

June 21, 2025

People's power and Mother Nature rain on Trump's parade

By Mark Gruenberg and Cameron Harrison

PHILADELPHIA—Dwarfing Donald Trump's D.C. parade, at least five million people, including tens of thousands of unionists, turned out for massive "No Kings Day" protests nationwide on June 14 in response to what many deem as the president's drive to destroy democracy with his dictatorial actions. The estimated crowd of only 50,000 at the military parade dwindled further in the evening as rain showers forced the cancellation of the air show by fighter jets.

The crowds peacefully marching and rallying to protect immigrants and save democracy were two-and-a-half times the projections by No Kings Day organizers, who had expected two million.

Indivisible.org and the Teachers/AFT led the organizing for what may well have been the largest ever nationwide protests. Other sponsors included the Communications Workers, the Postal Workers, retirees of New York City's AFSCME District Council 37, the Federal Unionists Network, Federal Workers Against DOGE, the Labor Campaign for Single Payer, and the United Electrical Workers.

Those unions and union-allied groups, plus Al Sharpton's National Action Network, the Progressive Democrats of America, and others, marched and rallied in more than 2,000 locations across the country.

The crowd in Chicago filled Daley Plaza shoulder to shoulder and surrounded the Civic Center on all four sides, filling those streets, too, and stretching for blocks adjacent to them in all four directions.

Turnouts like that led Teachers/AFT President Randi Weingarten to laud "the scale, power, and the solidarity of this movement."

The millions of marchers in the morning and afternoon dwarfed Trump's military parade down D.C.'s Constitution Avenue in the evening. He demanded 250,000 people, but got fewer. Capping off the disappointment of the MAGA forces was Mother Nature, wielding a thunderstorm, grounding the Air Force jets that were supposed to provide pageantry at the end of the day.

Tanks, troop carriers, and 6,600 soldiers paraded. The tanks tore up city streets, leaving D.C. holding the bag for the cost of repairs. Thanks to the GOP Congress, D.C. has had its budget, all from local tax dollars, cut by \$1 billion.

"Working people need our leaders in power to work for them. Wasting \$45 million on a Trump birthday parade does nothing to help working families lower their costs, keep their health care, or pay their bills," the AFL-CIO tweeted in support of the protest marches across the country. Two federation constituency groups, the Union Veterans Council and Pride@Work, also endorsed No Kings Day.

The AFL-CIO tweet, while true, did not mention Trump's constant defiance of the laws, the U.S. Constitution, the courts, and Congress.

A major point of contention for the millions marching was his use of the Marines, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, and anyone else he could co-opt to repress dissent.



The forces, often unidentified secret police, grab people from their cars, burst into schools, houses of worship, and hospitals and courts, then drag all of them off to detention centers near and far.

The Service Employees directly hit that point in a tweet. "We don't just fight for better wages. Workers fight for democracy. We fight for our right to organize, to vote, to be heard. When we lift and strengthen our voices, we strengthen our democracy," it said.

"We have to change the way we talk in this country. And part of that is how we create pluralism, not polarization," AFT's Weingarten said in a conversation with Al Sharpton of the National Action Network.

Trump's stated reason for his parade was to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the U.S. Army, but many assert that his real reason was that June 14 is his birthday. It's also Flag Day.

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People's power and Mother Nature rain on

Trump's parade

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The call by protest organizers for peaceful marches was heeded as the people showed that millions in the streets can and did avoid confrontations with white supremacists and other racists, with the police, with ICE agents, and assorted others. The marchers kept the peace, but in several instances—tragically in Minnesota this weekend—some on the right did not.

In the Twin Cities, gunman Vance Boelter, disguised as a police officer, gained entry into the homes of two Democratic state legislators and their spouses that morning, before marches began. Both lawmakers, like the peaceful “No Kings Day” marchers, support the U.S. Constitution and the rights of migrants to the U.S. to live freely and peaceably here.

Boelter murdered former State House Speaker Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark, and severely wounded State Sen. John Hoffman and his spouse, Yvette. Yvette Hoffman is a union member with Education Minnesota, the state's joint AFT-NEA affiliate.

Pulled out an AR-15

In Salt Lake City, Arturo Gamboa pulled out an AR-15 semi-automatic assault rifle. Police and security wounded him, but not before the spray of bullets killed a bystander during the No Kings Day march there.

The murdered former House Speaker, Hortman, “embodied our core values and wore them on her sleeve during her 20 years in public service,” Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bernie Burnham and Secretary-Treasurer Brad Lehto said. “As Speaker, she led the way in passing the most expansive pro-labor legislation in more than a generation,” including paid family and medical leave, earned safe and sick time, and better collective bargaining rights.

Under Hortman's leadership, state lawmakers also banned firms from mandating workers attend anti-union captive audience meetings. “Her legacy will live on for generations thanks to everything she did for working Minnesotans and our families,” the duo added.

“Violence has no place in our political discourse. In a democratic republic, we work out our disagreements through public debate and expressing our rights to peacefully protest injustice. We unequivocally condemn this and any other act of political violence and hope those responsible face justice for this terrible act.”

Laborers President Brent Booker called the murders and woundings “a horrific act of political violence that must never be tolerated in a society that calls itself a civilized democracy.”

Communications Workers District 7 Vice President Susie McAllister, whose area includes Minnesota, said, “Hortman fought for Minnesota's workers and retirees every day. Under her leadership [lawmakers] made a real difference for working people and our families...Her solidarity and her accomplishments will not be forgotten, and we will continue the fight in her name.”

Elsewhere, despite some arrests, marchers were peaceful, even while the ICE agents, Marines, and National Guard Trump sent to Los Angeles a week ago again shot tear gas at crowds. Denver police warned marchers not to block an interstate highway. When some tried, the police fired pepper balls and arrested five people. An estimated 20,000 marched there.

In Detroit, more than 5,000 people marched peacefully from Clark Park to the ICE headquarters downtown and then back.

Mayce, a recent high school graduate, told *People's World* why she attended Detroit's rally and march: “My parents. They're immigrants. I'm a first-gen. I'm here for them to voice their rights. They're pretty scared of the political climate going on. I'm trying to speak out for them.”

