

ECO-SOCIALISM OR EXTINCTION

Defending life, building free territories and ecosocialism from and for the peoples

<https://www.alterecosoc.org/>

Statement of the Second Eco-socialist Gathering of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Belém, Brazil, November 2025, with the participation of 99 organizations and more than 350 people, including a strong presence of organizations of Indigenous peoples and people of African descent.

We don't sell our land because it is like our mother. Our territory is our body. And we don't sell our body. We don't sell our mother. We wouldn't sell it, because it is sacred.

And we start suffering pressures of invasion, pressure from mining, from agribusiness, which has expanded a lot, pressure from logging companies, which are deforesting our territories. And we have been resisting.

—Auricelia Arapiun, Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB).

We gather at moment of profound capitalist attacks on life, within the framework of the actions organized by the peoples in response to COP30. This meeting has allowed us, once again, to reaffirm that both the rise of the far right and the false solutions proposed by governments that call themselves progressive (yet do not hesitate to privatize the commons or to facilitate attacks against the peoples and leaders who face daily the consequences of the logic of infinite capital growth in their territories) push us to struggle for a world in which living systems are at the center of all our political constructions, and to forcefully reject any attempt at intimidation.

We have seen an example of what happens when, instead of strengthening the struggles of peoples who defend their territories at the risk of their own lives, the defenders of progressive neo-liberalism place themselves at the service of capital and predatory extractivism. The political threats suffered by our Indigenous comrade Auricelia Arapiun during her intervention in our roundtable on the current conjuncture clearly reveal a sector acting within communities to sow fear and fragmentation. Yet we — just as Auricelia expressed in her response to the threat — neither remain silent nor compromise.

The offensive of the far right also manifests itself in our territories through attempts to violate our sovereignty, reproducing the same logics of subjugation and domination that existed in the past and persist today. Against this imperialist offensive, we, eco-socialists, defend a united front to resist and protect ourselves.

Eco-socialism, as a tool to build another world, has become necessary and urgent. The accelerating destruction of ecosystems' capacity for reproduction, and the neocolonial and imperialist character of the supposed alternatives proposed by the very system that created the current climate emergency, represent a threat to our continuity as a species, leading us toward a point of no return.

Faced with this challenge, the only possible path is the coordinated organization of our struggles in order to surpass the capitalist system. The organized struggle of peoples, their resistance to systems of domination, and their progress in building other worlds founded on solidarity, complementarity, and reciprocity — respecting the knowledge and cosmovisions of different peoples as well as their legitimate rights to self-defense and self-determination — form the fundamental basis of our strategy.

These days of debate brought together representatives of peoples in struggle from different regions of Abya Yala [an Indigenous name for the Americas, meaning “Continent of life” —ed.] and other continents, who have raised their voices globally to denounce that capitalist and imperialist extractivism are causing environmental and human destruction in many territories. It is necessary to strengthen the alliances among peoples in resistance in order to combat this destruction, while consolidating forms of life-production historically developed by the peoples and today threatened by the contamination and appropriation of water, land, and air by transnational corporations and governments.

The voices of Indigenous peoples were central in this gathering, identifying a shared context of colonialism, invasion, dispossession, extractivism, and false solutions — accompanied by policies of annihilation and genocide, which not only kill but also render these peoples invisible through criminalization and persecution. At this stage, we see the relationship between body and territory as a fabric where structural violence resides, but also the struggle for life. This struggle manifests in alternative forms of resistance, through the valorization and articulation of knowledge and cosmologies in which ancestry and nature are inseparable; and through self-defense, self-determination, community life, and the importance of hope and unity across territories.

These struggles for life also appear in ecofeminisms, highlighting the struggles of women and feminized bodies across different territories of Abya Yala as they confront the close and historical relationship between capitalism

and the violence inflicted on the land, the territories, and women.

From the various forms of extractivism there emerges a violence expressed through the contamination and destruction of land; the predation and theft of our commons; the fragmentation of cultural perspectives; and upon the feminized, impoverished, and racialized bodies of thousands of women of the Global South.

This analysis, in addition to identifying capitalism as the structural origin of all territorial violence, also proposes solutions capable of overcoming these contradictions — such as community water management, food autonomy, self-government, community justice, and a subversive conception of care. This vision of care arises from a structural critique of the neoliberalization of the care discourse, which continues to support the logic of capital. In contrast, we position ourselves in favor of collective and community care for radical transformation.

Eco-unionism is a fundamental component of the eco-socialist struggle. The fight for more and better working conditions, combined with the awareness that the exploitation of the working class and the dispossession of our commons serve the interests of capital and mutually reinforce each other, creates the conditions needed to mobilize and advance the structural causes of the oppressions we suffer under capitalism. In this sense, the rejection of fracking in Colombia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and worldwide is a task we assume with responsibility to contribute to building free territories. We know that this will only be possible if trade unions articulate with social, popular, Indigenous, and peasant movements in each country, while maintaining their autonomy in defending territories, life, and its reproduction. Through internationalist solidarity, we commit to promoting spaces that denounce violations of labor, human, and natural rights.

From within this shared fabric, we unanimously cry out: Free Palestine, from the river to the sea; ceasefire in Gaza; and condemnation of the genocidal State of Israel for the massacre of the Palestinian people. A people who resist, who sow, who maintain the conviction to stand tall — and whom we embrace through internationalist solidarity, multiplying global actions of support such as BDS and the Flotilla, examples of grassroots resistance that the State of Israel considers threats.

