for more than 12 years. Many thousands on Syria. This siege was part of a global the breaking of the unjust siege imposed of Workers World Party.

International Action Center and member International Arab Forum to Break the ship in solidarity and demanding that the Immediately the student workers went began their well-publicized national commencement speaker, the day after WGA Robert Brown announced Zaslav for com-
mencement speaker, David Zaslav, CEO of Warner Bros. Discovery.

The protesters checked in at the uni-

versity’s Playwriting’s Theatre, which workers there had turned into strike soli-
darity headquarters for the day. The the-
ater is home of the Graduate Playwriting Program at BU. The demonstrators all signed up there to get picket signs and be assigned to gate picket duty.

WGA East strike captains assigned picketers to the main entrance and the VIP entrance to the stadium event. The main force stretched two blocks along Commonwealth Avenue. There they greeted thousands of graduates and their families with news of profound labor con-

flict at the prestigious campus.

The solidarity between students and workers had grown over the past year. In recent months over 4,000 BU gradu-

ate and residence-life workers, many standing with writers: the enter-
rise workers, the WGA, and the students. Immediately the student workers went into action, reaching out to WGAIE leader-

ship in solidarity and demanding that the administration immediately “Cancel Zaslav!”

Thousands of BU students pay $50,000 per year and more to earn Fine Arts degrees, including screenwriting, media arts, film technology, music, acting and theater arts. Their “Cancel Zaslav!” campaign fea-
tured Hollywood-quality social media, posters, petitions, film and community events, which went viral as Boston Globe headlines had for weeks announced its hundreds of labor and community support-

ers and reached millions coast to coast.

Solidarity spreads

The solidarity throughout the BU community — whose 140 acres of campus and dormi-
tories make it one of Boston’s largest landlords — reached thousands more neighborhood neighborhood workers at Starbucks, Target, Taco Bell, REI and Alphabet, who joined the call denouncing BU’s overt union busting, as did local political leaders.

A widely disseminated BU Young Democratic Socialists (YDSA) leaflet sum-
marized the attack as “a slap in the face to both the writers on strike . . . and to the graduating seniors at BU who plan to work in the industry.”

Anyia Epstein, a leader of WGA-East from New York City, commanded the chants atop a Jersey stone barrier outside the Nickerson Field main entrance. Some 7,526 graduates and their families first heard her message loud and clear: “No Wages, No Pages!”

Hundreds of graduates raised their fists and took turns in the line, many writing pro-union messages on their caps, including the crowd favorite: “F*ck Zaslav!” A few brave gowned graduates refused to cross the line, skipping the cor-

porate pomp, but getting A+ for solidarity.

“Bye-bye to Al”

Epstein’s most sustained chant spot-
litized Zaslav and fellow Hollywood stu-
dio moguls’ headlong drive to replace writers’ talented labor and artistry with artificial intelligence (AI), a major issue of the now month-long industry strike.

“When I say AL, you say bye-bye! AL, bye-bye! AL, bye-bye!” drowned out BU’s pomp and circumstance outside the sta-
dium. Even blocks away, where VIPs exited limousines to reach the theater through a side-entrance ticket, they had to hear the chants.

Inside, when President Brown rose to introduce Zaslav, whole sections of gradu-

ates, many holding new degrees in media and entertainment writing, raised solidarity hell. They and their family members imme-
diately started booing, heckling, turning their backs and chanting for 22 minutes.

At one minute and 21 seconds into a widely reported video, a righteous grad-

demonstrated the aviator-sunglass boss Zaslav, yelling out, “F*ck you, you piece of sh!” Hundreds rose to their feet cheer-

ing and began rhythmically clapping and chanting: “Pay your writers!” The disrup-
tion didn’t stop until Zaslav, an alumnus of BU’s law school who had pocketed $286 million of workers’ surplus labor over the past two years, sat down in a dis-
grace that went viral.

WGA’s leaflet explained the stakes: “While Warner Bros. Discovery President and CEO David Zaslav prepares to speak at Boston University’s commencement, television and screen writers are facing the most comprehensive assault on our compensation and working conditions in a generation. The studies have taken advantage of the transition to streaming to underpay writers at all levels . . .

“The same race-to-the-bottom prac-
tices that hurt writers hurt workers up and down the call sheet. That’s why so many are standing with writers: the entertai-

nagement and unions, international writers’ unions, other labor organizations and political and community leaders.”

To support and join the writers’ strike lines, go to wgastrike.org.

Steve Gillis is a 33-year member and an elected leader of the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, United Steelworkers Local 2984.

Arab League invite to Syria stuns U.S. imperialism

The following is the message Sara Flounders was invited to deliver to the May 28 meeting of the International Arab Forum to Break the Siege on Syria.

Greetings and warm solidarity to the International Arab Forum to Break the Siege on Syria.

I’m Sara Flounders, Co-director of International Action Center and member of the International Relations Committee of Workers World Party.

It is an honor to join you in celebrating the breaking of the unjust siege imposed on Syria. This siege was part of a global war, led by U.S. imperialism, and waged for more than 12 years. Many thousands of people were killed, and millions were displaced.

We celebrate with you the end of the illegal freeze of Syria’s membership in the Arab League and the invitation to President Bashar Assad to the Arab Summit in Riyadh, in Saudi Arabia.