“It's great. There were more people than I thought there would be. People even from Canada came out and showed up.

I've seen, honestly, just a bunch of white people showing up [to support immigrants], which is amazing.” Mayce asked her parents not to attend because she didn't want to risk having ICE grab them.

An attorney, who was active in the anti-apartheid movement, said marching this time “is necessary, really. We can't just lie down and let this guy [Trump] do whatever he wants. There needs to be something done...I wish there were more people here. Everybody should get involved.”

Good for nothing

“I never thought this guy would be good for anything, even before he was president,” the attorney continued. “The fact that people voted for him just shows you how messed up things are.” The next march must be bigger, he added. That will take “inclusion of other people, talking to other people about what they think about politics and what's been going on here lately...informing people about what's going on. I'm shocked about how people don't even look at the news.

“They don't even care. Educate people about civics. What does it mean not to be able to vote, have your vote be meaningless, not to have the freedom to say what you want? These things are essential to a democratic government. Especially this one.”

Among the protesters in Chicago was Rep. Jesus “Chuy” Garcia, D-Ill., a progressive and pro-worker lawmaker who represents a heavily Latino district. “We join with the American people to take our country back. The rally and demonstration [are] for democracy and the rule of law and to end the attacks on so many people who are being targeted...against their constitutional rights. This is Flag Day,” he said, “and we don't allow kings in America. Today we're showing the power of our people united in resistance for democracy.”

“We're in a situation that is a crisis that is deepening every day, with weaponization of the military against people, with the kidnapping and disappearing of our neighbors, with the stealing of our resources to give to billionaires,” Kathy Tholin, board chair of Indivisible Chicago, told WBEZ public radio.

“And this is an opportunity for Chicago to say, ‘No, we don't have kings in this country. We don't want chaos and cruelty. And we don't want this country to be in the service of billionaires,’” Tholin noted.

Big urban centers were not the only places to see demonstrations on Saturday. Compared to previous mobilizations, the fight to defend democracy this time extended far deeper into the rural heartland of the country.

Even in so-called red states like Arkansas, there were demonstrations in places no one expected to see them. In Sebastian County, where Trump carried nearly 70% of the vote last year, more than 700 people lined the main avenue in Fort Smith urging people to, as one sign put it, “Unite against fascism.” More than a dozen more rallies were held around the state in small towns and cities.

North of the border, there were also marches in several cities across Canada, especially those with sizeable American expat populations. Branded as “No Tyrants Day” rather than No Kings Day, so the public wouldn't confuse the anti-Trump events as anti-King Charles III demonstrations, Toronto's event saw hundreds of people converge on the U.S. Consulate before marching to Queen's Park, the Ontario legislature.

One woman from New York, Susan, told the crowd she was upset when a work trip came up that would keep her from attending her local No Kings Day protest. “This is such an important day, I had to be in the streets wherever I happen to find myself,” she said, “so I'm so happy there is a march here in Toronto to stand up for democracy.”

Edward, a Canadian, said even though he's not a U.S. citizen like many in the crowd were, he believed it was important to stand up against fascism wherever it arises.

"Whenever the U.S. moves to the right, Canada and other countries often follow, so we have to stand together no matter what country we are in or where we are from," he said.

Back in the U.S., in Geneva, Ill., chants of "No kings in America" and "This is what democracy looks like" were joined by constant supportive honking from passing motorists and trucks. "People are mad, and people are ready to speak out," Sharon Riggle, who leads Batavia-Aurora Area Indivisible, told the *Chicago Tribune*. "This is bigger than anything we've had before."

The same thing happened in the close-in D.C. suburb of Chevy Chase, Md. No Kings Day organizers told their supporters to stay out of the central city, which in any case resembled an armed camp. Some 5,000 people headed to Alexandria, Va., while the boisterous Chevy Chase crowd of several hundred produced a cacophony of constant supportive honking and a blocks-long rush-hour-like traffic jam at the major intersection of Connecticut Avenue and East-West Highway.

"I've gone to a couple of protests, and this one I could not miss," a retired veteran attorney for the Teamsters told *People's World*. He also claimed union President Sean O'Brien, in a recent speech to the union's lawyers' conference, "is getting disgusted" with Trump's recent actions. O'Brien has boasted of his contacts with Trump.

No Kings in D.C., No Marines in L.A.

"No Kings in D.C. No Marines in L.A.," one Chevy Chase sign read. "Stop the bully," another declared. "I'm out here out of general respect for the law, not a reality-show politician," the sign-waving woman said. Another woman, a former teacher, wore a court jester's hat and waved a sign declaring "The emperor has no clothes, no morals, and no shame."

"Why are we letting billionaires with untreated mental illness and weak leadership skills wreck our country?" asked yet another sign in Chevy Chase. Her sign refers to Trump's erratic judgment and former top Trump advisor and DOGE-head, Elon Musk.

"I can't talk about this. It's too painful," she said.

One sign in Chevy Chase even proposed a deal involving Trump's MAGAites and the migrants the president wants to evict from the country.

Will trade racists for refugees," her sign said.

"We had a revolution to establish oversight over the government," said retiree LoRe Alden. "The government is there to serve the people. But they're turning it into a kleptocracy."

One sign said simply, "I don't have enough room on this sign" for all of Trump's offenses. Another produced a long list: "Hands off my body. Hands off my choice. Hands off my job. Hands off our lives. Hands off our future. Hands off our money. Hands off our freedom."

"ICE is better when it's crushed," another sign in nearby downtown Bethesda read. That protest drew around 200 people, massed in front of a building housing a Trump enabler: Fox-owned-and-operated local TV station WTTG.

No Kings Denver organizer Jennifer Bradley said 20,000 people attended the demonstration and marches through the city. Helicopter footage from 9News showed a column of marchers eight city blocks long. One marcher carried an effigy of Trump in a toilet with a plunger on his head. His sign read: "Dethrone Trump." There were also No Kings Day marches even in rural red towns.

One marcher in Philadelphia dressed as Tom Paine. That Revolutionary War pamphleteer's opening words were "These are the times that try men's souls."