We also demand that governments in the region break their relations with Israel, as in the case of agreements with Mekorot, Israel's national water company, which has become an instrument of colonial domination. Water is a common good and, in Palestine, it is used by the occupier as a political and economic weapon: Israel controls water sources, prevents Palestinians from drilling wells, collecting rainwater, or maintaining cisterns, thereby creating total dependence and a system of water apartheid. Palestine is a laboratory of domination whose techniques spread to other territories, and resistance and solidarity with the Palestinian people must be global. We, eco-socialists of the world, stand with and build active solidarity with the Palestinian people and their right to exist.

Days before the start of COP30, we once again observe that this space is incapable of responding to the needs of territories; on the contrary, it presents itself as a mechanism for the financialization of nature. This is why we reaffirm our denunciation and rejection of the payment of odious and illegitimate debts, and call for the dismantling of the international mechanisms that drive and legitimize them. These mechanisms mortgage our future in exchange for the delivery of strategic goods that capital needs for its unlimited reproduction. It is essential to dismantle the debt system, which subordinates and limits the capacity for a planned exit from the system.

We expect nothing from these spaces that propose projects such as carbon credits, which — just like TFFF — embrace the narrative that the problem is that the commons are not yet fully commodified and that there



exists a “market failure” to overcome. We also denounce governments complicit in ecocidal projects, such as the Brazilian government which, only days before COP30 in Belém — an Amazonian territory — approved offshore oil exploitation at the mouth of the Amazon, and which, during COP30, approved the registration of 30 new pesticides.

We reaffirm agro-ecology as one of the paths that build our eco-socialist strategy. The production of agro-ecological food, rooted in peasant and Indigenous traditions, is not only an alternative to the dominant agro-food system — whose main actors are agribusiness and commodity production — but also a way to restore and rebuild ecosystems, and to break the alienation between countryside and city, making it fundamental in the fight against climate change. It is crucial to understand that agro-ecology cannot exist within “green capitalism”, as agro-ecology involves, as a political practice, a structural transformation of the current relations of production and life.

Recognizing that eco-socialism has for years worked to build manifestos and programs defining this strategy, we discussed the next steps and concluded that there can be no eco-socialism without free territories. We are certain that eco-territorial struggles and the construction of a livable world are the path we must follow, strengthening our initiatives in solidarity, and creating spaces where we can advance the construction of eco-socialism from and for the peoples.

To reach this goal, it is necessary to accumulate victories that show us the way. Carrying out mobilizations and campaigns among the different collectives engaged in building this eco-socialist project is essential to consolidate an integrated and internationalist process of coordinated resistance and shared strategy.

The continuation of this struggle and the construction of the ecosocialist program we need, along with the internationalization of the eco-socialist movement, are tasks we began ten years ago in these gatherings, and which were consolidated with the formation of the Internationalist Network of Ecosocialist Encounters in 2024, following the meeting in Buenos Aires.

Among new initiatives, we announce the Seventh Internationalist Eco-socialist Gathering, to be held in Belgium in May 2026; the International Eco-socialist Seminar, to be held in Brazil as part of the First International Anti-Fascist Conference; and the Third Latin American and Caribbean Eco-socialist Gathering, in 2027, in Colombia. We are convinced that these gatherings must transcend borders and generate common actions of struggle capable of striking simultaneously at the concentrated powers of capitalist extractivism in each territory where we are present.

However, Eco-socialist Gatherings alone are not enough to advance the construction of a program truly rooted in concrete struggles. For this reason, we propose the creation of joint actions and campaigns on Palestine, fossil fuels, mining, debt, and free trade agreements; the defense of water; the struggle against agribusiness; and forest restoration. We also propose mapping which companies are aligned with ecocidal projects in Latin American and Caribbean countries, in order to issue joint denunciations and communiqués. Additionally, we propose organizing territorial eco-socialist meetings prior to the one in Colombia, so that the debates reflect eco-territorialized formulations and proposals.

Finally, we want our space of construction to be living and diverse, capable of generating deep debates among its collectives, in order to think about and question our understanding of eco-socialism — reaffirming that eco-socialism is not a green-tinted socialism, but a proposal for a profound transformation of our relationships, both among ourselves and with nature. It is another way of doing politics, capable of building a new world, dignified and beautiful to live in, for human beings and all other living beings.

How to topple Elliott Abrams’ delusion:

A Response to Elliott Abrams’s Latest Call for Regime Change in Venezuela

Michelle Ellner, CODEPINK [Excerpts]

<https://codepink.substack.com/p/how-to-topple-elliott-abrams-delusion>

Elliott Abrams has resurfaced with familiar instructions on how to “fix” Venezuela, a country he neither understands nor respects; yet he feels entitled to rearrange it like a piece of furniture in Washington’s living room. His new proposal is drenched in the same Cold War fever and colonial mindset that shaped his work in the 1980s, when U.S. foreign policy turned Central America into a graveyard.

My childhood in Venezuela was shaped by stories from our region that the world rarely sees: stories of displacement, of death squads, of villages erased from maps, of governments toppled for daring to act outside Washington’s orbit. And I know exactly who Elliott Abrams is, not from think-tank biographies, but from the grief woven into Central America’s landscape.

Abrams writes with the confidence of someone who has never lived inside the countries his policies have destabilized. His newest argument rests on the most dangerous assumption of all: that the US has the authority, by virtue of power alone, to decide who governs Venezuela. This is the original sin of US policy in the hemisphere, the one that justifies everything else: the sanctions, the blockades, the covert operations, the warships in the Caribbean. The assumption that the hemisphere is still an extension of US strategic space rather than a region with its own political will.