We join with you in demanding an end to the illegal U.S. / NATO / G7 sanctions on Syria. These criminal starvation sanc-
tions must be rejected and denounced by the whole world.

Syria is owed reparations for these sanctions and war of destruction by U.S. and NATO countries.

We join with you in the hope for the unity of the Arab people. This is the only way forward.

Despite 12 years of unremitting siege, U.S. imperialism has failed! It has failed in its efforts of destroying the elected Syrian government and replacing it with a regime submissive to Washington. U.S. imperialism has failed in its efforts to iso-
late Syria. The invitation by the Arab League was a defeat for Washington.

Now U.S. imperialism is busy planning new wars. Its wars never end.

It was the George W. Bush administra-
tion that at the end of 2003 listed Syria as a U.S. target for isolation and overthrow.

The war against Syria continued through the administrations of Presidents Barack Obama, Donald Trump and now Joe Biden. Republican and Democratic administrations were united in war and in imposing the harshest sanctions on Syria.

This policy has been costly for the people of Syria, the people of West Asia and the world.

We join with you in celebrating this great victory for the Syrian people and its government. This is a victory for the Arab people and for all steadfast people of the world.

We express our solidarity with Syria’s allies — governments and popular organiza-
tions — that aided and participated in Syria’s defense.

We salute the courageous Syrian peo-

ple, who were forced to sacrifice so much to combat the U.S.-led aggression.

Long live Syrian sovereignty and inde-

pendence from imperialism.

End the sanctions now! U.S. get out now! ☐
Kissinger at 100: still a war criminal

Henry Kissinger reached 100 years old today, May 27, 2023, offering proof that world-class war criminals can escape punishment if they commit their crimes in the service of U.S. imperialism.

Kissinger was National Security Adviser to President Richard Nixon and then Secretary of State under President Gerald Ford. Many of his well-wishers in the ruling class and its media are using this birthday to note his role in the “diplomacy” during that period, 1969-77.

Like the late Zbigniew Brzezinski, the global strategist who served Democratic Party presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, Kissinger was a European migrant to the U.S., who provided the intellectual framework for imperi- alist policies during the Cold War. Kissinger provided the rationale for the mass murders committed under Republican presidents; Brzezinski for the Democrats.

Most in the ruling-class media will praise him. Some may point out flaws. For those, like Workers World, who evaluate his history from the point of view of the working and exploited peoples of the world, what stands out are his crimes and that the goal of these crimes was to continue the domination of much of the world by a tiny group of superrich capitalists and their financiers.

His greatest, though not his only crimes, were commit- ted against the peoples of Southeast Asia, specifically the Vietnamese and Cambodians.

Yes, it was the Democrats in the Lyndon Johnson adminis- tration, who escalated the war and sent more than a half million U.S. troops to Vietnam by 1968. But the January-February Tet Offensive that year showed the weakness of the U.S. intervention. By late 1969, besieged by protests, the Nixon administration had already begun to draw down troops; negotiations became inevitable.

Kissinger’s negotiations became an end-run around Congress, but their pol- icy included stepping up the bombing of the Vietnamese people. In an attempt to stop the Vietnamese from liberat- ing their country, Kissinger even threatened to use nuclear weapons against them. In the end, the U.S. rainied more tonnage of bombs on Vietnam than all the allied bombers dropped on Germany in World War II, costing millions of Vietnamese lives.

Kissinger pushed for the bombing of Cambodia, overthrowing the neutral gov- ernment and killing hundreds of thousands of Cambodians in the countryside. This pol- icy left a chaotic situation that eventually led to the deaths of many more Cambodians. In an insult to the Vietnamese people fighting for their liberation, in 1973 the Nobel Committee tried to offer the Peace Prize to Kissinger and to the Vietnamese peasant, Le Duc Tho, as they both signed the peace treaty. Le Duc Tho, then-spokes- person for the North Vietnamese delegation to the Paris Peace Talks, refused to jointly accept it with the war-criminal. The Vietnamese communists were not only heroic; they were principled.

As Secretary of State, Kissinger oversaw the CIA’s over- throw of the elected government of President Salvador Allende in September 1973 in Chile. Replacing Allende was the military dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet, who murdered tens of thousands of Chileans and enslaved the country to a takeover by imperialist banks and corporations.

Kissinger’s policies gave a green light to the generals in Argentina to torture, murder and arrest tens of thou- sands of Argentines. Despite its love of the Argentine gen- rals, Washington still backed its junior partner, British imperialism, in the war to reconquer Argentina’s Malvinas islands in 1982.

That list omits many of Kissinger’s crimes. But it’s enough for a conclusion.

The important question is not whether Kissinger was an effective strategist for U.S. imperialist interests. That’s a question of interest only to the ruling class.

The important question involves what happened as a result of his conduct. Our conclusion: To expand the inter- ests of a tiny class of billionaires, Kissinger provided the strategy for carrying out war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Those who fought against those crimes did the right thing. Those who defend those crimes and celebrate the birthdays of their centenarian perpetrators are the ene- mies of the vast majority of the world’s people.

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist- Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigendered and multigenerational organization that not only aims to abolish capitalist, 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 never-ending quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future.

No social problems can be solved under capitalism. No social problems can be solved under imperialism.

Workers World

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