And later in that same paragraph, Paine declared, "Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered. Yet we have this consolation before us: That the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph."

A woman's sign in Bethesda, Md., harkened back to opposition to the Indochina War. She changed a familiar chant of anti-war forces to "Hey, hey, Donald J., how many kids did you deport today?" The old chant, circa 1967, was "Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?"

A second sign in Bethesda read "No free pass for Jan. 6 rioters," referring to Trump's mass pardon of the 1,500 indicted and convicted insurrectionists who stormed the U.S. Capitol—to keep him in office—almost four and a half years ago.

Gabe Falsetta, 82: Gentle warrior with strong faith in the people

By John Bachtell

Gabe Falsetta always greeted everyone warmly, making them feel right at home. And he always said goodbye with a confident, "Forward Together!"

That encapsulated Gabe's life perfectly: a beautiful, kind human being, an unquenchable optimist, and a lifelong activist for social and environmental justice and peace.

Gabe died on March 14, 2025, at the age of 82, following a prolonged illness.

He was a gentle warrior, possessing boundless faith in the ability of ordinary people to achieve extraordinary things if they united and fought "together." This belief strengthened his resolve to combat the rise of right-wing extremism and fascism and to fight for a socialist future, despite facing significant personal challenges.

Gabe was born in 1943 in New York City. His parents, Carmela and Alphonzo Falsetta, were immigrants from Saliano and Parenti, Calabria, Italy. His father eventually became a U.S. citizen, and his mother carried what was then called an "alien" registration card.

Gabe grew up in Ridgewood, Queens, a working-class community of Italian, German, and Irish immigrants bordering on Brooklyn.

He was the youngest of four children, with a brother, Lou, and sisters, Caroline and Rita. His parents primarily spoke Italian at home.



When Gabe graduated from 8th grade, his mother penned a congratulation in Italian.

As a result, Gabe entered kindergarten and first grade with limited proficiency in English. One of Gabe's elementary school teachers held biased views against immigrant children, believing that because they didn't speak English well, they couldn't learn. This humiliating experience caused young Gabe to skip school. He would come home and hide while his parents were both working. After this traumatic experience, the family decided to enroll Gabe in a Catholic school.

The experience left an indelible mark on him.

He always felt a kinship with the plight of immigrant communities and had deep empathy for those suffering discrimination and oppression. He was also proud of his Italian heritage, visited his parents' ancestral homes, and became active in the Vito Marcantonio Forum, named after the famous Italian-American progressive congressman.

Like many hardworking children from working-class families, Gabe began working at a young age. He sold pretzels on the street when he was seven, ran a newsstand, and shined shoes. He dedicated himself to hard work throughout his life.

When he reached high school, he attended the New York School of Printing in Manhattan, where he apprenticed in the printing trades and became a linotype operator. He remained an active member of the New York Typographical Union 6 until his death.

As a linotype operator, Gabe learned grammar and spelling, which would serve him well when he began [writing news stories for People's World](#).

Gabe often worked in shops filled with lead fumes and experienced numerous technological revolutions throughout his career. Eventually, computers transformed the printing production process, removing the need for linotype operators.

Gabe never worked for a big publishing company because he enjoyed the artistic aspect of the process, which he was exposed to in smaller shops, primarily in lower Manhattan. Gabe learned to become a skilled graphic artist by the time he retired. But this path often led Gabe to work in non-union shops, and he never earned a pension.

Like so many of his generation, the U.S. imperialist war against Vietnam radicalized Gabe. He attended demonstrations with his sister and later met veteran peace activists, including Bill Davis and Frank Stearns, which led him to join Veterans for Peace, despite never having served in the military. He attended a weekly Vets for Peace vigil in Queens for years and engaged in countless discussions with pedestrians.

Gabe gravitated to the left and eventually found his way to the People's School for Marxist Studies, where he took classes with famed Marxist historian and scholar Herbert Aptheker in 1986.

Gabe joined the Communist Party USA in the early 1990s. The author, then the CPUSA New York District organizer, welcomed Gabe, his wife, and two daughters to the party office when Gabe joined.

Gabe also played a key role in re-establishing the CPUSA in Queens. Gabe and his comrades were actively engaged in various grassroots struggles and electoral campaigns.

Alongside his activism for peace, Gabe campaigned with thousands of others for Barack Obama in Philadelphia in 2008 and 2012, for Frank Barbaro during his 2004 congressional run, and for numerous local and state political campaigns.

House GOP budget bill allocates \$185 billion for Trump's mass deportation plan, while ignoring workers

By Daniel Costa

House Republicans recently passed Trump's budget reconciliation legislation that [massively redistributes income](#) from some of the poorest households to the richest. It is now under consideration in the Senate and Trump is [pressuring](#) senators to pass it without major changes. Aside from cutting taxes by trillions for the wealthy, kicking 15 million people off health care, and cutting food aid for the poor, the bill provides an unfathomable amount of additional money to fund Trump's draconian mass deportation agenda.

In just a few months, Trump's deportation troops have repeatedly [arrested and deported](#) the wrong people, [including U.S. citizens](#); sent [innocent people to gulags](#) designed for terrorists in third countries; [separated families](#) and turned children into orphans; [detained high school honors students](#); and engaged in countless other heinous actions.



Gabe also wrote regularly about New York politics, labor struggles, and culture for *People's World*. He was a skilled writer because he was an attentive listener, captivated by people's stories. He was most proud of his [article](#) on the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire that killed 146 garment workers, mostly young women. He was also involved in countless fundraising efforts for the newspaper over the years.

Gabe became a skilled guitarist after he began playing as a teenager. He and his neighborhood friends formed a band, playing at community events and weddings, and they even performed gigs in the Catskills. Gabe put down his guitar when he got married but picked it up as a personal hobby years later, never missing a day of practice.

His love of music led to a lifelong passion for jazz. One of his many articles was [a review](#) of "Champion," an opera about the tragic life of boxer Emile Griffith written by Jazz musician and composer Terrance Blanchard.

Gabe endured personal tragedy, including the deaths of his first wife, Harriet, who was also his childhood sweetheart, his daughter, Celene, and his grandson, Alec.

