Muslim prisoners to take a tuberculosis test involving the ingestion of an alcoholic substance — a violation of their religion. Other aggravating conditions that led to a full-scale rebellion included poor food and medical care; frequent guard violence and guard-instigated violence between incarcerated men, which had led to a number of deaths; overcrowding; and allowing only one phone call to loved ones each year.

After the uprising, five men — Imam Siddique Abdullah Hasan, Keith Lamar (aka Bomani Shakur), Nameer Mateen (aka James Were), Jason Robb and George Skatzes — were falsely convicted of murder and sentenced to death for the killing of a guard, Robert Vallandingham, and, in Skatzes’ case, taking a prisoner hostage during the siege. Lamar now has an execution date: Nov. 16, 2023.

Dozens more were scapegoated for participating in the uprising, framed-up on false charges and given long sentences. Most are still in prison.

The rebellion, which lasted 11 days, united Black, Brown and white prisoners. Of the five Lucasville defendants on death row, three are Black and two are white.

Peace negotiators scapegoated

Over the years supporters of the Lucasville defendants have offered evidence that the real killer of Vallandingham was likely the state prosecutor’s key witness against the



PHOTO: CENTRAL OHIO INCARCERATED WORKERS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Protesters commemorate 25th anniversary of Lucasville Uprising outside Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, Lucasville, Ohio, Oct. 21, 2018.

the anniversary. A “Justice for Keith Lamar” jazz concert drew a packed house at a popular music venue on Oct. 14. Musicians from different countries, led by pianist Albert Marquès, have been performing around the world in pieces featuring Lamar’s spoken word artistry.

Through Lamar’s work, his bravery in the face of a possible execution this year shines through. While there is currently a moratorium on executions in Ohio following several botched lethal injections, Gov. Mike DeWine could resume executions if an alternate method of execution is approved by the Ohio General Assembly. The governor, a death penalty supporter, has postponed until 2026 all executions scheduled between now and October 2023 — but those falling later, including Lamar’s, have not been postponed!

Clevelanders who have supported the Lucasville defendants over the years used the occasion of the anniversary to reconnect on April 15. More events in Akron, Kent, Youngstown and other Ohio cities are planned later in April. Youngstown is the location of the Ohio State Penitentiary where most of the Lucasville defendants, including Hasan, Lamar, Mateen and Robb, are held. □



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Join us in the fight for socialism!

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward!

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ2S+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by hard-fought struggles by people’s movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at — and challenge — the capitalist system.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and

worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you. □

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Vol. 65, No. 16 • April 20, 2023
Closing date: April 19, 2023

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Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published monthly by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$36; institutions: \$50. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl. New York, N.Y. 10011.



Pentagon takes a leak

The top story in the capitalist media is the arrest of a 21-year-old member of the Air National Guard in Massachusetts over the leak of some 100 “classified” state documents. They were purportedly shared to a chat for gamers on the Discord social media platform and later shared by Russians on Telegram. Airman 1st Class Jack Teixeira has been charged with violating the Espionage Act and faces 10 years in prison for one charge, but more charges could follow.

Teixeira is in no way akin to Daniel Ellsberg, Chelsea Manning, Edward Snowden or Julian Assange, who took great personal risks to blow the whistle on the war crimes of U.S. imperialism. He has displayed white-supremacist and anti-Semitic tendencies. If the allegations are true, Teixeira might only have been showing off to fellow gamers what he thought he could get away with — removing classified “intelligence” reports, setting them on a kitchen countertop and photographing them to post on Discord.

The Espionage Act was passed by Congress in 1917, soon after the U.S. entered World War I. It has been used only occasionally to charge individuals, primarily those accused of spying for the former Soviet Union. The most famous case, and the only one where the death penalty



Chairman Fred Hampton, Chicago Black Panther Party leader, murdered in 1969 in Cointelpro-instigated police raid. For over a century the FBI has engaged in spying and much worse against Black revolutionaries and other progressives.

was imposed, was against Ethel and Julius Rosenberg. These two members of the Communist Party USA were falsely accused of passing on the formula for the atomic bomb to the USSR.

