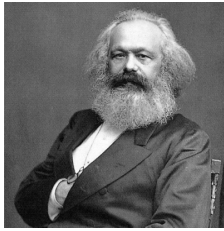


Towards Marxist-Leninist Unity

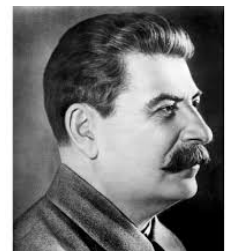


A Journal of Discussion and Debate



Vol. 6, No. 1

May, 2024



Contents:

Israel's Continuing War on Palestine	1
Police Continue to Exonerate Themselves for Murder	4
In Cases of Child Sex Abuse, Attorney General Allows Brooklyn Diocese of Roman Catholic Church to Investigate Itself.....	4
Vote for a Progressive Candidate or "Blank" for President	5
Cobalt Red, How the Blood of the Congo Powers Our Lives	6
What are the general laws of building of socialism?	9
On Ameliorating Secondary Contradictions under Capitalism	10
May Day, a day of struggle, resistance and militancy	12
Low economic growth in the midst of a world in conflict.....	14

Sección en español

Primero de Mayo, día de lucha, resistencia y militancia	16
Escaso crecimiento económico en medio de un mundo en conflicto	18

To see the reasoning behind publication of TMLU, please see the article “Why ‘Towards Marxist-Leninist Unity’” in the first issue on the website below. Though we believe that a Party must have ideological unity, we include progressive articles from groups with varying views. Also, note that unsigned articles, as well as comments before articles, are mine (George Gruenthal).

Note that we reprint many articles without asking for permission. Clearly the authors are in no way responsible for other views in this publication.

Comments, criticisms and articles are welcome. The next issue of TMLU should appear in July 2024. Material should be sent in by the end of Jinr.

TMLU has been moved to mltranslations.net. That web-site has replaced mltranslations.org, which I have not been able to access for several years.

For print copies in the U.S., please send \$3 per copy plus \$2 for mailing cost (of up to 5 copies) by PayPal to: georgeg0626@hotmail.com

Outside the U.S., please contact georgeg0626@hotmail.com

Israel's Continuing War on Palestine

Israel's war on Gaza is now some 7 months old. Over 34,000 people, overwhelmingly civilians, have been killed. Clearly, Israel has not been able to fulfill its declared aim, which is to wipe out Hamas, but it is well on its way to fulfilling what seems to be its real aim, which is to commit genocide against the population, so that it can take over all of Gaza.

Meanwhile, Israel again expanded the war by bombing Iran's consulate in Syria, killing seven of Iran's military commanders. In a response justified under international law, Iran fired missiles and drones against Israel, hitting at least two military bases.

At this point, it seems that Biden does not want to be involved in a war with Iran, and is convincing Israel to limit its further retaliation. On the other hand, Biden's calls on Israel to try to limit civilian casualties seems to be pure hypocrisy meant to assuage world public opinion, including in the U.S., as the horrors of Israeli genocide are clear to all. As everyone knows, the U.S. provides for the overwhelming majority of Israel's military capacity, and could restrain Israel if it wanted to.



A New U.S. Foreign "Aid" Package.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress approved a bi-partisan bill for **\$95 billion** in foreign "aid." This breaks down to \$61 billion to Ukraine, \$26 billion to Israel, and \$8 billion to Taiwan (which the U.S. has long acknowledged is part of China). Some of the comments by Congressional "leaders" show the continued great-nation chauvinism of U.S. imperialism. Republican Senate Minority leader Mitch McConnell stated: "We can wish for a world where the responsibilities of leadership don't fall on us, or we can act like we understand that they do." Democratic Senate Majority leader Chuck Schumer stated: "finally, both parties came together to do the right thing for our nation's security," meaning that the U.S.'s security means controlling as much of the world as possible.¹

Interestingly enough, while there were 37 Democrats who voted against aid to Israel, already a significant number that reflects public opposition to Israel's genocide, there were **no Democrats** who opposed aid to Ukraine or Taiwan. The majority of Republicans opposed aid to Ukraine, partly because they recognize that the U.S. has already lost that war, and partly because they want to tie this aid to money to "secure the border." But some also realize that working people in the U.S. know that these wars are at the expense of the miserable social services in this country. Republican Mike Lee stated: "Congress cares more about sending billions to wage endless war in foreign countries, cares more about this than saving our own country."²

¹ See <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/a-look-at-whats-in-the-95-billion-foreign-aid-package-and-what-the-money-does>

² Ibid.

U.S. Movement in Support of Palestine Grows

There have been daily demonstrations in support of Palestine throughout the country. At the same time, student demonstrations have increased in militancy. Encampments in support of Palestine have been set up at Columbia University, then at New York University, and have now spread to City College, a major working-class university.



Demonstration at Columbia



and at CCNY

Also, many trade unions, including the autoworkers (UAW) and electrical workers (UE) have opposed the continuing war in Palestine. Although the resolution, signed by over 200 unions and other organizations, is confined to calling for a ceasefire, in the context of the current situation it shows a beginning opposition to U.S. war policy.³ The Student Workers of Columbia – United Auto Workers went further, saying “we stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people.” The UAW’s position is also important in that it comes at a time when the union won recognition from some 4,300 Volkswagen workers in Chattanooga, Tennessee, with votes coming up in companies in other southern states.

Ruling Class Attacks Protestors

The bourgeoisie at all levels, as well as the bourgeois press, has come down on the protestors. Most have raised the baseless charge of “anti-Semitism.” First, there have been many Jews at the protests, both religious and secular. And the view that Jews should support Israeli genocide just because they are Jewish is in itself anti-Semitic. Meanwhile, Congress is passing the Antisemitism Awareness Act, which, while not just acquainting anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism, can also be extended in the future to criminalize speech that the ruling class opposes.⁴ And if anyone thinks Trump is any better, he recently commented: “These are radical left lunatics, and they’ve got to be stopped now.”⁵

³ <https://secure.everyaction.com/w1qW7B3pek2rTtv9ny5bqw2>

⁴ See https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/6090?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email. It has already passed the House by 320 to 91, and is headed to the Senate.