In 2005, Gabe found love again when he met Tina Nannarone through mutual friends, Chris Butters and Betty Harris. Another mutual friend, Bobby Greenberg, assured Tina that Gabe was a "sweetheart."

They married and enjoyed many years of love and comradeship together, marching, protesting, canvassing, and traveling across the United States and the world. Gabe also treasured every moment with his family, including his seven grandchildren—three from his daughter, Celene, and four from Tina's daughters. He was affectionately known as Grampa Gabe.

Gabe will be missed by his friends, family, and comrades. But he left his mark in life, and he'd expect us to carry his spirit into battle every day for a better world. Forward Together!



House GOP budget bill allocates \$185 billion for Trump's mass deportation plan, while ignoring workers

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The bill provides \$155 billion in new immigration enforcement funding—more than five times the amount of current funding—to supercharge the ability of the Trump administration to carry out more actions like these, as well as further militarize the border and build more miles of the border wall, put immigrants in new and expanded prisons, and carry out worksite raids across the country.

Altogether, Trump would have \$185 billion for immigration enforcement, and this doesn't include additional appropriations that Congress could pass in future years. Even with all that spending, there isn't one new cent in the bill that would go to ensuring that wages and working conditions are protected by increasing funding to the federal agencies that hold lawbreaking employers accountable. In fact, the \$185 billion Trump could have at his disposal to carry out his radical immigration enforcement agenda would be 80 times more than the annual government funding for labor standards enforcement. That disparity alone tells you all you need to know about how little the Trump administration prioritizes working people.

Let's take stock of this new funding that would help Trump turn the country into an authoritarian police state. First, the reconciliation bill provides \$27 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and operations. This would nearly triple the agency's funding and make ICE the highest-funded law enforcement agency in the entire federal government.

Giving ICE more funding than any other law enforcement agency to [violate due process](#) at an even grander scale won't help anyone, however, because [deportations don't improve workers' wages and working conditions](#). It'll unquestionably [make workplace conditions worse](#), while giving ICE the ability to do much more of what they've already been doing—namely, covering their faces and [kidnapping students](#) who are in the country lawfully, as well as going after [labor organizers](#), [university scientists](#), and even sometimes construction workers who are [U.S. citizens](#).

The bill also provides \$45 billion to spend on new and expanded immigrant detention centers through September 30, 2029, nearly quadrupling ICE's [detention budget on an annualized basis](#). As one analyst recently [pointed out](#), the federal Bureau of Prisons currently has an annual budget of \$8.3 billion, so ICE's annual budget for immigrant detention would be nearly 50% larger than that of the entire federal prison system.

And then there's \$83.2 billion in new funds for border enforcement and construction of Trump's border wall. That includes \$8.3 billion for Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents, vehicles, and facilities, \$6.3 billion for border surveillance technology and vetting, and \$51.6 billion for border wall construction. Another \$5 billion would go to the Department of Defense (DOD) for so-called "border operations," meaning the deployment of military personnel and the temporary detention of immigrants on DOD installations.

And right before the bill passed, an additional \$12 billion was added to reimburse states for money they've spent on border enforcement (most of which would likely go to Texas to reimburse the state government for things like barriers and razor wire they installed in the Rio Grande).

In addition to mind-blowing levels of new government spending for detaining, deporting, and terrorizing immigrants, House Republicans also included punitive new taxes and fees on immigrants. They added a 3.5% fee on [remittances](#) (money sent abroad) paid by people who are not U.S. citizens, which would also turn staff at places like Western Union into de facto immigration enforcement officials because they would have to check their customers' immigration statuses. House Republicans also voted to impose exorbitant fees on applications that immigrants file with the U.S. government. For example, people seeking relief in immigration court would be charged hundreds of dollars in new fees, and people who are the subject of immigration enforcement actions would be charged thousands.

Those seeking asylum, who currently do not have to pay a fee to apply for humanitarian protection, would be required to pay a new \$1,000 filing fee. The ultimate result is that asylum protections would all but disappear for children and people in detention who can't work. Those not in detention would have to pay a new \$550 fee every six months for their work permits—and people with [parole and Temporary Protected Status](#) would have to pay this new fee, too. A new \$8,500 up-front fee for sponsors of migrant children would mean that the vast majority of children in government shelters might end up detained for lengthy periods. These are just a few examples from [a long list](#).

And finally, the bill neither improves the immigration system nor helps workers. The bill only spends \$1.25 billion on the immigration court system. Investments in judges and staff would speed up adjudications on benefits and deportations and make the immigration process fairer and timelier relative to the status quo, where people with legitimate claims are left in limbo for many years about whether or not they can remain lawfully in the United States. This is a drop in the bucket compared with what's needed.

And despite the Trump administration's many [claims](#) that they want to help U.S. workers, the Republican budget bill provides exactly zero new dollars to federal agencies that protect workers—even though these agencies' [funding has been flat or declining](#) for decades while workers are being [hurt](#), [killed](#), and [robbed](#) on the job at alarming [rates](#). It spends zero on agencies that check if workplaces are safe. It spends zero to fight illegal child labor. And it spends zero dollars on the agency that enforces safety and health rules for people who work in mines. To add insult to injury, the Trump administration is working hard to [reduce staff](#) at those agencies and [firing](#) their leadership, as well. The senators who vote in favor of taking this bill one step closer to becoming law will be turning their backs on workers while plunging the United States into a dark new era of authoritarianism, extreme and intrusive surveillance, and a new national network of internment camps.

Abrego Garcia pleads not guilty; family awaits court's bail decision

By Albert Bender

NASHVILLE—A federal judge, Magistrate Judge Barbara Holmes, indicated late Friday afternoon that she would not make an immediate decision in the detention hearing of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, the Salvadoran man illegally deported by the Trump administration in March.

Holmes stated that she would "take the case under advisement" and render a decision "sooner rather than later" as to whether Abrego Garcia will be granted bail. However, the judge gave no indication as to when "sooner" might be.

The case, which has become a cause célèbre, has garnered national and international attention. *People's World* observed the proceedings from the media room of the Nashville Federal Courthouse on June 13.