Espionage per se — euphemistically referred to as “intelligence gathering” when it’s done by the capitalist

state — is not a crime to the U.S. government, which maintains a massive domestic and international spy apparatus, which includes the FBI and the CIA. From COINTELPRO to the overthrow of democratically elected governments around the world, these “legitimate” government bodies engage in far worse acts than mere espionage. The full cost of these operations, which the working class funds through taxes, is not even public information.

Espionage only violates the 1917 Act when it is allegedly carried out on behalf of an “enemy.” But in this case the “enemy” is an online gaming chat group, Thug Shaker Central. The New York Times, the head mouthpiece of big business, was the first to investigate these leaks. The paper then handed its findings over to the federal government. Why?

Whose interests are involved?

The main questions being asked by the media seem focused on how “someone so young and emotionally insecure, and with racist and anti-establishment views, could have been allowed access to a site containing highly classified intelligence.” (theguardian.com, April 13)

That’s not a problem for working-class and oppressed people. We welcome the rare leak that exposes the machinations of the Pentagon, whose “classified” plans, shrouded in secrecy, are made well in advance and closely guarded under the guise of “national security.” Our class interests are diametrically opposed to those of the capitalist state, which is, as Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin observed, an instrument of bourgeois class rule.

But the leaks could be of interest if they reveal a growing divide between competing factions in the ruling class, one that labor can use to its advantage in its fight against capital. Is there a breakdown in class unity around supporting Ukraine in the U.S.-NATO proxy war against Russia? Some of the leaked documents are said to paint a pessimistic picture of the prospects for a Ukraine victory. But apparently the Ukraine government welcomes this as an argument for additional military assistance from NATO members.

The media finds the leaks “embarrassing,” because some documents show the U.S. spies on its “friends” — good friends, including Israel, South Korea and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky — probably to make sure these friends aren’t forgetting who their boss is.

There are many moving parts to this latest, highly publicized development, and the antiwar movement should be in no rush to draw conclusions. The movement can’t be pulled into taking sides with this or that faction of the ruling class. The whole capitalist system is the enemy of peace and social and economic justice.

Abolish the Pentagon death machine! Abolish the FBI, the CIA and the whole repressive state apparatus! □

International Al-Quds Day demands justice for Palestine



April 14, 2023, New York City WW PHOTO: MARSHA GOLDBERG

By Workers World New York City bureau

International Al-Quds Day is an annual pro-Palestinian event held in cities around the world on the last Friday of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. It expresses support for Palestinian resistance and opposition to Israel and Zionism. It takes its name from the Arabic-language name for Jerusalem: Al-Quds. The militant commemoration was initiated in 1979 during the Iranian Revolution.

This year Al-Quds Day, or Jerusalem Day, comes amid heightened Zionist attacks in the West Bank, following a series of Israeli raids on the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the arrest of worshippers.

Speaking at the New York City rally for Workers World Party, Sara Flounders stated, “Palestine is a resistance that inspires every country facing U.S. sanctions, imperialist wars, invasions, coups and occupations; peoples’ movements that are facing seemingly impossible odds and overwhelming U.S. military power also know it is possible to resist, because Gaza has survived and continues to fight.” □

Pension cut becomes French law: Unions fight back

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luxury brands like Givenchy and Louis Vuitton. “You’re looking for money to finance pensions? Take it from the pockets of billionaires,” said Sud-Rail unionist Fabien Villedieu, as the LVMH headquarters filled with red smoke from flares.

Cops brutalize demonstrators

Videos of demonstrations in France broadcast by TV2 or TV5, which are archived on francetvinfo.fr, show what is a common cop tactic. After flooding the area with tear gas, some 50 to 200 baton-swinging cops surround demonstrators who stumble, those who hold their ground to film or those just passing by and beat them to the ground before assaulting the next protester.

Sebastian Roché, a research director at the French National Center for Scientific Research and professor at Sciences Po Grenoble, writes, “The French police are, in Europe, the ones who kill the most in main-

taining order.” Roché listed three demonstrators killed and two put into comas in France since 2014, compared to none in Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Greece, Spain or Britain. (Le Monde, April 14)

Roché also points to the high number of “mutilations” that French cops inflict. During the recent Yellow Vest struggles, dozens of demonstrators lost an eye or suffered other head wounds, most often being hit with rubber-coated bullets.

How the cops beat people on a physical level mirrors the “brutal and cruel” effects this new retirement system will have on millions of workers on a social and political level if the mass movement can’t reverse it.