⁵ https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/biden-vs-trump-on-college-protests-what-their-clashing-messages-say-about-2024-election/ar-AA1o82Xb?ocid=nl_article_link

But the attacks on protestors have been more than verbal. The Columbia administration called the police on student protestors, arresting over 100 and suspending some. The protestors were charged with “trespassing.” But how can one trespass on one’s own campus? There have also been attacks on “outside agitators,” a ridiculous charge, particularly since at Columbia since the protests one needs a university identification to access the campus. At CCNY, almost 200 students have been arrested. Meanwhile, administrators have been attacked (and some forced to resign) for not being forceful enough against the pro-Palestinian students.



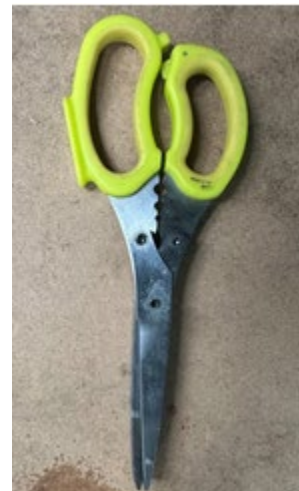
At the University of South Florida in Tampa, police attacked protestors with tear gas.

Once again, we are seeing that as the U.S. continues to support fascism abroad, it is restricting democratic rights at home. As pointed out by Soctt Ritter, a former US intelligence officer and now an anti-imperialist commentator, laws such as the Antisemitism Awareness Act are against the Constitution, the First Amendment of which states: Congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press...”

Police Continue to Exonerate Themselves for Murder

In 2019, two cops shot Kawaski Trawick, a gay black man to death in his Bronx home. He had been accidentally locked out of his room, but had gotten back in when the police came. He was holding a knife while he was cooking. The cops had broken into his room, and when he asked why they were there, they first tasered him and then shot him. Both Bronx DA Darcel Clark and New York State AG Letitia James refused to prosecute the cops involved, and this April the Police Department declined to take any disciplinary action against the cops.

Meanwhile, police murders continue unabated. This April 20, cops shot and killed Jesus Alberto Nuñez Reyes, a 65-year-old man in Corona, Queens. He was supposedly holding a knife that he refused to put down when he was shot, in an incident whose details are still not clear, but the bourgeois press calls an “NYPD-involved” shooting, their name for police murders. Meanwhile, both the NYS Attorney General’s office and the NYPD are “investigating” the killing, but their record shows that there is little chance of any disciplinary action must less criminal charges against the cops involved. And on March 27, 19-year-old Win Rozario, an immigrant from Bangladesh, was killed by police in Ozone Park, Queens. He was apparently having some sort of mental health episode when his mother called the police. They claim he was charging at them with scissors when they killed him. But the scissors (see picture) look more like ones used to cut paper, not a dangerous weapon.



In Cases of Child Sex Abuse, Attorney General Allows Brooklyn Diocese of Roman Catholic Church to Investigate Itself

A number of cases of allegations of sex abuse of children by priests in the Brooklyn Diocese in the last decades were swept under the rug by the diocese. In particular, one unnamed priest who was accused of sex abuse in the 1990s was just moved around from one parish to another until he was finally removed from duty (but apparently never charged with a crime) in 2018, that is some two decades later.¹

Now NY State Attorney General Letitia James made a new, “stronger” agreement with the diocese on the reporting of such allegations. Under this agreement, “the Diocese must acknowledge all complaints within five business days. And the Bishop must determine whether or not a complaint is credible within 20 days. Credible complaints will be referred to the DRB [Diocese Review Board] for an investigation which must be finished in nine months.” If the complaint is found credible, the clergy member must be removed from office and their name must be made public. There are some 74 priests on the Diocesan list², not including those who resigned or died before a finding of credibility.

The Diocesan Review Board is appointed by the Diocese itself, so in essence the Diocese investigates itself and decides on the credibility of allegations itself.

It is interesting to compare this with allegations of abuse (sexual or otherwise) in schools. At least in New York State, once a report has been received and the appropriate form has been filled out, the duties

¹ See report in amNY, 4/17/2024.

² <https://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/protecting-children/sex-abuse-crisis-response/list/>

of school administrators includes to: “Promptly forward a copy of the completed report form to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.”³ So why are schools obliged to report allegations to law enforcement while clergy are not? (Of course, this does not mean that one should trust law enforcement to correctly handle such allegations. Look at the numerous high-profile politicians and figures in the entertainment industry who were never tried much less punished, or escaped punishment for decades.

Vote for a Progressive Candidate or “Blank” for President

In the previous issue, I recommended that in the primaries in states where there is no genuinely progressive candidate running for president, voters should hand in a blank ballot. Several groups, including pro-Palestine groups, put forward the same idea.

In the New York State Democratic Primary election in April, some 12% of voters handed in blank ballots.¹ In the Feb. 27 primary in Michigan over 101,000 ballots (13%) were cast for “uncommitted”, as were almost 1 in 5 (20%) in Wisconsin.²



In the general elections in November, depending on the state one is in, there may be a progressive third-party candidate for president. The one who will be on the ballot in more states is Jill Stein, who can run on the Green Party line, which still has ballot status in 19 states. (The Green Party lost ballot status in New York when former governor Andrew Cuomo more than doubled the number of votes needed to maintain ballot status.) Stein has opposed Israel’s genocide in Gaza³. She was arrested at a pro-Palestine demonstration in St. Louis last month. Cornell West is also running for president on a progressive platform.⁴ The Party for Socialism and Liberation is also running, but is not likely to be on the ballot in many states. Another progressive independent candidate is Dr. Shiva, who takes pro-Palestine and pro-worker positions.⁵ However, he is relatively unknown, so may only be on the ballot in a few states. Also, according to the U.S. Constitution he is ineligible to be president since he was born in India. Although Robert Kennedy Jr. had a certain appeal due to his positions critical of Big Pharma and mandatory vaccinations, his support for Israel⁶ means he is not a progressive candidate. He is, after all, a member of a ruling class family even though he has distanced himself on certain positions.