The prosecution's case was filled with irrelevancies, some of which the federal public defender timely objected to and to some of which he didn't.

In the late morning of the proceeding, Shabazz told the court that he had missed objecting to some of the prosecutor's arguments due to a misunderstanding of what was actually being presented. The judge said she also misunderstood the prosecution and that she would give the defense the option of having the statements in question stricken from the record.

This had to do with the admission of hearsay evidence. Both the federal public defender and the judge said they had been confused by Trump's prosecutor.

The judge said several times in the morning that she expected to have the entire matter resolved by the end of the day, but that obviously didn't happen.

Also, the court stated several times that the purpose of the hearing was to determine whether the government was entitled to a detention hearing, while the news media characterized the proceeding itself as a detention hearing. The judge also, at times, referred to the proceeding as a detention hearing.

Was this a detention hearing to determine if there was to be a detention hearing? Observers inside and outside the courtroom were left confused.

There was also a dispute early on in the hearing on the question of whether Abrego Garcia was being charged with human smuggling and/or human trafficking. Holmes said that human smuggling and human trafficking were two different offenses, not one and the same.

There was also confusion as to the Rules of Evidence affecting admissible hearsay. The judge strangely said that the Rules of Evidence were relaxed at detention hearings to allow for the admission of hearsay. How much relaxation of the Rules? The judge never clarified.

There were several other absurdities witnessed in the proceeding, but for now, Abrego Garcia, his family, legal experts, activists, and others watching the case must await the court's decision.

In the meantime, Abrego Garcia remains in custody—even though the legal evidence for his original detention remains flimsy. When Abrego Garcia was deported, he was in the U.S. legally under a 2019 court order barring his deportation.

Outside the federal courthouse, meanwhile, several dozen demonstrators rallied in support of Abrego Garcia with signs and speakers. The public was encouraged to contact their political representatives to demand justice for the embattled Abrego Garcia.

Abrego Garcia was detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents on March 15 and deported to a notorious mega prison in El Salvador. After a successful court fight, he was returned to this country on June 6 and now faces charges of human smuggling and being a member of a criminal gang. In this regard, the hearing was said to be an arraignment.

The charges brought by Trump prosecutors stem from a traffic stop three years ago when Abrego Garcia was pulled over for speeding. In his vehicle were nine passengers, all fellow construction workers, he was driving to a worksite.

Body camera footage shows that the officers on scene that day discussing suspicions that he was "smuggling" undocumented persons. They chose to allow him to go on his way that day with only a warning about an expired driver's license, however, and did not issue a citation or allege any crime.

The indictment he now faces accuses Abrego Garcia of allegedly "transporting" hundreds of undocumented immigrants throughout the U.S. It is part of a new line of attack being taken by Attorney General Pam Bondi, who now says Abrego Garcia was part of an "alien smuggling ring."

Abrego Garcia pleaded not guilty to the charges. He was represented by Federal Public Defender Dumaka Shabazz.

The case has been mired in farcical controversy from the start. Abrego Garcia's defense team has labeled the charges against him "preposterous." Moreover, a top prosecutor in the Nashville-area Department of Justice (DOJ), Ben Schrader, resigned after the Trump administration brought charges against Abrego Garcia, saying there was no evidence on which to proceed.

Abrego Garcia's attorneys also told Holmes that some of the prosecution's witnesses had received favors regarding their own immigration status or criminal charges in exchange for testifying on behalf of the government. Judge Holmes expressed skepticism about many of the assertions the government used these witnesses to make, including accusations of sexual harassment and the smuggling of children.

Speaking to the court, one federal agent acknowledged that at least one witness who was living in the U.S. undocumented and had a criminal record is now getting preferred status.

"He sounds like the exact type of person this government should be trying to deport," Shabazz said. "They're going to give all these other people deals to stay in the country just to get this one other person."

The charges are seen by many as a face-saving farce on the part of Trump and Bondi and elicited confusion in the courtroom.

Enough is enough – Stop funding militarization and mass deportations!

By People's World

Call and write or visit your U.S. Senators to demand they oppose the \$123 billion for mass deportations and the additional \$150 billion for militarization and war (bringing the total to more than \$1 Trillion) in the MAGA billionaire budget.

Tell your Senators: Stop the war on migrants and working people. Instead of destroying communities with agents and troops, help communities thrive with funding for health care, housing, public education, and child care.

Tell them: Vote NO on the billionaire budget! The lives and democratic rights of your constituents and our country are at stake.

Call 202-225-3121 today and ask for your Senators.

Then, [fill in your info](#) to send a short letter to your elected officials. And please share with your coworkers, friends, family, and neighbors.



Juneteenth and the power of Black History

By Beatrice Lumpkin

Black History has the power to uncover the truth and expose the lies about the key contributions Black people have made to winning democratic rights for all. This is especially true of the Civil War and Reconstruction. That was a crucial time in American history that has been “falsified,” as W.E.B. DuBois said. In his 1935 groundbreaking book, *Black Reconstruction*, DuBois sets the record straight. The North “had to call in the black men to save the Union, abolish slavery, and establish democracy.”

Juneteenth: The First General Strike

On “Juneteenth” 1863, when Lincoln announced his decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, he was only recognizing the facts on the ground. Hundreds of thousands of enslaved people had already freed themselves and run away, depriving the slaveowners of their workforce. Of those who remained on the plantations, the owners complained that many were refusing to work. DuBois called it “the first General Strike.”

Over 180,000 of the self-freed men joined the Union Army. Their families often joined the men and worked for the Union Army. That turned the tide of the Civil War that the North had been losing.

The question could be asked, “Why was the North losing the Civil War although they had superior resources and over three times the population?” That was partly due to the ongoing, almost permanent military nature of the Southern states, already mobilized to keep 3.5 million people enslaved. Also, the morale of the poor white farmers and workers who were drafted into the Union Army was not always high.

It was true that working people were strongly anti-slavery. Whole union locals had dissolved to volunteer for the Union Army at the start of the war. But the rich never enlisted. For \$300, they could buy their way out of serving. That was not an option for workers, many of whom made less than \$500 a year. Meanwhile, the war was enriching the bankers, the new monopoly capitalists, and the expanding railroad companies. Growing inequality was undermining Union morale.

