



Palestinian Communists thank CPUSA for solidarity and support



By C. J. Atkins

The ongoing Israeli attack on Gaza may have prevented representatives of the Palestinian People's Party from traveling to the United States for the Communist Party USA's national convention here last week, but it couldn't stop them from beaming a message of solidarity from the other side of the globe.

Expressing appreciation for CPUSA members' work to win a ceasefire and halt the Biden administration's weapons shipments to the Israeli military, the PPP dispatched a statement to their U.S. comrades from the city of Ramallah, inside the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

"We thank you for your firm position of solidarity with the struggle of our people," read the message from the PPP's International Relations Department to the delegates of the CPUSA's Nat'l Convention.

Palestinian Communists are active on the ground in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and within the war-torn Gaza Strip—as well as in the Palestinian diaspora worldwide. Their party, the PPP, is a member group of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the internationally recognized representative of the Palestinian people.

The PPP, which has long had a fraternal relationship with the CPUSA and other parties in the world Communist movement, sent greetings to the members of the U.S. party and congratulated them

on the success of their convention.

It noted that the PPP and other groups in Palestine remain engaged in a dire struggle aimed at "ending the ongoing genocide" of their people in Gaza and ending the occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem—a struggle which includes Palestinians' right to the "self-determination" of their own future.

PPP leaders have been outspoken in the world arena in efforts to rally support for the Palestinian people and the ranks of those opposing Israel's war.

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PPP General Secretary Bassam Al-Salhi, in a late 2023 interview with international media, said the assault on Gaza proved that Israel has returned to the doctrine of "displacement and liquidation" of the Palestinian people. He said the Netanyahu government was "restoring and confirming the

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in person.**

ideology of ethnic cleansing.”

Al-Salhi argued that the U.S. and European reaction to the events of Oct. 7 and Israel's retaliatory war “left the West completely exposed” for its “double standards”—talking often of human rights but overlooking or even assisting war crimes.

Slamming continued U.S. arms shipments, Al-Salhi said that the Biden administration remains committed to the continuation of Israel's “role as a party that occupies the lands of the Palestinian people and seeks to impose the logic of hegemony.”

In his remarks at the Communist convention in Chicago, CPUSA Co-Chair Joe Sims urged his party's members to remain committed to the ceasefire fight and positioned the struggle to stop the war in Gaza as a necessary component of the struggle to stop fascism in the U.S.

“The battle lines are clear. We're fighting a fascist danger at home and a genocidal war abroad. And to defeat the danger at home, we've got to defeat the war abroad,” Sims warned in his June 7 speech.

While referring to the danger of a Trump and MAGA revival, Sims was also discussing the slide to the right that's already happening, especially on foreign policy. “Biden's Israel policy must be defeated today so that Trump and MAGA can be defeated tomorrow.”

He told CPUSA clubs and districts to keep the pressure on Biden, pro-war Democrats, and right-wing Republicans alike. “In fact, turn it up, turn it way up! Mass public pressure is the only thing this ruling class understands,” Sims said. “It's all about power and relationships of power. It's only by building mass working class-led movements that real change can be achieved.”

A resolution passed by the convention delegates on Sunday, June 9, said that a primary responsibility of the CPUSA was to “build a mass movement including Congressional action to cut U.S. military, diplomatic, and economic support” for the right-wing Israeli state.

Student groups calling for ceasefire and Palestine solidarity face repression by universities

By Eric Brooks

Tucson's Salt of the Earth Labor College is celebrating its 30th anniversary amid growing working class militancy both nationally and locally. The school held its first class in September 1993 in a house left by Felix Padilla and Arvilla Jackson who wanted their home turned into a workers' school.

The first meetings were held in one small room, but within a few years walls were removed, creating space with seating for about sixty people. The main advocates for the school were Lorenzo Torrez who was Arizona CPUSA Organizer, and his wife and comrade Anita. —

For 30 years Salt of the Earth Labor College has offered lectures, seminars, films, and cultural events. At the height of the pandemic classes switched to zoom, and are now hybrids. The school is also a venue for community and neighborhood events.