In those states where there is no progressive candidate, we would again recommend submitting a blank ballot.

³ <https://www.nysed.gov/student-support-services/education-law-23-b-reporting-requirements#admin>

¹ <https://www.cityandstateny.com/politics/2024/04/leave-it-blank-campaign-gets-12-vote-ny-democratic-presidential-primary/395464/>

² <https://inthesetimes.com/article/uncommitted-democratic-voting-state-list>

³ <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/demand-an-independent-investigation-into-us-funding-of-israels-genocide-in-gaza/>

⁴ <https://www.cornelwest2024.com/platform>

⁵ <https://shiva4president.com/>

⁶ <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/will-rfk-jr-s-israel-support-limit-his-appeal-on-the-left.html>

Black Agenda Report

Cobalt Red, How the Blood of the Congo Powers Our Lives

Ann Garrison, BAR Contributing Editor

24 Jan 2024



(Photo Courtesy of Siddharth Kara)

Siddharth Kara's book exposes the exploitation behind the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

“Unspeakable riches have brought the people of the Congo little other than unspeakable pain.” So writes Siddharth Kara in [Cobalt Red, How the Blood of the Congo Powers Our Lives](#). It’s one of the many poetic phrases that make this book easy on the ear but hard on the heart and mind. There’s pleasure in turning the pages of such finely crafted prose, pain in knowing that, if you have half a heart, you’ll never be able to see your smartphone, laptop, tablet, solar power system, or electric car quite the same way again, that you’ll see blood all over the supply chain that put them in your hand, on your roof, or in your driveway. Despite such privilege, you might even ask yourself how you can stand to live in such an evil, brutally predatory world for one more day. I did, but I read on and highly recommend this book despite that shaky moment.

It’s better to know that, as Kara writes, “The ongoing exploitation of the poorest people of the Congo by the rich and powerful invades the purported moral foundation of contemporary civilization and drags humanity back to a time when the people of Africa were valued only by their replacement cost.”

Kara not only crafts a fine sentence, but also surrounds his subject—artisanal cobalt mining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo—with broad historical and economic context. He recounts the discovery of the Congo and the waves of exploitation and predation to claim its vast resource wealth, driven by successive technological revolutions, none of which have left anything for the Congolese people aside from comprador and kleptocratic elites.

He explains battery technology and the global dominance of battery manufacture by South Korean, Japanese, and, most of all, Chinese industrial titans. Huge Chinese corporations so dominate Congolese cobalt mining, processing and battery manufacture that one has to ask why a communist government,

however capitalist in fact, doesn't at least somehow require more responsible sourcing of minerals processed and then advanced along the supply chain within its borders. I hope that Kara's book has or will be translated into Chinese.

That's not to say that Kara even remotely exonerates the West. Equally predatory Western industrial titans sold cobalt mines to their Chinese counterparts, in one significant instance brokered by none other than [Hunter Biden](#).

As Kara makes painfully clear, there's blood all over the supply chain all over the globe, from the artisanal and industrial mines to the ore processors, battery manufacturers, and electronics manufacturers, including Apple, Google, Microsoft, Dell, Tesla, Ford, Huawei, Samsung, Motorola, and all the world's other electronics giants and their retail outlets.

The one industry in that supply chain that he doesn't mention is military manufacture, where Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon and all the rest rely on cobalt as much as the consumer electronics industries. That would complicate his argument with various national security concerns. His intended audience is, instead, the consumer electronics industries and electronics consumers themselves, who he feels should demand that their products be ethically sourced.

Artisanal mining

"Artisanal" mining should not convey a pleasant image, as Kara writes:

"Today, these laborers are assigned the quaint term artisanal miners, and they toil in a shadowy substrate of the global mining industry called artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM). Do not be fooled by the word artisanal into thinking that ASM involves pleasant mining activities conducted by skilled artisans. Artisanal miners use rudimentary tools and work in hazardous conditions to extract dozens of minerals and precious stones in more than eighty countries across the global south. Because ASM is almost entirely informal, artisanal miners rarely have formal agreements for wages and working conditions. There are usually no avenues to seek assistance for injuries or redress for abuse. Artisanal miners are almost always paid paltry wages on a piece-rate basis and must assume all risks of injury, illness, or death."

Thirty percent or more of Congolese cobalt mining is "artisanal"; the rest is industrial, conducted with heavy machinery. Congolese, whose environments have been destroyed to build vast industrial cobalt mines, have been left with no way to survive except by digging with picks and shovels or even their bare hands to gather bags of rocks that they might be paid as little as a dollar a day for.

They sell these bags of rocks to middlemen, "negociants," who transport them on motorbikes or trucks to another type of middlemen in makeshift depots, or "comptoirs," unless the miners work near enough to a depot to sell to it directly. Moving up the chain, the comptoirs sell to the industrial mines, and at that point, artisanally mined rock becomes indistinguishable from industrially mined rock. There's no way to know which, or what admixture of the two, winds up in refineries, electronics manufacturing plants, retail stores, and consumers' hands. "Accountability vanishes like morning mist in the Katangan hills as it travels through the opaque supply chains that connect stone to phone and car," Kara writes.