What’s next?

Macron’s apparent intransigence against the working class, despite the opposition of the vast majority of people in France, has the support of not only the bosses in France but the bosses and bankers of the European Union and the United

States — who otherwise might despise the French banker-president.

Meanwhile union members are becoming more radical, more conscious of their power and the need to struggle. During the April 6 national protest, members of

Sud-Rail, along with members of the CGT, occupied the Paris office of BlackRock, the largest investment company in the world, for 20 minutes. They were chanting “Anti, Anti, Anti-capitalist.” (tinyurl.com/mryaja68). □



Outside the French Constitutional Council, Paris, April 13, 2023.



El presidente Xi Jinping de China y el presidente Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva de Brasil en Beijing, abril de 2023. Más: workers.org/2023/04/70355

Tennessee Goddam

Por CNC en el Estado Español

*Alabama me ha alterado tanto
Tennessee me hizo perder el descanso
Y todo el mundo sabe de Mississippi Goddam*

(“Mississippi Goddam”, Nina Simone, 1964).

Bulletin: El Consejo Metropolitano de Nashville votó a favor de la reincorporación del representante Justin Jones a la Cámara de Representantes de Tennessee. Los comisionados del condado de Shelby votó a favor de la reincorporación del representante Justin Pearson.

Aprobada en 1870, la 15ª Enmienda a la Constitución de EE.UU. establece: “El derecho al voto de los ciudadanos de los Estados Unidos no será denegado ni coartado por los Estados Unidos ni por ningún Estado por motivos de raza, color o condición previa de servidumbre” y otorga al Congreso “el poder de hacer cumplir este artículo mediante la legislación apropiada”.

La Ley del Derecho al Voto de 1965 añade que “ningún Estado o subdivisión política impondrá o aplicará ningún requisito o prerrequisito para votar, ni ninguna norma, práctica o procedimiento que niegue o restrinja el derecho de cualquier ciudadano de Estados Unidos a votar por motivos de raza o color”.

Hasta qué punto el mundo real se desvía de la ley sobre el papel lo demostró la mayoría fascista de la legislatura estatal de Tennessee el 6 de abril. La supermayoría de dos tercios necesaria votó a favor de destituir a los representantes de la Cámara de Representantes Justin Jones y Justin Pearson. Justin Jones y Justin Pearson. Al desterrar a estos dos jóvenes negros, la Cámara de Tennessee privó efectivamente del derecho de voto a los 200.000 votantes de Memphis y Nashville que los eligieron, en las dos ciudades más grandes del estado.

¿No es esto una violación de la 15ª Enmienda y de la Ley del Derecho al Voto?

Su “delito” fue participar en una protesta masiva y multinacional en la que, en su mayoría jóvenes, exigían que el poder legislativo aprobara restricciones a las armas para detener la oleada de tiroteos en las escuelas, después de que el 3 de abril un tiroteo en una escuela de Nashville dejara tres niños y tres

adultos muertos. Después de que les cortaran los micrófonos en la Cámara de Representantes, Jones, Pearson y la representante Gloria Johnson se colocaron brevemente detrás del estrado y entonaron cánticos con un megáfono. La moción para expulsar a Johnson, que es blanca, fracasó por un voto.

El presidente de la Cámara, Cameron Sexton, calificó la acción de “Los Tres de Tennessee” de “insurrección” y la comparó con el asedio al Capitolio el 6 de enero de 2021. El representante Gino Bulso lo llamó un “motín”.

Cuando los jóvenes de Tennessee volvieron al Capitolio del estado para apoyar a sus representantes, señalaron que la misma legislatura reaccionaria prohíbe los abortos, prohíbe los libros, ataca a las personas trans y se niega a prohibir la venta de armas de asalto.

Un patrón histórico

Los ojos del mundo están puestos en Tennessee tras este flagrante ejemplo de supremacía blanca.

La desfachatez de los legisladores no es excepcional en el estado natal del general confederado Nathan Bedford Forrest, que se hizo millonario comerciando con africanos esclavizados y cofundó el KKK tras la Guerra de Secesión.

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Una estatua de este racista fue finalmente retirada de un parque de Memphis en 2017; una segunda en terrenos privados de Nashville y visible para los automovilistas en la Interestatal 65 fue derribada cuatro años después. Ese mismo año se retiró finalmente un busto de Forrest del mismo edificio del Capitolio estatal en Nashville, donde tuvo lugar la votación contra “Los Tres”.