In his telling, Venezuela becomes a “narco-state,” a villain. But anyone who bothers to study the global drug trade knows that the world’s largest illegal market is the USA, not Venezuela. The money laundering happens in New York and London, not in Caracas. The guns that sustain the drug corridors of the continent come from US producers. And the history of the drug war itself, from its intelligence partnerships to its paramilitary enforcement wings, was written in Washington, not in Venezuela.

Even government data contradicts Abrams’ narrative. DEA and UNODC reports show that the vast majority of cocaine destined for U.S. consumers travels from Colombia through the Pacific, not through Venezuela. Washington knows this. But the fiction of a “Venezuelan narco-route” is politically useful: it turns a geopolitical disagreement into a criminal case file and prepares the public for escalation.

What’s striking is that Abrams never turns to the real front line of the drug trade: US cities, banks, gun shows, US demand. The crisis he describes is born in his own country, yet he looks for the solution in foreign intervention. The US has armed, financed, and protected its own “narco-allies” when it suited larger strategic goals. The Contras in Nicaragua, paramilitary blocs in Colombia, and death squads in Honduras. These were policy tools, and many of them operated with Abrams’ direct diplomatic support. [Trump just pardoned the narco-dealer ex-president of Honduras and endorsed his party’s candidate in their election.]

I grew up with the stories of what that machinery did to our neighbors. You don’t need to visit Central America to understand its scars; you only need to listen. In Guatemala, Maya communities still grieve a genocide that U.S. officials refused to acknowledge, even as villages were erased and survivors fled into the mountains. In El Salvador, families continue lighting candles for the hundreds of children and mothers killed in massacres that Abrams dismissed as “leftist propaganda.” In Nicaragua, the wounds left by the Contras, a paramilitary force armed, financed, and politically blessed by Washington, remain visible in the stories of burned cooperatives and murdered teachers. In Honduras, the word disappeared is not historically remote; it is widely remembered, a reminder of the death squads empowered under the banner of U.S. anti-communism.

So when Abrams warns about “criminal regimes,” I don’t think of Venezuela. I think of the mass graves, the scorched villages, the secret prisons, and the tens of thousands of Latin American lives shattered under the policies he championed. And those graves are not metaphors. They are the cartography of an entire era of U.S. intervention, the era Abrams insists on resurrecting.

Abrams now adds new threats to the old script: warnings about “narco-terrorism,” anxieties about “Iranian operatives,” alarms over “Chinese influence.” These issues are stripped of context, inflated, or selectively highlighted to manufacture a security crisis where none exists. Venezuela is not being targeted because of drugs, Iran, or China. It is being targeted because it has built relationships and development paths that do not answer to Washington. Independent diplomacy, South-South cooperation, and diversified alliances are treated as threats—not because they endanger the hemisphere, but because they weaken U.S. dominance within it.

His fantasy for Venezuela rests on another imperial delusion. The notion that the United States can bomb air bases, sabotage infrastructure, deploy Special Forces into a sovereign country, tighten sanctions until society buckles, and then “install” a compliant government as if Venezuela

were an uninhabited outpost is a breathtaking escape from reality. Venezuela is a nation of 28 million people, with a national identity shaped by resisting foreign control, above all, control over oil. Abrams presents a military-assisted overthrow as if it were a routine administrative task, erasing the human cost, the regional fallout, and the absolute certainty of popular resistance. It is the same imperial fantasy that has haunted Latin America for generations: the belief that our countries can be redesigned by force and that our people will obediently accept it.

He also assumes that once Washington’s preferred government is installed, the oil will conveniently flow. Nothing could reveal a deeper ignorance about Venezuela. Oil in Venezuela is not merely an export or a source of revenue; it is the ground on which its sovereignty was fought for, betrayed, reclaimed, and fought for again. It was the terrain of foreign concessions, the site of the 2002 sabotage, the backbone of the Bolivarian project. Venezuelan refineries, pipelines, and fields are the archive of a century of struggle to control its own destiny. Believing that foreign troops would be welcomed as managers of their most intimate sovereignty is to be utterly blinded by arrogance.

Then there is the matter of sanctions. In Washington, they are treated as technical measures, policy levers, bargaining chips. In Venezuela, there are shortages in hospitals, lines at pharmacies, collapsed revenue, currency freefall, and families forced into migration. And here Abrams’ fingerprints are impossible to ignore: during Trump’s first administration, he served as “Special Representative for Venezuela,” helping design and defend the very sanctions that strangled the economy he now blames the government for failing to manage. Abrams says sanctions “failed,” as though they were meant to improve Venezuelan life. But sanctions did not fail. They succeeded at destabilizing society, suffocating public services, and manufacturing the humanitarian crisis now used to justify further intervention. It is circular logic: create the conditions of collapse and then point to the collapse as evidence that the government must be removed.

Abrams now frames regime change as a solution to migration, but history tells another story entirely. U.S. interventions do not stop migration; they generate it. The largest waves of displacement in our region came in the wake of U.S.-backed coups, civil wars, counterinsurgency campaigns, and, more recently, the weaponization of economic sanctions. People fled not because their governments were left alone, but because Washington treated their countries as battlefields or, in the case of sanctions, as laboratories for economic collapse. Central Americans ran from bullets and death squads; Venezuelans have been pushed out by a siege designed to break the economy and fracture society. The result is the same: migration engineered by U.S. policy, then used as justification for further intervention.

Until Washington abandons the idea that it owns the hemisphere, Latin America will never be safe. Not from Abrams, not from coups, not from CIA programs, not from blockades, and not from the Monroe or “Don-roe” Doctrine.