Cobalt and climate ambitions

"In 2010," Kara recounts, "there were only 17,000 electric vehicles on the road in the entire world. By 2021, that number had skyrocketed to 16 million. Meeting the ambitions of the Paris Agreement would require at least 100 million total electric vehicles in use by 2030. An even more ambitious EV30@30 Campaign was launched in 2017 with the goal of accelerating the deployment of electric vehicles, targeting a 30 percent market share for electric vehicles sales by 2030. The EV30@30 target would require a global stock of 230 million EVs by 2030, a fourteen-fold increase over 2021 numbers. EV sales could end up being even greater, as twenty-four nations pledged at COP26 to eliminate the sale of gas-powered vehicles entirely by 2040. Millions of tons of cobalt will be needed, which will continue to push

hundreds of thousands of Congolese women, men, and children into hazardous pits and tunnels to help meet demand.”

Surely the lofty goal of saving the planet should be compatible with equitable sharing of the profits generated to create it, especially with the Congolese people, whose resources and labor are at its epicenter. Surely the environment of the Congolese should be included in concern for the environment as a whole, but that is not the world we live in. Kara’s book is not an explicit critique of capitalism, but it is an implicit one. It makes it clear that, without some form of socialism, a world powered by renewable energy will be no less predatory and no more people or community centered than that powered by fossil fuels.

Given the world’s finite supply of cobalt, battery engineers are already working on alternative designs that can minimize or eliminate reliance on it, and no matter how climate friendly, there’s no reason to believe that there’ll be any less blood on the supply chains required to manufacture them. Kara writes, “Even after battery designers find a way to eliminate cobalt from rechargeable batteries without sacrificing performance or safety, the misery of the Congolese people will not end. There will surely be another prize slumbering in the dirt that will be made valuable by the global economy. Such has been the curse of the Congo for generations.”

Critique of Cobalt Red

“Open Democracy” published a [scathing critique](#) of Cobalt Red which called it a sensationalistic, self-aggrandizing “White Saviour” exposé, even though Siddarth Kara is a South Asian Indian American. I spoke to Maurice Carney of [Friends of the Congo](#) (FOTC), and we agreed that whatever its failings, Cobalt Red has greatly expanded awareness of the human cost of electronics and clean energy manufacturing, most of all to the Congolese. He said that FOTC works with Congolese who like the book and are glad to see its wide reception. Kara has been interviewed on countless podcasts, on [Democracy Now](#), and at the DC-based [Foreign Policy Association](#). The book is a New York Times and Publishers Weekly bestseller, and it’s been shortlisted for the Financial Times Best Business Book of Year Award.

Ann Garrison is a Black Agenda Report Contributing Editor based in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 2014, she received the [Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza Democracy and Peace Prize](#) for her reporting on conflict in the African Great Lakes region. She can be reached at ann@anngarrison.com.

Stalin gave a brief description what socialism is in the selection cited below. We ask: What countries today are socialist according to Stalin's description?

What are the general laws of building of socialism?

1. Above all it is the dictatorship of the proletariat, the workers' and peasants' state, a particular form of the union of these classes under the obligatory leadership of the most revolutionary class in history the class of workers. Only this class is capable of building socialism and suppressing the resistance of the exploiters and petty bourgeoisie.
2. Socialised property of the main instruments and means of production. Expropriation of all the large factories and their management by the state.
3. Nationalisation of all capitalist banks, the merging of all of them into a single state bank and strict regulation of its functioning by the state.
4. The scientific and planned conduct of the national economy from a single centre. Obligatory use of the following principle in the building of socialism: from each according to his capacity, to each according to his work, distribution of the material goods depending upon the quality and quantity of the work of each person.
5. Obligatory domination of Marxist-Leninist ideology.
6. Creation of armed forces that would allow the defence of the accomplishments of the revolution and always remember that any revolution is worth anything only if it is capable of defending itself.
7. Ruthless armed suppression of counter revolutionaries and the foreign agents.

Stalin, Sochinenia, Tom 18, Informatsionno-izdatelskii tsentr 'Soyuz', Tver, 2006, pp. 531- 533.

Translated from the Russian by Tahir Asghar

Quoted from Revolutionary Democracy April 2010

On Ameliorating Secondary Contradictions under Capitalism

There is no question that under capitalism, although the principal contradiction is between the capitalist class and the working class, there are other contradictions. First among these is between oppressor nations and oppressed nations (including within the imperialist countries), as well as between men and women, and also between straight people and LGBT+ people.

This in no way means that people from the oppressor nations (white people in the U.S.), men and straight people are part of the enemy, or allies of the capitalists. The ruling, capitalist class always tries to find ways to split the working class along these lines.¹ It is the task of Marxist-Leninists to try to ameliorate these differences and unite workers on class lines.

A particular contradiction has been raised by many groups on the “left” with regard to trans people, and trans women in particular. First, there is no question that trans people as well as biological women² are oppressed not only under capitalism, but under patriarchal societies in general. According to the Human Rights Campaign, there were at least 41 trans gender people killed in the U.S. in 2022 (of whom 83% were from oppressed nationalities – “people of color”) and 59 were killed the previous year.³ Many of them were forced into prostitution⁴ due to discrimination, and were killed by their clients when they found out that the person had male sex organs. At the same time, 2,997 women were killed in 2019, many by an intimate partner.⁵ This is clearly an effect of patriarchal society, including present-day capitalism.

The ruling class always tries to turn one oppressed group against another. Most lower-paying jobs, particularly minimum wage service work such as McDonalds, are overwhelmingly filled by oppressed nationality workers, mainly Blacks and Latinos. Home health workers used to be almost all Black women, but with the increasing Latino population, many Latinos have gone into this type of work, leading to some contradictions between the two groups. One thing that Marxist-Leninists, and all progressive people, should do is to fight to increase the wages and working conditions of all home health workers.⁶

This is also true with housing for homeless people. A large percent of recent migrants in New York City are Latino. They have been placed in shelters, some in huge tents with extremely crowded conditions, while others (mostly families) have been placed in hotels. At the same time, New York residents who are homeless, many of whom are Afro-Americans, are either placed in dangerous shelters or prefer to sleep on the street. Rather than accept the playing off of one group against another, shouldn't we demand safe affordable housing for all who are unhoused?