Black soldiers turn the tide

The massive influx of dedicated Black freedom fighters, who joined the Union Army in regiment-size contingents, led to a resounding victory. The Civil War could not have been won without them. Still, in the early days of the Civil War, the Union Army had the shameful policy of returning escaped, enslaved people to their masters! But General Frémont, in the border state of Missouri, recruited officers who rejected this outrageous practice.

Generals Joseph Weydemeyer, Franz Sigel, and August Willich—immigrant German Communists and friends of Karl Marx—emancipated the enslaved wherever they marched. Lincoln disapproved and reassigned Frémont elsewhere. But the die had already been cast. The decision had been made by the hundreds of thousands of Black people escaping the plantations to fight for freedom.

The Union victory unleashed the creative energies of 3.5 million freed men, women, and children, who rushed into the newly opened political arena. Freedmen joined already-free Black people to organize state conventions. Attendance at Black political events was so massive that employers complained nobody worked on meeting days. What was at stake included ownership of the plantations that had been confiscated from the rebel owners, and political rights—especially the right to vote. What kind of new South would Reconstruction create?

The tragic assassination of Lincoln was a huge setback. Pro-slavery Andrew Johnson became president. He pardoned 7,000 Confederate leaders and allowed Southern state legislatures that enacted “Black Codes” to force Freedmen and women back to plantations. But Johnson was stopped in his tracks. The veto-proof Radical Republican majority of Congress rose up and impeached him. Johnson was saved from removal by just one Senate vote.

With Congress in charge, real Reconstruction began, and new state legislatures were elected with substantial Black composition.



Black men won the right to vote in state elections and run for office well before the 15th Amendment established that right nationally.

Reconstruction and new democratic rights

A lasting achievement of Reconstruction was the creation of a public school system in the South. As Eric Foner said in a recent interview with Chicago’s PBS network WTTW: “At the end of the Civil War, even while the war’s still going on in some areas, and then immediately after, there’s this explosion of energy in Black communities to create schools. Northern aid societies come down to help create schools. The Freedmen’s Bureau puts money into creating schools. But most of the schools that spring up are actually created by Blacks themselves.”

Other lasting achievements were the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. They laid the basis for the democratic rights that we are working to defend and extend today. The 13th Amendment, for the abolition of slavery throughout the U.S., passed in 1865. The 14th Amendment, for birthright citizenship and equal rights under the law, passed in 1866. By 1869, the 15th Amendment passed Congress, extending the freedmen’s right to vote nationally. That amendment did not include women’s suffrage, although Black leaders had fought for voting rights for all, women as well as men.

For the first time ever, in both North and South, significant numbers of Black men were elected or appointed to public office. Over 4,000 Black men became public officials, counting federal, state, and local public offices. That was a most important achievement, but it could not outlast the return of political power to ex-Confederate plantation owners. The crucial issue of survival of democratic rights was tied to land reform. Who should own the plantations that were either abandoned or confiscated from Confederate traitors?

Reconstruction, an “Unfinished Revolution”

There was a successful land reform model that could have established a huge economic base for democracy in the South. Gen. Sherman’s “Special Field Order 15” gave 14,000 Black families in South Carolina 40 acres each along the Charleston rice coast and the Sea Islands. Sherman also offered to lend mules.

Instead, most of the confiscated plantations were “returned” to the former slaveowners who had fought to destroy the Union. That left most freedmen and freed women with no way to make a living except to go back to the plantation under semi-serf conditions. In that basic economic and political sense, the Reconstruction Revolution remained unfinished.

Withdrawal of the Union Army from the South in 1877 ended Reconstruction and returned full power to the former slaveowners and their Ku Klux Klan. Then salt was added to these mortal wounds to the body of Democracy. The very same Union Army regiments that had protected Reconstruction were withdrawn to smash the National Railroad Strike of 1877 and to fight genocidal wars against Native Americans.

Meanwhile, vast economic and political changes had been taking place in the North and West.

Banks and corporate monopolies began to dominate the economy. By May 10, 1869, railroads crossed the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. They were subsidized with huge land grants of Native American land. Having already forced Native Americans off their lands east of the Mississippi, the U.S. was waging genocidal wars to seize Native American lands in the West. In the cities and towns, wage workers were rising up and joining unions to cut the 12-hour work days and to fight for an 8-hour day.

The growing dominance of monopoly capital and imperialist changes in the North, and the failure to complete Reconstruction in the South, set our country on its present dangerous path. It's a path of racism and oppression at home and eternal war and imperialism abroad. Many have called the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and '70s, "the Second Reconstruction." It is time for a "Third Reconstruction" to finish the Reconstruction Revolution left unfinished in 1877.

Thousands of heroes

Black Reconstruction brought forward thousands of heroes. To begin with, the thousands of Black public officials were all heroes. They served despite frequent terrorist attacks that also targeted their families. There were many more thousands of heroes whose names we don't know.

Fortunately, a whole corps of historians, Black and white, are now doing research in the spirit of W.E.B. DuBois. They are bringing more heroes' names to light, such as Sergeant Fred Brown and State Legislator Abraham Calloway. Joseph T. Glatthar has written about Brown in *Forged in Battle, the Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers*. The Regiment Commander had been alerted to a plot to destroy the 33rd U.S. Colored Infantry when they relocated by train. The commander ordered Brown to take four privates, ride on the engine, and shoot the engineer if anything went wrong.

On a trestle bridge, 100 feet above the water, someone pulled a pin, uncoupling the engine. The engine sped on, leaving the regiment trapped aboard the cars, up in the air. Just then, volleys of musket fire poured into the cars. It was nighttime, so the soldiers could not see to return effective fire. Nor could they abandon the cars. It seemed hopeless.

Just then they heard the engine backing up, returning.

When the two sections were reconnected, the commander noticed that Sgt. Brown had his pistol cocked, snug against the back of the engineer's head. Evidently, Brown had threatened to blow the man's brains out unless he backed up his engine immediately. Brown's quick thinking had saved the whole regiment.