Michelle Ellner is a Latin America campaign coordinator of CODEPINK. She was born in Venezuela and holds a bachelor’s degree in languages and international affairs from the University La Sorbonne Paris IV, in Paris. After graduating, she worked for an international scholarship program out of offices in Caracas and Paris and was sent to Haiti, Cuba, The Gambia, and other countries for the purpose of evaluating and selecting applicants.



CodePINK protesters disrupt Elliot Abrams as he calls for “regime change” in Venezuela, spearpoint target of US imperialism in Latin America as a whole.

LET CUBA PLAY!

By Yimel Díaz Malmierca

In recent months, the US government has denied visas to more than 80 Cuban athletes who requested to participate in qualifying games there, a prerequisite to compete later in the Olympic Games set to be held in the summer of 2028 in Los Angeles.

The rejection is part of a long string of hostile actions and aggressions against Cuba that aggravate the real impact of the U.S. economic, commercial, and financial blockade, as well as the supranational sanctions levied against Cuba as a result of its unjust inclusion on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list.

While that hard line is the official stance of Donald Trump’s government, within U.S. society, solidarity groups are growing and becoming stronger, and their actions have an increasingly greater impact.

Aware of that certainty and the undeniable accomplishments of the Cuban sports movement, some of those groups have put together an international campaign, Let Cuba Play, launched November 23, via an international videocall.

Prominent figures and organizations that have joined the initiative include social epidemiologist Bitá Amani and Medea Benjamin, both of Codepink. Also Tamara Hansen, coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba; Kevin Kucera, of the International Association of Machinists of Los Angeles; Carlos Lazo, organizer of Bridges of Love (Puentes de Amor); Brenda Lopez, of the Los Angeles US Hands Off Cuba Committee; Bob Schwartz, of Global Health Partners; Danny Valdes, co-chair of the Democratic Socialists of America’s Cuba Solidarity Working Group; Michael Vera, of the Inland Boatmen’s Union of the Pacific, Southern California Region; John Waller, former national coordinator of the Pastors for Peace caravans; Helen Yaffe, professor at the University of Glasgow; and the National Network on Cuba.

The campaign recognizes that Washington’s refusal to grant visas to Cuba’s athletes “is not just a violation of the rules of the International Olympic Committee, but also an attack on the right of U.S. sports fans to enjoy the high level of competition that Cuban teams have always delivered to the games.”



“We believe that the Olympics should not be used as a political weapon against the Cuban people,” they say. “Our primary focus will be to organize the broadest number of athletes from the sports world alongside concerned artists, unionists, religious leaders, campus figures, prominent individuals and others, to remind members of the International Olympic Committee from various nations and organizations of their obligation to honor the organization’s own charter.”

“We will carry out this campaign in the broadest, most inclusive and most democratic fashion,” and they warn the Trump government “that the political price it will pay — if it continues this unpopular attack on the Olympic games, on Cuba’s sovereignty, as well as on the democratic rights of the American people — is too high.”

The Let Cuba Play campaign began to take shape during the International Meeting of Theoretical Publications of Left-Wing Parties and Movements, held in Havana in October. The campaign has the support of the U.S. National Network on Cuba; Cuba’s National Institute of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (INDER); and the creators of the audiovisual platform Belly of the Beast.

Those interested in joining Let Cuba Play can write to the email Letcubaplay@gmail.com, call via WhatsApp (+1-310-350-7515), or on the social media platforms: <https://www.facebook.com/letcubaplay>; Instagram: @letcubaplay; and TikTok: @letcubaplay.

UPROAR CALLS OUT VIRGINIA OMBUDSMAN AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

By Kevin “Rashid” Johnson

The Virginia legislature created an ombudsman’s office in July 2024, charged with overseeing and investigating the Virginia prison system. Andrea Sapone was appointed as ombudsman that September. The creation of this office was backed by advocacy groups who believed the VADOC could be trusted to investigate and correct itself in the wake of protests of prison abuses and a prisoner hunger strike at its supermax Red Onion State Prison, that gained widespread public and media attention and protest.

I was one of the hunger strikers at Red Onion, and endured 71 days without food in protest of conditions and abuses there. I also recognized that the creation of an ombudsman within the VADOC was an empty token gesture and diversion that would only allow the prison system to continue with its abuses as usual business. I expressed this in an article a year ago. [See, Kevin “Rashid” Johnson, “A New Ombudsman for the Virginia Prison System Is Business as Usual” (2024), <http://rashidmod.com/?p=3660>]

Shortly after the ombudsman’s office was created, I helped draw further attention to abuses at Red Onion, by publicizing that numerous men had set themselves on fire there in desperate efforts to be transferred away from the inhumane conditions in the prison.

Initially, the VADOC’s director Chadwick Dotson and Red Onion warden David Anderson lied to the media and public denying the prisoner self-immolations. Their lies were exposed by legislators who only days later confirmed the burnings in the press and questioned why they were happening. Media outlets using the Freedom of Information Act also obtained internal email exchanges between Red Onion administrators where they were discussing the prisoner self-burnings and how to stop them. In turn legislators visited Red Onion and confirmed conditions to be inhumane and needing immediate addressing. The ombudsman’s office promised to give special focus on Red Onion and its sister supermax, Wallens Ridge.

Recognizing the futility of creating an ombudsman’s office and the ineffectiveness of so-called advocacy groups and not-for-profits who trusted and worked in league with our our abusers or had their own agendas and economic motives for pretending to stand with prisoners against abuse, I put out a call to create a prisoner support group composed of people who genuinely cared about our treatment, namely prisoners’ loved ones and ex-prisoners. From this call UPROAR (Uniting Prisoners’ Relative Organizing Against Repression) was born.