There is a similar situation with trans women and biological women. Take the question of trans women in women's facilities. While trans women may not be appreciated by biological women in women's athletic facilities, or prison facilities, they could well be in danger in men's facilities. Moreover, trans men would be in serious danger of rape in men's prison facilities. There are other solutions: in the LGBT Center in New York, most if not all bathrooms are unisex. In prisons in some states, LGBT+ people are general placed in separate wings of the

¹ This is in no way to deny that many whites are influenced by white chauvinism (as are males by male chauvinism or straight people by bias against LGBT+ people). But as Marxist-Leninists we do not support the “woke” ideology that blames all white people, as opposed to the ruling class, for the oppression of Blacks, Latinos and other oppressed people, and similarly with other groups.

² I do not use the term “cis women”.

³ <https://www.hrc.org/resources/fatal-violence-against-the-transgender-and-gender-expansive-community-in-2022>

⁴ I do not use the “politically correct” term “sex worker,” as it is not a form of labor but a form of exploitation both sexually and financially. This is not to blame the people who have to engage in prostitution. Almost anyone who is involved in prostitution would gladly take another job if it paid decently.

⁵ <https://sanctuaryforfamilies.org/femicide-epidemic/>

⁶ There is currently a fight being waged to stop 24-hour shifts for these workers.

facility. But it would be much better if most LGBT+ people and all others who are in prison for non-violent offenses (such as prostitution or shoplifting in order to survive) were not in prison at all.

Trans women in women's sports still have an **overall**⁷ physical advantage over biological women. I usually don't quote sources for well-known facts, but since some people seem to deny this I will quote height and weight figures. Average height for men in the U.S. is 5 ft. 9 in., while for women it is only 5 ft. 3½ in. As to weight, it is almost 200 lbs. for men and not quite 171 lbs. for women.⁸ Though medicine for transition may make some difference, it is generally small, and to take an obvious example it will not make trans women shorter.

The word "terf" ("trans exclusionary radical feminism") is a male chauvinist term. How come there is no word "term" ("trans exclusionary radical men")? Antiwar activist Cindy Sheehan, who organized a "Women's March on the Pentagon" in October 2018, was ostracized by many in the so-called "left" who boycotted her demonstration for speaking out for single-sex spaces for women and against self-identification of sex.⁹

Ways must be found, not to split biological women from trans women, but to unite them. Why does one main section of the ruling class, primarily centered around the Democratic Party, promote events like Transgender Visibility Day, or Trans Equality Now Awards? Do they really support the rights of trans people, or do they just see this as a way to win liberal votes (and alienate conservatives in the process)? Why does another main sector of the ruling class, mainly centered around the Republican Party, put forward laws prohibiting trans women in women's sports. Do they really care about the rights of biological women (note that Trump is one of the most openly misogynist politicians), or are they just courting votes of people who believe in "family values" (and alienating liberals in the process)?

Finally, to point out the obvious (though some people don't like to admit it) trans men are still biologically women, and trans women are biologically men, not to mention people who consider themselves gender fluid. Trans women cannot get pregnant, they are not **personally** affected by the denial of the right to abortion (although **socially** this affects all people, both men and women), they do not suffer the pain (or experience the pleasure) of childbirth or the pain of menstruation. This is not to deny the other problems that they are confronted with. It is also not to try to explain why they identify with the sex opposite from the one they are born with. It is a simple material question of biology. We must certainly fight all forms of discrimination and oppression that they suffer in this patriarchal capitalist system, but in a way that unites the working class and all working people, not divides them.

There are many questions that divide the Marxist-Leninist movement in the U.S., the question of how to handle support for the LGBT+ movement being only one of them. What is holding us back is not so much the differences themselves, but the unwillingness to have open discussion on these questions in a comradely way. This is also connected to the sectarianism that has long affected our movement. Each group thinks that they have all the answers, and that the way they will form a genuine communist party of the working class will be by their group growing into such a party. That is why most of these groups have little connection with the working class, and in particular with advanced workers.

This does not mean that we need a free-for-all discussion with all varieties of social-democrats, revisionists, Trotskyists, and other non-revolutionary elements. I have proposed a bulletin for discussion and debate open to all workers on the questions that divide us¹⁰. I hope that this proposal can be taken up in a serious way.

⁷ Please note that we are talking about averages, as certainly there are some women who are stronger than some (or even most) men, but **on the average** they are weaker. While this may be a social phenomenon, this is the situation today.

⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/body-measurements.htm>

⁹ <https://rdln.wordpress.com/2019/10/28/the-new-misogyny-targets-cindy-sheehan-and-helen-steel/>

¹⁰ See <http://mltranslations.net/US/TMLU/TMLUv5n1.pdf> with amendment in <http://mltranslations.net/US/TMLU/TMLUv5n2.pdf>

This article is from Communist Workers and Students for Social Change of Puerto Rico. While we have comradely relations with this group, we have disagreements with some of their views, which we share publicly. The footnotes to this article are my views.

May Day, a day of struggle, resistance and militancy



On the International Day of the Working Class, the global struggle against capitalism and exploitation intensifies. Millions of workers continue to migrate to other lands in search of better living conditions. Inter-imperialist wars are intensifying.

Each economic bloc is defending its particular interests. Declining U.S. imperialism and its lackeys are challenged by other economic blocs defending their regional and national interests. On the other hand, other countries that have suffered imperialist interventions and colonial domination, are waging their struggles to free themselves from the yoke of French, British and U.S. imperialism are entering the clutches of other imperialist blocs (BRICS).¹

Caught in the middle, the international working class is the victim of these deceptions. We cannot fall into the game of national chauvinism and abandon our class interests for the preservation of an anti-imperialist line that has no class content. Our particular struggles transcend national borders. Just as imperialism transcends national boundaries, so the workers' struggle must transcend those boundaries. Countries in struggle, distant and different, such as Haiti, Palestine, Congo, Niger, South Africa and Puerto Rico, to mention a few, are examples of the same class struggle.