En cambio, el Capitolio de Tennessee nunca ha tenido un busto o estatua del reverendo Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., asesinado en Memphis en 1968 mientras apoyaba una huelga de trabajadores sanitarios negros.

En declaraciones a Symone Sanders-Townsend en MSNBC, el representante Jones declaró: “Lo que ocurrió ayer fue un acto

de violencia. Fue un linchamiento público”, y calificó a la legislatura estatal de “órgano tan definido por la supremacía blanca, el patriarcado y el capitalismo de plantación”. Pearson declaró que “la raza volvió a ser el factor determinante en la separación entre lo que nos ocurrió al diputado Jones y a mí y al diputado Johnson”. (8 de abril)

Johnson describió una reunión del Comité de Justicia Penal para discutir un proyecto de ley para añadir el pelotón de fusilamiento y la silla eléctrica a los métodos de pena capital. Como si eso no fuera suficientemente malo, “uno de los miembros dijo: ‘Creo que tenemos que añadir el ahorcamiento en un árbol’ . . . He oído comentarios así en múltiples ocasiones”. (msnbc.com)

La vicepresidenta Kamala Harris, visiblemente enfadada, viajó repentinamente a Tennessee para apoyar a los legisladores expulsados, que se habían reunido antes, virtualmente, con el presidente Joe Biden.

A la oficialidad del Partido Demócrata le gustaría controlar y contener esta importante lucha contra la privación racista de derechos. Queda por ver si podrán hacerlo a la luz de la ira masiva que ha provocado este incidente.

Sea cual sea la **forma** que adopte finalmente esta batalla, su **contenido** -una lucha continua de los más oprimidos por el derecho democrático básico a votar y a ser representados- merece la solidaridad de los progresistas y de todos aquellos que se consideran revolucionarios. □



El representante de Tennessee Justin Jones, delante, y el representante Justin Pearson tras su expulsión de la legislatura estatal.

¡Atención médica y libertad para Alex Saab!

Por Óscar López Rivera (ex prisionero político),
Luis Rosa Pérez, Adolfo Matos Antorgiorgi

23 de marzo de 2023

El diplomático Venezolano, Alex Saab, sigue preso en gulags de los Estados Unidos de América. Su salud ha empeorado. Su vida está en peligro. Exhortamos a que se unan a la campaña por su inmediata excarcelación.

Porque somos puertorriqueños(as) que amamos la justicia y la libertad, hemos decidido exigirle al gobierno de los Estados Unidos de América (EE.UU.) que excarcele de inmediato a Alex Saab.

Hace dos años y ocho meses que el gobierno estadounidense ha secuestrado a Alex Saab en un acto craso de violación de los derechos humanos y leyes internacionales. El secuestro y encarcelación de Saab son actos de lesa humanidad. También son actos de lesa humanidad negarle acceso y visitas a su familia, esposa e hijos de 12

años y a su bebé recién nacida.

Siendo los EE.UU. los secuestradores y violadores de estos derechos fundamentales, tenemos toda la



PHOTO: FREE ALEX SAAB MOVEMENT

Support for Alex Saab in Caracas, Venezuela, April 16, 2023.

obligación de protestar y seguir luchando por su excarcelación y atención médica.

La salud de Alex Saab corre peligro. Su cáncer se ha adelantado y está en necesidad urgente de atención médica. Alex y su familia siguen siendo víctimas de un gobierno que practica la lesa humanidad, o sea, un crimen “legal” como lo ha catalogado Amnistía Internacional.

Le exhortamos a todas las personas que aman la justicia y la libertad a que se unan a esta campaña. Les pedimos que a su vez que apoyan y luchen por la excarcelación inmediata de Alex Saab. Hagamos todo lo posible para que Alex Saab pueda ser excarcelado lo antes posible y él pueda recuperar su salud y a su vez pueda disfrutar de la vida junto a su esposa e hijos.

Este próximo Abril 29 - Mayo 7 estaremos demandando la atención médica y libertad para Alex Saab. ¡Participen con nosotros en nuestra semana de acción! Envíe un correo electrónico a william@afgj.org para aprender más. □