It took 10 months for the ombudsman’s office to get up and running. In the meantime, conditions at the supermaxes only got worse, while the prisoners who resisted and publicized the conditions like myself were retaliated against - I for one was transferred to South Carolina and kept incommunicado for publicizing and protesting abuses in the VADOC.

Andrea Sapone then held several underpublicized public meetings where her plan was to pretend for the media that her office was busy serving its purpose of visiting and investigating conditions and complaints in the VADOC. She didn’t anticipate that UPROAR along with angry loved ones would show up and put the lie to her faking public accountability. Few knew about the first ombudsman meeting. But UPROAR members, including Evi, showed up and pointed out that Salome’s office had done absolutely nothing to address the many prisoners’ and their loved ones’ complaints of abuses in the remote supermaxes.

The next meeting, held on October 2, 2025, got a larger attendance and more spirited protest from loved ones and UPROAR.

Mothers and fathers of men imprisoned in the VADOC who’ve been abused and members of UPROAR took the mic. Each was forced to limit their statements to 5 minutes. One mother and UPROAR member Melinda Evans described abuses of her son and other prisoners who’ve been beaten, tortured and even killed in the supermaxes. One attendee, Dawn of CCCAN, who spoke about official coverups and abuse in Virginia’s prisons, and the murder of Aubrey McKay in June 2025 at Wallens Ridge, protested, “ I deserve more than five minutes, they’re killing people!” “

Her son has been physically abused and had contraband planted in his cell by guards. He’s also been touched on his genitals by male guards in these remote prisons. Another mother and UPROAR member, April Wright, also spoke. Her son, who’s been confined in the VADOC for 8 years, has been beaten, had his nose broken, been picked up by metal restraints on his wrists and ankles, and strapped down to a steel bunk and left naked to urinate and defecate on himself by guards as other prisoners looked on. Evi of UPROAR and a senior

staff member of the Virginia ACLU also spoke about inhumane conditions and the terrorizing of prisoners in the supermaxes. Other parents and UPROAR members confronted Sapone, like Dawn, Pertell Gilmore and Tyrecia Williams-El. Pertell’s son was shot in the face with rubber buckshot at Wallens Ridge for no justifiable reason. He spoke not only as the parent of an abused son, but but also as a victim himself of abuses within the VADOC, where he did time himself.

He gave voice to the frustrations of the multitudes of prisoners and loved ones who’d made complaints to the ombudsman that went unanswered. A situation that I foresaw and spoke to a year ago. He said: “All the hurdles and stuff that I’ve been jumping over already - and all us parents in here - this is just a drop in the pond.

“And nothing has been done as of yet. I know this is a procedure, so it can look good for people to say, ‘well we did this, we listen[ed] to them. But it’s going in one ear and out the other.’ “

But the frustrated attendees’ complaints didn’t go in and out of Sapone’s ears, they fell on completely deaf ears as Sapone’s colleagues called in capitol police to quietly escort her from the meeting while the frustrated attendees were speaking. She used as a pretext for walking out without answering their questions or concerns, that the righteously frustrated Pertell had raised his voice during his statements and went over the arbitrary 5 minutes time limit.

She was jeered by attendees for showing distrust and lack of identity with the very communities she was supposed to report to by calling in police and leaving in this manner.

The ombudsman’s next meeting was held on October 9, 2025. Unlike many of the so-called prisoner advocates, UPROAR showed up once again, along with members of Bending Bars and IDEA (Incarceration Doesn’t End Achievements).

This time Sapone was accompanied by a large contingent of officials and her attitude was one of smug arrogance and indifference. The attendees left feeling thoroughly disrespected. Further confirmation that nothing can be expected from these token officials whose positions have been created to divert public attention and protests into empty channels. The abuses continue

MUMIA FREEDOM TOUR COMES TO L.A. DEC. 9

Jamal ibn Mumia, son of political prisoner, movement journalist and former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal brings the Mumia Freedom Tour to Southern California. He will speak about his father’s case and about the Freedom From Frame-Up Foundation that he heads, at 6:30 pm, at Black Lives Matter LA Grassroots’ Center for Black Power, located at 3423 W. 43rd Pl., in Africa Town/Leimert Park, LA 90008. Adjacent to the Metro K line and served by a number of buses on Crenshaw Blvd. including the 105. Jamal ibn Mumia will also be speaking about his recent visit to



Cuba on behalf of his father and the Foundation. A lengthy interview with Jamal ibn Mumia will appear in the next issue of *Turning The Tide*.

December 9 marks the 44th anniversary of Mumia’s incarceration since his false, unjust and brutal arrest in Philadelphia in 1981. Come out to the Center for Black Power to hear his son, Jamal ibn Mumia and the Freedom for Mumia Tour.

Learn how you can stop Mumia’s medical mistreatment, get him the eye care he needs to restore his vision, and help win freedom for this freedom-fighter and truth-teller. Learn more about the Freedom From Frame-Up Foundation, a non-profit that works around other cases of unjust imprisonment as well. More information about Mumia and the Foundation is at:

<https://freedomfromframeup.org/>

Jamal ibn Mumia will also be speaking in Las Vegas NV the night before (Dec. 8) at Trubian Village, 1700 East Desert Inn Suite 317, and in the Bay Area, in San Jose CA, on Dec. 11 as part of the tour. Brenda Lopez, a co-founder of the LA US Hands Off Cuba Committee will also be speaking at the latter event, along with Donna Wallach of San Jose Against War, & speaker from Haiti Action Committee. 6:30 pm at the San Jose Peace & Justice Center, 48 S. 7th St., San Jose CA 95112.