In the current global war scenario we have the Russian Federation and Putin who are running out of patience, calling for the surrender of Kiev and Zelensky (Ukraine). But on the other hand, Putin's anti-fascist struggle serves as a pretext for the preservation of the elite of the Russian Federation. Neither Putin, nor Zelensky, NATO, nor the EU represent the interests of the working class.

¹ BRICS is a conglomerate of imperialist and more developed dependent countries. While Russia and China are imperialist, Brazil and India, and probably South Africa, are dependent countries.

Zelensky, NATO and the EU prefer to continue a lost war with the argument of weakening Russia, sacrificing the Ukrainian and Russian working class. Eurocentric² chauvinism is so obvious and blatant that the lives of Ukrainians are worth less than those of EU and NATO soldiers. While they are waging this war against Russia in order to weaken it, they want to bet on the strengthening of the EU without caring about the lives of Ukrainians, because for them they are not equal, they do not see them as Europeans.³

We want to make it clear: we do not support the fascists in Ukraine any more than we support Moscow in the name of the anti-fascist struggle. Its only interest is the preservation of Russian bourgeois interests, Putin himself said this in an interview with Tucker Carlson on February 9, 2024, where Putin pointed out that he had asked Bill Clinton to be part of NATO, to which Clinton replied that on the recommendation of his cabinet the answer was no. Putin questioned why not, since they were bourgeois capitalists just like in the U.S.

Palestine, the hypocrisy of the UN and the International Court of The Hague

Even with South Africa's complaint to the International Court in The Hague, Israel continues to act with impunity by intensifying its genocide in Gaza. Supported by US imperialism, it cares little about public and international opinion. The U.S. continues to provide Israel with weapons. On the one hand, for the extermination of the Palestinians, and on the other hand, it offers humanitarian aid to Palestine. Hypocrites!

On the other hand, Nicaragua denounced before the International Court of Justice in The Hague the fact that Germany supplied arms to Israel while it was committing crimes of genocide against the Palestinian people. It is the height of arrogance of the Zionist fascist government of Israel when it mocks the international institutions and diplomacy of independent countries, as happened with its attack on the Iranian embassy in Syria, assassinating military personnel and diplomats. We see here the disproportionate application of the law, with sanctions by the UN against countries such as Cuba, Venezuela, Russia and Iran. This exposes the fact that these institutions do not represent the interests of the working class, that their role is to defend the interests of these capitalist-imperialist countries.

Puerto Rico and its struggle against U.S. imperialism

For 126 years Puerto Rico has been occupied by U.S. imperialism. Like Palestine, we have experienced genocidal and racist practices on the part of the United States, such as the mass sterilization of Puerto Rican women of reproductive age; experiments with Agent Orange and depleted uranium; bombings of our lands in military practice, bringing pollution and disease; and forced emigration of workers.

In this election year, our colonial reality is once again exposed, when a governor will be elected with a shorter mandate than an unelected commission, the Fiscal Control Board (FCB); it will once again determine national policy without caring about the dire consequences on the working class. There are certain sectors that believe that in the name of the struggle against bipartisanship they propose tri-partisanship as a solution to the problems of poverty and misery suffered by our working class. We are convinced that this is not the way to go.⁴ That is why this May Day on the Golden Mile, in front of the headquarters of the Fiscal Control Board, we will demand the departure of both the FCB and U.S. imperialism from Puerto Rico.

As communists we call on the unionized and non-unionized working class to join our effort to fight this system that exploits us. Only the struggle for communism and against all exploitation will lead the working class to victory.

Long live May Day! Long live proletarian internationalism! Long live the working class! The working class has no borders; The workers' struggle has no borders!! Stop Zionist, fascist genocide on Palestine! Down with imperialist wars!! Long live communism.

² This must certainly include the U.S.

³ Ukraine is clearly part of Europe, but it is a dependent country in that continent.

⁴ We think it is wrong to refuse on principle to participate in elections, though it should always be made clear that when we do participate, it is to spread our views among broader masses of the people, not that this will lead to the seizure of power. The Russian Bolsheviks did this in a highly principled way, as described by Badayev in *The Bolsheviks in the Tsarist Duma*.

Low economic growth in the midst of a world in conflict



The World Economy Faces Its Weakest Growth in the Last Three Decades

The IMF has published its economic projections for this year 2024, forecasting an improvement compared to its latest figures, which cannot hide the difficult situation of the capitalist economy. The whole world would grow at a rate of 3.2%, while the United States would grow at a rate of 2.7%, insufficient to recover from events such as bank failures, but much more than the European economies that, as a whole, would grow at 0.8% – the same as Ecuador's – leaving the weight of the global momentum to economies such as India, which would increase by 6.8%, China by 4.6%, emerging middle-income countries by 4.1%.

But this projection is far from the expectations created by the international organizations themselves, which previously expected an economic rebound after the last crisis. The "macro" explanation comes from the analysis carried out by the IMF regarding the crusade that the United States has carried out against inflation, which it decided to confront by applying neoliberal orthodoxy, that is, reducing the working capital by increasing interest rates. The "soft landing" that they projected has not yet arrived, so interest rates will still be high for the rest of this year, which means that the U.S. economy and, given its global weight, the global economy will be restricted and will not grow, which would explain the growth below what was originally expected. There is also another consequence, perhaps unexpected but beneficial for the yankees, which is the strengthening of the dollar since, given the increase in interest rates, it has become, once again, the safe haven currency for those who try to flee from risk.

The revision of the projections also shows that Europe is not doing well with the conflict caused by the war in Ukraine, since its growth is low. This is the case with Germany, which would grow at just 0.2%, insufficient to recover from its recession of -0.3% in 2023, similar to the United Kingdom with 0.5% or France with 0.7%.