Abraham Calloway

Born enslaved in 1837, [Abraham Calloway](#) escaped to freedom when only 20 years old. But he returned to North Carolina to rescue his mother, and again to help the North win the Civil War. Only 26, Galloway and his men held a gun to the head of the Union Army recruiter until they won the promise they needed. The recruiter promised equal pay for the new Black recruits, schools for their children, jobs for women, and provisions for their families.

Above all, was the demand that the Union Army would force the Confederacy to treat captured soldiers as prisoners of war and not re-enslave or execute them. Within six days, Galloway returned with 6,000 recruits, enough for a brigade.

The very next year, Galloway led a delegation of self-freed men to present President Lincoln with a petition calling on him to "...finish the noble work you have begun, and grant to your petitioners that greatest of privileges, when the State is reconstructed, to exercise the right of suffrage."

One of only 13 Black delegates among the 120 men elected to the State Constitutional Convention, Galloway declared, "I came here to help the poor white man, as well as the colored man, and to do justice to all men."

Elected twice to the State Senate, Galloway voted to ratify the 14th and 15th Amendments to the U. S. Constitution. He introduced a bill to limit the workday to ten hours. Galloway also sponsored bills for women's suffrage and against domestic violence. But these bills did not pass. Galloway was especially eloquent on the subject of public education: "They hunger for the 'forbidden fruit' of knowledge with a zest of appetite which imparts marvelous powers of acquisition."

Abraham Galloway died, cause unknown, at 33. He had just escaped two assassination attempts. Although he died broke, 7,000 people came to his funeral in Wilmington, N.C. His unrelenting fight for freedom, just as the even less known bravery of Sgt. Brown, continues to inspire us today.

Boycott for equality: Targeting Target's anti-DEI turn

By African American Equality Commission, CPUSA

In a recent decision, the National Board of the CPUSA endorsed the boycott of Target Stores in solidarity with those faith and community leaders who initiated the boycott. The African American Equality Commission provided this background on the campaign.

How we got here

After the police murder of George Floyd in May of 2020, Target (whose headquarters are in Minneapolis, MN), was one of the first major corporations to invest into diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs. They committed \$2 billion to support Black-owned businesses and another \$100 million to support Black communities and Black representation in leadership roles. It additionally pledged to add products from 500 Black entrepreneurs to its shelves and to direct \$100 million into Black scholarships and non-profit organizations for HBCU students.

A conservative and anti-LGBTQ-led boycott was launched against Target in 2023 for selling Pride merchandise. This led to general attacks on Target executives and its workers for the company's DEI policies at the time.

After the inauguration of Trump in 2025, Target was one of the first major companies to scale back its DEI initiatives, following an effort by a MAGA-faction of shareholders pushing anti-DEI resolutions at several major companies which were rejected by the likes of Apple, Costco, Coca-Cola, Levi's, and others.



The Target memo stated that the company would end its three-year DEI goals, stop reports to diversity-focused groups, and end its programs focused on carrying more products from Black and minority-owned businesses.

Significance of DEI

DEI initiatives have similar objectives and goals to affirmative action programs from decades earlier, but they are not identical. DEI was not a primary demand of the George Floyd rebellion and Black Lives Matter movement. It was a corporate and mainstream response to the uprising in general.

Major corporations began investing in DEI and made promises to address discrimination in their workplaces, change hiring practices, use more African American and other minority branding in their advertising efforts, and promote more small minority-owned vendors.

These initiatives came with a lot of criticism from people in radical movements because it was a “band-aid” on broader problems regarding questions of racist wage gaps, promotions, unemployment, and more (though, the application of DEI was and is not homogeneous across all corporations).

In addition, a lot of these private corporations were anti-union while “pro-DEI” publicly in an effort to divide the working class and increase their profits. However, on the general question of democracy, these programs aimed to address some of the questions of equality within the workplace, which is a necessary component in the fight for socialism.

Response from the African American community and others

On February 1, the beginning of Black History Month, a group of African Americans in Minneapolis, MN — including civil rights lawyer Nekima Levy Armstrong, Black Lives Matter MN co-founder Monique Collars-Duty, and Jaylani Hussein of CAIR-MN — called for a nationwide and indefinite boycott of Target. The call received some initial resistance from Black vendors who had their products on the shelves of Target. Some of these called instead for a “clearing of the shelves” rather than boycotting, to support the Black entrepreneurs. Twin Cities Pride dropped Target as a partner and corporate sponsor of its parade following the boycott call.

A national boycott call by former Ohio State Senator Nina Turner of [We Are Somebody](#) and Tamika Mallory of [Until Freedom](#) also became public on February 1, primarily through social media, noting that Target had also contributed \$1 million to Trump’s inauguration (a first for the company). They called on their supporters to buy from Black-owned brands directly at their websites or at other stores outside of Target. Sen. Turner has also pointed out that the CEO of Target makes 719 times the median pay of Target workers.

As a result of these initiatives, Pastor Jamal Bryant out of Atlanta, Ga., called for a 40-day Target fast from Ash Wednesday, March 5 through Easter Sunday, April 17. The [Latino Freeze Movement](#) also joined in on the call to boycott Target because of its DEI rollback.

Following these initiatives, Target’s foot traffic has fallen significantly. In the four weeks ending Feb. 9, there were [5 million](#) fewer shopping trips at Target compared with the year before, while Costco’s traffic increased. Target CEO Brian Cornell’s compensation declined 45%, and the company’s share value fell by more than 30%. After its Q1 earnings came out recently, Target cut its full-year sales outlook.

On March 29, a coalition of Black clergy in Washington, D.C. and some community partners — including the local club of the Communist Party USA, the D.C. Poor People’s Campaign, and the new DMV chapter of the Dream Defenders — have participated in a weekly informational picket in front of the busiest Target in the city’s Columbia Heights neighborhood. The coalition hands out nearly 500 leaflets over a 1 hour period in addition to ringing out protest songs and picketing. The weekly action has been covered in the local African American newspaper, the Washington Informer and [People’s World](#). The coalition is looking to expand with participation from Black Greek organizations, civil rights organizations (like the Urban League and NAACP), and other spaces of worship. This coalition is looking to expand to an additional location in Prince George’s County, which has a large density of African Americans.