School programs usually try to connect to ongoing working-class struggles. For example, a talk by longtime Chicago activist Bea Lumpkin on the importance of the Coalition of Labor Union Women led to formation of a local chapter.

The seeds for several local union drives were planted at school discussions. This Fall's schedule

will kick off on September 9 with a forum on the upcoming campaign for an amendment to the Arizona constitution to guarantee abortion and reproductive rights through a voter's initiative.

Supporters will need to collect about 500,000 signatures to get it on the 2024 ballot and then campaign for votes. Polls indicate that Arizona voter support women's rights and will vote to amend.

Supporters hope that putting the issue front and center will also help flip the legislature where ultra-right Republicans hold one seat majorities in both houses. It can also help defeat Trump.

In October Salt of the Earth Labor College President and Arizona Jobs with Justice leader, Steven Valencia will discuss the upsurge in organizing and rising militancy of organized workers. That will be followed by a class on why peace activists need to support workers' struggles in defense industries.

Salt of the Earth Labor College is urging all its Arizona supporters on Saturday, September 2 at 6:00 pm to celebrate the anniversary. The party, at the school, will begin at 6 p.m. with food and drinks followed by a discussion of accomplishments over three decades. Local musicians Rebeca Cartes and James Jordan will perform.

**Call for a
ceasefire and you
may be labeled
anti-Semitic.**

15,780 Amazon drivers file pay grievances with the help of a pro-worker law firm



By Press Associates

In what may be the biggest joint grievance complaint in years—as opposed to a monster class-action suit several years ago by Walmart workers charging job discrimination—some 15,780 Amazon drivers jointly filed grievances against the retail/warehouse monster over pay.

“We have no idea,” yet, how much the drivers lost in total, their lead attorney, Steven Tindall, said. Tindall and a partner at the pro-worker Gibbs law firm in San Francisco spent years gathering the drivers’ complaints. The drivers are from California, Illinois, and Massachusetts, where state laws are more favorable to such cases. Approximately 7,000 are from Illinois, Tindall said in a phone interview.

In California, even gig economy workers—except Uber, Lyft, and DoorDash drivers—legally must be paid time and a half for any hours over eight per day, just like federal law. Amazon didn’t pay for its drivers’ overtime.

And the California Department of Labor has spent years reclassifying “independent contractors,” particularly port truckers in Los Angeles-Long Beach, as “employees,” covered by state and federal labor laws. Those laws include, especially, the right to unionize. The Teamsters have been in a long campaign to organize the port truckers.

Amazon hires the drivers under its “Flex” program and pays them a set amount daily no matter how far they drive or how many deliveries they make. As a result, “some of the drivers drove thousands of

miles,” unpaid, Tindall said.

Instead, Amazon monitored the drivers’ “delivery blocks,” according to the four years of complaints Tindall and his partner collected. Those blocks cover mileage driven and packages delivered. The drivers’ grievances say the set amount Amazon pays doesn’t cover the work they do.

The grievances are all for that. Meanwhile, gasoline, insurance, tires, and wear and tear are all supposed to be covered by a basic payment of 60 cents per mile, the Internal Revenue Service rate. The only way a driver could get more is if the driver kept every single receipt and document. Few do.

And individual drivers often don’t sue because it’s too expensive for them to do so. Few attorneys take such individual cases because, even if they win for their workers, arbitrations can take so long that the attorneys wind up breaking even, at best.

The Amazon drivers can’t sue as a class because they all signed—as a condition of being hired—agreements mandating arbitrators decide any conflict between the driver and Amazon or between the driver and the subcontractor Amazon hires to contract with the driver, Tindall notes.

Tindall expects hearings on the mass grievances to start this year, but he has no idea when there will be a conclusion. One problem is that the American Arbitration Association, the largest such firm in the U.S., literally does not have enough arbitrators to handle all the Amazon grievances.

These drivers would be a lot better off if they had a union.

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Nuclear powers are continuing to modernize their weapons, says Swedish think tank

By Morning Star

The world's 9 nuclear-armed states continue to modernize nuclear weapons as the countries deepened reliance on such deterrence in 2023, a Swedish think tank said today.