NATO's contender, Russia, on the other hand, would grow at a rate of 3.2%, which shows that its political-economic agreements, especially with China and India, have borne fruit; the sanctions imposed, both by Europe and the United States, surely affected it, but have not prevented it from continuing to grow in the midst of the war.

China continues to grow above average, but its slowdown is evident compared to its previous growth.

In Latin America:

In the subregion, the levels of growth make it clear that the gap between Latin American countries and the rest of the world is tending to grow, deepening the great differences in access to minimum living conditions.

The rise in oil prices has led Guyana to be the country with the highest economic growth in the world, with 33.9%, but it is an exception to the rule of small growth. It is followed at a huge distance by its neighbor Venezuela, with 4%; this appears to be adequate but only represents a small step after several years of negative growth; then Mexico with 2.2%, Paraguay 3.8%, Uruguay 3.7%, Peru 2.5%, Chile 2%, Bolivia 1.6%, Colombia 1.1% and Ecuador 0.1% (lower than the forecast of the Central Bank of Ecuador) among those that will grow. The countries that will shrink are Haiti with -3%, and Argentina with -2.8% as a result of the application of the restrictive measures of the neoliberal Milei, although in 2025, the IMF report says that it would grow to 5%.

Este artículo es de Trabajadores y Estudiantes Comunistas por el Cambio Social de Puerto Rico. Si bien tenemos relaciones de camaradería con este grupo, tenemos ciertos desacuerdos con algunos de sus puntos de vista, que discutimos abiertamente. Las notas a pie de página de este artículo son mis puntos de vista.

Primero de Mayo, día de lucha, resistencia y militancia



En el Día Internacional de la Clase Trabajadora, la lucha mundial en contra del capitalismo y la explotación se intensifica. Millones de trabajadores continúan emigrando a otras tierras buscando mejores condiciones de vida. Las guerras inter-imperialistas se agudizan.

Cada bloque económico defiende sus intereses particulares. El imperialismo norteamericano en decadencia y sus lacayos son retados por otros bloques económicos que defienden sus intereses regionales y nacionales. Por otro lado otros países que han sufrido intervenciones imperialistas y dominación colonial, pelean sus luchas para liberarse del yugo del imperialismo francés, inglés, estadounidense para entrar en las garras de otros bloques imperialistas (BRICS).¹

En el medio, la clase trabajadora internacional víctima de estos engaños. No podemos caer en el juego del chovinismo nacional y abandonar nuestros intereses de clase por la preservación de una línea antiimperialista que no tenga contenido de clase. Nuestras luchas particulares trascienden fronteras nacionales. Igual que el imperialismo trasciende fronteras nacionales, de la misma forma la lucha obrera debe trascender esas fronteras. Países en lucha, distantes y distintos, como son Haití, Palestina, Congo, Níger, Sur África, Puerto Rico, por mencionar unos pocos, pero que son ejemplo de una misma lucha: de clases.

En el panorama bélico mundial actual tenemos a la Federación rusa y a Putin a quienes se les agota su paciencia, pidiendo la rendición de Kiev y Zelensky (Ucrania). Pero por otro lado, la lucha antifascista de Putin, le sirve de pretexto para la preservación de la elite de la Federación Rusa. Ni Putin, ni Zelensky, la OTAN, ni la UE representan los intereses de la clase trabajadora.

Zelensky, la OTAN y la UE prefieren continuar una guerra perdida con el argumento de debilitar a Rusia, sacrificando a la clase trabajadora ucraniana y rusa. El chovinismo eurocéntrico² es tan obvio y descarado que la vida de

¹ Los BRICS son un conglomerado de países imperialistas y dependientes más desarrollados. Mientras que Rusia y China son imperialistas, Brasil e India, y probablemente Sudáfrica, son países dependientes.

² Esto ciertamente debe incluir a los EE. UU.

los ucranianos vale menos que los soldados de la UE y la OTAN. Mientras ellos están librando esa guerra contra Rusia con tal de debilitarlos, quieren apostar al fortalecimiento de la UE sin importarles la vida de los ucranianos, porque para ellos no son iguales, no los ven como europeos.³

Queremos dejar claro que nuestra postura es que no apoyamos a los fascistas de Ucrania como tampoco, en el nombre de la lucha antifascista, apoyamos a Moscú. Su único interés es la preservación de los intereses burgueses rusos, esto dicho por el mismo Putin en una entrevista concedida a Tucker Carlson en el 9 de febrero 2024 donde señaló que le había pedido a Bill Clinton ser parte de la OTAN a lo cual Clinton contestó que bajo recomendación de su gabinete la respuesta era no. A esto Putin cuestionó que por qué no, si ellos eran capitalistas burgueses igual que los estadounidenses.

Palestina, la hipocresía de la ONU y la Corte Internacional de la Haya

Aún con la denuncia de Sur África ante la Corte Internacional de la Haya, Israel sigue actuando con impunidad intensificando su genocidio en Gaza. Poco le importa la opinión pública e internacional, apoyado por el imperialismo norteamericano. Estados Unidos sigue proveyéndole a Israel armas. por un lado, para el exterminio de los palestinos y por otro lado, le ofrece ayuda humanitaria a Palestina. ¡Hipócritas!

De otra parte, Nicaragua denunció ante la Corte Internacional de Justicia de La Haya que Alemania suministraba armas a Israel mientras cometía crímenes de genocidio contra el pueblo palestino. Es el colmo de la arrogancia del gobierno fascista sionista de Israel cuando se burla de las instituciones internacionales y la diplomacia de los países independientes, como ocurrió con el ataque perpetrado en Siria en la embajada iraní, asesinando a militares y diplomáticos. Vemos aquí la desproporcionada aplicación de la ley con sanciones por parte de la ONU, aplicadas a países como Cuba, Venezuela, Rusia, Irán. Esto expone que estas instituciones no representan los intereses de la clase trabajadora, y su papel es defender los intereses de estos países capitalistas-imperialistas.