At the conclusion of the Target fast on Easter Sunday, Pastor Jamal Bryant announced that the fast will turn into a full-on boycott. He hosted a national town hall some days afterward featuring leaders in Black Press Associates (Rev. Ben Chavis), the Black Chamber of Commerce, Tamika Mallory, and Nina Turner, announcing a national organizing committee of the boycott. This town hall put forward four demands on Target in order for the boycott to be lifted:

- Honor \$2 billion pledge to the Black business community
- Deposit \$250 million across 23 Black-owned banks
- Establish community retail centers at 10 HBCUs
- Fully restore and recommit to DEI.

The following action was on May 25, where Rev. Bryant called on faith leaders to lead a prayer vigil at a local Target store for 9 min. 40 secs, the amount of time that the racist cop Derek Chauvin knelt on George Floyd’s neck in 2020.

Why should clubs and districts take this project on?

The CPUSA has expressed its support for the boycott before. A graphic promoting the boycott was released on social media and party co-chair Joe Sims published a [statement](#) on why we are supporting the boycott. A recent meeting of the National Board agreed to encourage clubs and districts to take the project on.

Consumer boycotts have a long history in the African American community, as well as in the labor movement. As detailed in the *People’s World* article, “[The emerging people’s boycott movement against MAGA](#),” these include the role of the National Negro Congress and the African American community in Harlem boycotting a private bus company, demanding they hire more Black workers. Later, there was the well-known Montgomery Bus Boycott, which lasted nearly a year and brought Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr. into the national spotlight. Later, during the affirmative action period of the 1970s and ’80s, Rev. Jesse Jackson of Operation PUSH led boycotts against Coca-Cola, CBS, and other big businesses for not instituting affirmative action programs in their workplaces.

Concentrated boycotts have proven successful — including those of the Free South Africa movement and even recently with the Teamsters in Texas fighting for a contract with Molson Coors. One can also look to the #TeslaTakedown efforts taking place around the country in response to the Musk and DOGE-led attacks on our public services and public sector workforce, which ultimately forced Tesla’s shareholders to push out Musk from his public-facing role in the Trump government. The [BDS movement](#) has also had an [impact](#), undermining the profits of targeted companies like [Carrefour](#), [Elbit systems](#), and [McDonald’s](#); forcing [various](#) corporations, universities, and local, state, and national governments to separate ties from the Israeli occupation of Palestine; and creating economic [distress](#) within Israel.

The National Board agreed to redouble our efforts to support the Target boycott, providing materials to assist clubs and encouraging club leaders to work with coalition partners like progressive Black clergy, Poor People’s Campaign, NAACP, Urban League, Black Greek organizations, local Black leaders, Black Lives Matter chapters, and Rainbow PUSH, as well as Latino, Asian American, and Women’s and LGBTQ organizations.

[Take the pledge: boycott Target!](#)

No war on Iran! Hands off the Middle East!

By CPUSA International Department

The International Department of the Communist Party USA condemns in the strongest terms Israel's illegal bombing of Iran. It is a reckless act of aggression backed by U.S. imperialism designed to escalate tensions in the region. This attack exposes the criminal collaboration between the fascist Israeli government and Washington.

Prime Minister Netanyahu, facing potential political collapse at home, launched this attack in order to save his regime. He is gambling with the lives of millions. But the bloodshed is not his alone: Donald Trump, while feigning reluctance, greenlit this aggression. He boasts of U.S.-made weapons slaughtering Iranians and threatens further destruction unless Iran surrenders to Washington's dictates. This is not "self-defense" — it is a calculated provocation by Israel, with Washington's approval, to derail diplomacy and force Iran and the entire region into submission.

The bipartisan war machine in Washington, from Republican Lindsey Graham to Democrats like John Fetterman and Ritchie Torres, cheer on as Israel drags the entire region, and the world, toward war and catastrophe.

Workers, progressives, and all peace-loving people must resist imperialism's drive towards war! We echo the calls of our fraternal parties in the Levant, Iran, and across the globe in condemning Israel's brazen and dangerous actions. We join with the rest of the international workers and peace movements in demanding:

- End all U.S. military aid to Israel!
- No war on Iran — hands off the Middle East!

Cuba: Preparan proceso de consulta del anteproyecto de Ley Código del Trabajo

By Granma

Entre los meses de septiembre y diciembre, el anteproyecto de Ley Código del Trabajo será sometido a consulta, para ser enriquecido con los aportes de los trabajadores cubanos, estatales y no estatales, incluidos quienes prestan colaboración y laboran en misiones en el exterior.

De acuerdo con Marta Elena Feitó Cabrera, ministra de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, esta decisión es una vía para ampliar las garantías y los derechos de los trabajadores en materia de legislación laboral.

Destacó, como una de las principales novedades que, a partir de la legislación comparada, esta propuesta de Código del Trabajo se divide en cuatro libros que contemplan disposiciones generales, derecho individual, colectivo y la administración del trabajo.

Significó que en este texto se integran 12 disposiciones normativas emitidas con anterioridad, además de adjuntarse, a la propia norma, el reglamento.

Feitó Cabrera comentó que esto le dará una mayor integralidad, y unificará todas las decisiones en pos de reforzar los beneficios de los trabajadores.

Aseguró que, de aprobarse este anteproyecto de Código del Trabajo, será de estricto cumplimiento para todos los trabajadores y empleadores, tanto del sector estatal como del privado.

En el seminario nacional de preparación, realizado recientemente, Ulises Guilarte de Nacimiento, miembro del Buró Político y secretario general de la Central de Trabajadores de Cuba, manifestó que se trata del proceso político más importante del movimiento obrero en 2025, en el que se reafirma su participación en los destinos de la nación.

El cronograma incluye la preparación de cuadros y dirigentes sindicales, con el acompañamiento de juristas y de representantes de organismos e instituciones a nivel de provincia y de municipios, así como la preparación de los colectivos, en julio y agosto.

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