Wilfred Wan, director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) weapons of mass destruction program, said: "We have not seen nuclear weapons playing such a prominent role in international relations since the Cold War."

Earlier this month, Russia and its ally Belarus launched a second stage of drills intended to train their troops in tactical nuclear weapons, part of the Kremlin's response to aggressive overtones from the members of the NATO military alliance.

In a separate report, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017, said that the nine nuclear-armed states spent a combined total of \$91.4 billion on their arsenals in 2023.

The group said that figures show a \$10.7 billion increase in global spending on nuclear weapons in 2023 compared to 2022, with the U. S. accounting for 80%.

The U.S. total spending, \$51.5 billion, is more than all other nuclear-armed countries.

The U.S. and Russia together have almost 90% of all nuclear weapons, SIPRI said.

In Asia, India, Pakistan, and North Korea are all pursuing the capability to deploy multiple warheads on ballistic missiles, the institute said. The U.S., Russia, France, Britain, and China already have that capacity.

Congreso a la venta: las empresas de criptomonedas redactan regulaciones que rigen su propia industria

By Brian Carss

Un proyecto de ley reciente aprobado por la Cámara de Representantes pretende regular la industria de las criptomonedas y proteger a los consumidores. Pero el proyecto de ley es un caballo de Troya diseñado por una industria repleta de dinero en efectivo: del tipo real.

La Ley de Innovación Financiera y Tecnología para el Siglo XXI es el gran intento de la industria de las criptomonedas de ganarse favores de Washington. En pocas palabras, eximiría a los criptoactivos de la definición de "valores", lo que significa que el poder de la Comisión de Bolsa y Valores para regular las criptomonedas se reduciría drásticamente.

La SEC ha sido la piedra angular para proteger a los pequeños inversores desde la década de 1930, cuando se creó en respuesta a la caída del mercado de valores anterior a la Depresión. En cambio, las criptomonedas quieren ser reguladas por la Comisión de Comercio de Futuros de Productos Básicos, una agencia oscura con mucha menos capacidad para hacer cumplir la ley.

El impacto potencial no debe tomarse a la ligera. El FBI informó en 2023 que se perdieron más de 4 mil millones de dólares debido a estafas de inversión. Otro informe reciente mostró que más del 90% de las transacciones de monedas estables son falsas. Y el mito de que las criptomonedas son un medio para la inclusión financiera es solo eso.

La industria de la criptografía ha engañado constantemente a los legisladores durante el proceso mediante el uso de una jerga oscura de la industria de la criptografía y promesas

exageradas de "innovación" para disfrazar políticas que son simplemente nuevas formas de evitar una supervisión efectiva y legitimar prácticas industriales riesgosas.

El dinero externo involucrado en la aprobación de esta legislación subraya la capacidad de una industria adinerada para corromper el proceso. Crypto ha gastado una cantidad sorprendentemente grande de dinero presionando y presionando a los candidatos para que adopten sus objetivos políticos a cambio de apoyo. Crypto Los Super PAC han gastado más de 100 millones de dólares en este ciclo electoral.

Los legisladores ya no se preocuparán por los mejores intereses de los consumidores si quedan cautivos de la industria de la criptografía. Pero en la reciente criptovotación, 71 demócratas, que generalmente son más criptoescépticos que sus homólogos republicanos, se unieron a los republicanos para ayudar a que este proyecto de ley fuera aprobado en la Cámara. Eso muestra el poder que tiene el lobby sobre los legisladores a pesar de la oposición de grupos de consumidores y trabajadores, reguladores estatales, varias agencias federales y la administración Biden.

Los votantes tendrán que pedir al Congreso que resista la tentación de caer en las afirmaciones falsas, las llamativas relaciones públicas y la presión política de la industria. Los legisladores deberían exigir a la industria los mismos estándares que todos los demás. ¿Por qué los inversores en criptomonedas deberían recibir menos protección que otros? El historial de la industria muestra que no es un riesgo que valga la pena correr.

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