Links to the tour, social media accounts, and merchandise available from Freedom From Frameup Foundation can be found at: <https://linktr.ee/freedomfromframeup>

Write to Mumia Abu-Jamal:

Smart Communications/PA DOC

Abu-Jamal, Mumia #AM 8335 SCI-Mahanoy, P.O. Box 33028

St Petersburg, FL 33733

Contact PA Governor Josh Shapiro and demand that he use his power of executive clemency to free Mumia now! Learn more about the long march to free Mumia, going on at press time, from Philly to the Mahanoy prison: https://www.instagram.com/p/DRc_7nUk4uZ/

CA Legislation is Students’ Loss

by Gabi Kirk [Excerpts]
<https://jewishcurrents.org/in-california-jewish-groups-win-is-students-loss>

On October 7, CA Gov. Gavin Newsom signed AB 715 into law. The product of months of political haggling, the bill establishes a new state office of civil rights and, within it, a governor-appointed “antisemitism prevention coordinator,” the first in the US for K–12 education. The legislation instructs this new coordinator to “develop, consult, and provide antisemitism education to school personnel” in order “to identify and proactively prevent antisemitism,” and “requires districts to investigate and take corrective action” when “discriminatory content” is used in schools.

The bill prescribes that any offending “instructional materials” be “immediately and permanently . . . omitted” from the classroom. Districts found to be engaging in discrimination may see a portion of state funding withheld. AB 715 also expands what is considered discriminatory in classrooms, establishing that “discriminatory bias . . . does not require a showing of direct harm to members of a protected group” nor does it require “members of a protected group to be present while the discriminatory bias is occurring.”

Some Jewish groups in the state are heralding AB 715 as a win for Jewish students, protecting them from what they describe as a precipitous rise in antisemitism in schools since October 7, 2023. According to the Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California (JPAC), organizational support for AB 715 amounted to “the largest Jewish coalition ever assembled for a California bill.”

Endorsers included every Jewish federation in California; the west coast affiliates of the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL); several Hillel chapters; 12 individual synagogues; the state Democratic Party-affiliated California Jewish Democrats; and Zionist groups like StandWithUs. In turn, they faced opposition from every sector of the progressive movement, including Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim community groups; Asian American and Black community organizations; anti-Zionist and progressive Jews; Chicano/Mexicano/Latino groups; education workers; and free speech legal experts.

Many opponents warned that rather than protect students, the bill could give the state license to curb political content in classrooms under the guise of fighting

antisemitism, a pattern already familiar from Donald Trump’s attacks on higher education in California, as well as from similar legislation in other states. Most notably, the California Teachers Association came out in opposition in July, expressing concerns that the bill “does not address any other forms of hate or discrimination” aside from antisemitism. They noted that because “we are already seeing ‘anti-discrimination’ frameworks weaponized to limit academic freedom” at the federal level, the state should “avoid a framework that punishes teachers for teaching students.”

But not even the power of the largest teachers’ union in the state, which has over 310,000 members, could stop AB 715 from passing unanimously in the Assembly and Senate and receiving Newsom’s signature. (In response, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee has filed a lawsuit to challenge the statute’s constitutionality.)

AB 715 is best understood as a continuation of the five-year assault on ethnic studies curricula in California’s public schools, which has become a state graduation requirement in recent years. Emerging from radical student organizing in the 1960s and ’70s, ethnic studies is an academic discipline which centers the experiences of communities of color. While it is often erroneously understood simply as “multiracial education,” the discipline has always centered a radical critique of structures of injustice like colonialism and capitalism.

Though AB 715 does not explicitly mention ethnic studies, a previous iteration of the bill, introduced in 2024 and defeated earlier this year, would have required school districts to submit ethnic studies curriculum to the California Department of Education for review, in order to root out alleged “bias”—chiefly antisemitism. That bill struggled to gain traction among legislators after constituents voiced fears that singling out ethnic studies for policing would mean students of color would have their communities’ stories suppressed. But the contention that ethnic studies contains antisemitic content dates back to the backlash to a state model curriculum for ethnic studies created after California passed the graduation requirement in 2021.

The original Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum contained

lessons on Arab American and Palestine studies, which were eventually excised from the final draft—along with other material, like explicit criticisms of capitalism—after an all-out campaign by Jewish and conservative groups. In the years since, the authors of the original curriculum and other ethnic studies educators developed the Liberated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, offering individual school districts the chance to return to the intentions of the original curriculum, before the more critical content was removed from the statewide version. When school districts across California have adopted this version, Jewish and Zionist groups have claimed that the curriculum contains and fosters antisemitism.

The backers of AB 715 pulled together an arguably diverse coalition against antisemitism in K–12 schools by billing as an anti-bias bill opposing all discrimination.

Yet SB 48 was originally meant to prohibit immigration officers from entering schools without a warrant and to restrict school law enforcement from cooperating with federal officials. It was amended in July to its current version. As a result, the pro-AB 715 coalition’s claim to support inclusivity appears suspect: It is unclear how a statewide antisemitism coordinator supports “safe, inclusive learning environments” for non-Jewish students; why the appointment of statewide discrimination prevention coordinators relied on the creation of an antisemitism prevention coordinator first; and why “discrimination prevention” took precedence over protecting students from ICE at a moment when officers are conducting warrantless raids across the country.