Puerto Rico y su lucha contra el imperialismo norteamericano

Desde hace 126 años Puerto Rico ha sido ocupada por el imperialismo estadounidense. Al igual que Palestina, hemos vivido prácticas genocidas y racistas de parte de EEUU como la esterilización masiva de mujeres puertorriqueñas en edad reproductiva; experimentos con agente naranja y uranio empobrecido; bombardeos de nuestras tierras en prácticas militares trayendo contaminación y enfermedades; y emigración forzosa de trabajadores.

En este año electoral, nuevamente se expone nuestra realidad colonial, cuando se elegirá a un gobernador con menor mandato que una comisión no electa, la Junta de Control Fiscal, quienes determinarán una vez más la política nacional sin importarles las nefastas consecuencias que acarrearán sobre la clase trabajadora. Hay ciertos sectores que creen que en el nombre de la lucha contra el bi-partidismo proponen como solución el tri-partidismo a los problemas de pobreza y miseria que sufre nuestra clase trabajadora. Estamos convencidos que por ahí no es el camino.⁴ Por eso este Primero de Mayo en la Milla de Oro, frente al cuartel de la Junta exigimos la salida tanto de la JCF como del Imperialismo norteamericano de Puerto Rico.

Como comunistas hacemos un llamado a la clase trabajadora sindicalizada y no sindicalizada, a unirse a nuestro esfuerzo para combatir este sistema que nos explota. Solo la lucha por el comunismo y contra toda explotación guiará a la clase trabajadora a la victoria.

¡Que viva el Primero de Mayo! ¡Que viva el internacionalismo proletario! ¡Que viva la clase trabajadora! ¡La clase obrera no tiene fronteras; la lucha obrera no tiene fronteras! ¡Alto al genocidio sionista, fascista a Palestina! ¡Abajo las guerras imperialistas! ¡Que viva el comunismo!

³ Ucrania es claramente parte de Europa, pero es un país dependiente de ese continente.

⁴ Creemos que es un error negarse por principio a participar en las elecciones, aunque siempre debe quedar claro que cuando participamos, es para difundir nuestros puntos de vista entre masas más amplias del pueblo, no que esto conduzca a la toma del poder. Los bolcheviques rusos hicieron esto de una manera muy basada en principios, como lo describe Badayev en *Los bolcheviques en la Duma zarista*.

Escaso crecimiento económico en medio de un mundo en conflicto



El FMI ha publicado sus proyecciones económicas para este año 2024, pronosticando una mejora respecto de sus últimas cifras, lo que no puede ocultar la difícil situación de la economía capitalista. Todo el planeta crecería a una tasa del 3.2%, mientras Estados Unidos lo haría un 2.7% insuficiente para sus necesidades de recuperarse de hechos como las quiebras bancarias, pero bastante más que las economías europeas que, en conjunto, crecerían al 0.8% -igual que la ecuatoriana-, dejando el peso del impulso mundial a cargo de economías como la de India que se incrementaría en el 6.8%, China al 4.6%, los países emergentes de ingresos medios al 4.1%.

Pero esta proyección está lejos de las expectativas creadas por las propias organizaciones internacionales, que antes esperaban un repunte económico, luego de la última crisis. La explicación “macro” viene del análisis que realiza esta entidad respecto de la cruzada que tiene los Estados Unidos contra la inflación, a la cual han decidido enfrentar aplicando la ortodoxia neoliberal, esto es reduciendo el circulante mediante el incremento de las tasas de intereses. El “aterrizaje suave” que proyectaban todavía no llega, por lo que los intereses estarían todavía altos el resto de este año, lo que trae como consecuencia que la economía norteamericana y, dado su peso global, la economía planetaria se restrinja y no crezca, lo que explicaría el crecimiento por debajo de lo originalmente esperado. También se presenta otra consecuencia, quizá poco esperada pero beneficiosa para los gringos, que es el fortalecimiento del dólar ya que,

dado el incremento de intereses se ha convertido, otra vez, en la moneda refugio de quienes tratan de huir del riesgo.

La revisión de las proyecciones también deja percibir que a Europa no le va bien en medio del conflicto que significa la guerra en Ucrania, ya que su crecimiento es reducido como es el caso de Alemania que crecería apenas al 0.2%, insuficiente para recuperarse de su recesión del -0.3% del 2023, caso parecido al de Reino Unido con 0.5% o de Francia 0.7%. El contendor de la OTAN, Rusia, en cambio, crecería a una tasa del 3.2%, lo que deja ver que sus acuerdos político-económicos especialmente con China e India le han dado frutos y que las sanciones impuestas, tanto por Europa como por Estados Unidos, seguramente le afectaron, pero no le han impedido seguir creciendo en medio de la guerra.

China sigue creciendo por sobre el promedio, pero es evidente su freno, en comparación con sus crecimientos anteriores.

En América Latina

En la subregión los niveles de crecimiento dejan en claro que la brecha entre los países latinoamericanos y el resto del mundo tiende a crecer, profundizando las grandes diferencias de acceso a condiciones de vida mínimas.

El impulso del petróleo ha llevado a que Guyana sea el país de mayor crecimiento económico del mundo: con el 33.9%, pero es una excepción frente a la regla de crecimientos pequeños. Le sigue a una enorme distancia su vecina Venezuela con el 4% que aparece como adecuado pero solo representa un pequeño paso luego de varios años de crecimientos negativos; luego México con el 2.2%, Paraguay 3.8%, Uruguay 3.7%, Perú 2.5%, Chile 2%, Bolivia 1.6%, Colombia 1.1% y Ecuador 0.1% (inferior al pronóstico del Banco Central del Ecuador) entre los que crecerán. Los países que decrecerán son Haití con -3% y Argentina -2.8% a consecuencia de la aplicación de las medidas restrictivas del neoliberal Milei, aunque en el 2025, el informe del FMI dice que crecería al 5%.