Like previous efforts from mainstream Jewish Zionist institutions, AB 715 is not interested in combating antisemitism so much as in suppressing Palestinian stories in the classroom and adding surveillance to teachers already under scrutiny. Even as these advocates work in the name of protecting children, those who stand to lose from AB 715 are California’s students—including its Jewish youth, an increasingly racially diverse group with diverse opinions on Palestine-Israel, who would benefit from a robust curriculum that teaches us how both antisemitism and anti-Palestinian racism are connected to broader structures of empire and colonialism. More here: <https://jewishcurrents.org/in-california-jewish-groups-win-is-students-loss>

A BDS Victory – and Beyond

by Bill Balderston
<https://solidarity-us.org/a-bds-victory-and-beyond/>

People packed the Alameda County board room and Zoom on October 3, as supervisors considered a new investment policy. After an 18-month campaign by Bay Area Divest (BAD), the Alameda County (California) Board of Supervisors on Oct. 3 adopted an Ethical Investment Policy (EIP) barring county investment in “companies that consistently, knowingly and directly facilitate and enable severe violations of human rights.” The policy is the first of its kind for any county in the US.

This campaign involved a broad coalition, including the Divest from Apartheid Committee of East Bay DSA, Jewish Voice for Peace, Palestine Youth Movement, and the Arab Resource and Organizing Center. The labor movement was also strong, including Bay Area Labor for Palestine, Service Employees International Union Local 1021, the Oakland Education Association, and the Alameda Central Labor Council.

County Treasurer Hank Levy crafted the EIP’s specific language. Levy has roots in the labor left through his involvement with the Plant Closure Project.

The county board had stalled a vote on the policy for months until a special board meeting was called. Even then, the board delayed implementation of the new policy until further “investigation of legal impact.” Only Supervisor Nikki Bas of Oakland advocated it go into effect immediately. Still, it was seen as an important win by the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. While the EIP does not specifically mention Israel/Palestine, the policy clearly emerged as a product of the Palestine solidarity movement.

Pressure on the Board of Supervisors for swift implementation must continue. Palestinian campaigners in the East Bay have also won these fights recently:



Alameda County divested \$32 million in Caterpillar, which produces bulldozers used by the Israeli army to destroy Palestinian homes and villages.

The cities of Hayward and Dublin divested their stock holdings in companies linked to the Zionist occupation.

The Alameda Labor Council endorsed the “Arms Out of Oakland” coalition’s demand that the Oakland Airport ban the shipping of F-35 fighter parts used in Gaza.

Bill Balderston is member of Solidarity, East Bay DSA and Bay Area Labor for Palestine. Photo Credit: Natalie Orenstein/The Oaklandside

Note from TTT: Here in Los Angeles, a major campaign is underway by PYM-LA-OC-IE, the Harriet Tubman Center, Solidarity and others, including public employee union members, to get the city of LA to divest its very substantial pension from Israeli firms and companies selling weapons and tech to Israel, or investing in the Palestinian occupied territories. There is also an ongoing effort by educators to get the California State Teacher Retirement System (CalSTRS) to similarly divest any such holdings.

100X100 Campaign to Increase Publication Frequency of *Turning the Tide*

Over its 37+ year publishing history, *TTT* has been published in magazine format, as a 24-page tabloid, and from time to time on a bi-monthly basis, six issues a year. For the last few years, economic necessity has dictated that we guarantee four 8-page issues a year. To restore bi-monthly publication, we launched a fund-raising campaign we’ve dubbed “100X100.”

We are still looking for one hundred people who will donate \$100 a year, or \$10/mo. You’ll make it possible for *TTT* to publish another six issues a year, and continue mailing about 1700 copies of each issue into the prisons. You can donate at http://ko-fi.com/anti_racist_action_la. Help it go viral!

Turning the Tide doesn’t print itself, or mail itself. Some prisoners who get the paper contribute a few stamps.. Often, they pass the copy of *TTT* that they received from hand to hand, cell to cell, or they send in the names and addresses of half-a-dozen or more other prisoners. **Prisoners, if you can find donors or subscribers outside prison to subsidize your sub, that would help a lot!**

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If the campaign is successful, we will be able to publish every other month again in 2026. Postage is our biggest expense. Nobody gets paid at *TTT*. But the Postal Service is not so generous. We have a handful of people who are sustainers, making a monthly donation, a larger number of people who subscribe once a year or so. Right now, we are at about 10% of our goal. LA area supporters could set up house meetings, where the editor will pitch to your friends for support. The future of *Turning the Tide* is in your hands. While you’re thinking about it, go to:

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and donate, or use paypal to antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com if you prefer. Then share it with your contacts. With your help, *Turning the Tide* can step up to the “urgency of now” -- the necessity for radical organizing, educating and analyzing to respond to the growing crisis of the Empire -- endless war, police terror with impunity, mass incarceration, colonialism, ecological devastation that will shortly become irreversible. If you think *TTT* is a useful tool in the struggle for people’s power and a new world, please donate today. If you wish, you can also just send cash, check or money order to

Anti-Racist Action, PO Box 1055, Culver City CA 90232.

UCLA: Portrait of a Campus in Crisis

by Will Alden [Excerpt]
https://jewishcurrents.org/portrait-of-a-campus-in-crisis

Around 8 pm on the last evening in April, some 200 people gathered in Bruin Plaza on the UCLA campus for a screening of the documentary *The Encampments*. As the sky darkened, members of the school’s chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) stretched a white sheet of fabric between two metal poles, while comrades in puffer jackets and jeans, faces obscured by medical masks or keffiyehs, settled on blankets near the Bruin bear statue.

The film chronicles the Palestine solidarity movement at Columbia University, but it includes a brief portrayal, nearly 30 minutes in, of the UCLA students’ own encampment on Royce Quad, not far from this evening’s screening—the site where, a year earlier, an off-campus mob wielding wooden boards, metal rods, fireworks, and chemical spray had staged a ferocious overnight attack while police looked on. Victims of that mob attack were among the crowd marking the grim anniversary, yet they never got to see their protest represented on screen. About 25 minutes into the film, a column of 30 UCalifornia Police officers in riot gear emerged from behind a concrete stage at the northeastern edge of the plaza, marching two abreast, visors down, batons and pepper-ball guns in hand.

This aggressive interruption of the students’ movie night marked a new phase of the sprawling police operation that had dominated a section of campus for the previous week: UCPD officers from up and down the state—including the Riverside, San Diego, Santa Barbara, and San Francisco departments, in addition to UCLA’s own—had spent the days leading up to the anniversary of the attack patrolling Royce Quad and sitting in police SUVs prominently parked near the grassy expanse.

The SJP students had originally planned to screen the documentary on the quad, but that afternoon, university security personnel sealed off the area, and a caravan of CHP SUVs pulled into a campus parking lot nearby. This expensive show of force, while unusual in its size, exemplified post-encampment UCLA, described by a group of faculty members in a May essay in *The Nation* as “a fortress” that was “nearly unrecognizable as a university.”

In the wake of the 2024 mob attack—and the subsequent mass arrest of the student protesters who had been attacked—the university went to work “ensuring that the Royce Quad encampment and related incidents could never happen again,” including by redrawing its emergency-response plan so that police officials “no longer need[ed]” to consult senior administrators before curbing campus protests, according to a sworn declaration that summer by Rick Braziel, then head of the newly formed Office of Campus Safety.

In the fall, under a preliminary federal injunction premised on the idea that the encampment had been a “Jew Exclusion Zone,” UCLA announced an interim update to its “time, place, and manner” rules, effectively limiting protests to certain “areas for public expression” and forbidding “tents, campsites or other temporary housing or other structures” anywhere on campus unless specifically approved by the Events Office.

The revision to these free-expression policies was widely viewed as unfairly targeting the Palestine solidarity movement, gathered under the banner of the UC Divest Coalition at UCLA. Campus authorities invoked the new rules in October, as they dismantled Jewish students’ solidarity sukkah, and again in November, when they arrested four people connected to a protest on Bruin Walk.

When, on the evening of the Encampments film event, the SJP activists arrived in their backup location—Wilson Plaza, down the steps from Royce Quad—with an inflatable screen, a Student Affairs official informed them that, “the second that thing goes up,” facilities workers and police would confiscate it: Apparently, the backyard movie rig qualified as an unauthorized structure. Rather than argue, the students packed up their equipment and directed the group to Bruin Plaza, one of the few designated “areas for public expression,” where amplified sound was allowed until midnight.

Ditching the inflatable screen, they opted for a more DIY approach. “We thought, ‘Hey, we have this white bedsheet; let’s just have two people hold it,’” one of the screening’s organizers, a computer science graduate student named Dylan Kupsh, told me later. “It’s not a temporary structure because it’s not attached to anything.” The audience in Bruin Plaza—including experienced SJP members like Kupsh who’d been keeping tabs on the police while the film played—were on their feet before the UCPD officers reached them. “We’re going to move together,” a student in a black “University of California Intifada” t-shirt and a keffiyeh worn as a hood said into the megaphone. “Together we keep each other safe, right? We keep us safe!”

Their numbers dwindling, the students walked west until they reached De Neve Plaza, a courtyard surrounded by dorms. There, having lost the police, they encountered another familiar antagonist: Eli Tsives, a curly-haired sophomore, perched on a low wall and holding out an Israeli flag. A frequent counter-protester who had amassed a major Instagram following on the back of his post-October 7th advocacy—most prominently with an April 2024 viral video in which he portrayed encampment activists as “promoting hate” because they were blocking his preferred path to class—the 20-year-old Tsives had a proven ability to attract attention and push the administration to take a heavier hand with the student movement.

In previous confrontations, the activists had been careful not to take the bait: Tsives’s own videos typically show them responding calmly to his finger-jabbing and bellowed accusations. But this time, just seconds after Tsives brought out the flag, someone snatched it and ran.

Tsives, in his muscle-hugging t-shirt and white Nikes decorated with Israeli flags, sprinted into the tide of arriving students, where I lost sight of him. “This person does not deserve our attention!” said a woman with a keffiyeh around her hair, urging others away. Soon, I watched Tsives shove his way out of the crowd. “Only Jewish kids getting assaulted right now,” he shouted, as if narrating for an audience.

In the caption of the video he posted later, Tsives said the protesters were “violent” and suggested that they tried “to beat me up,” but the video itself doesn’t support this. Though the action is obscured, Tsives is shown roughly grabbing someone in a black hoodie and demanding his flag, while others in keffiyehs try to intercede. When I approached him afterward, he told me he’d been put in a headlock. Watching with arms crossed as the students set up their film equipment in De Neve, Tsives said, “I feel better than ever, because the police are going to come and get rid of them.”

The group of activists had just gotten the film playing again when the riot police appeared—breaking into a run as they entered the courtyard. The students stopped their chants of “Shame!” and fled. There were isolated screams as the officers, batons drawn, chased them up the steps outside the Dogwood dormitory, and as two motorcycle cops roared in from the opposite side of the courtyard, misery lights flashing.

The police arrested the two people who had been holding the poles of the makeshift screen—one a student and the other an alumnus—and barred them from campus for two weeks, citing a Vietnam War-era law that the university unearthed last year and now regularly deploys against pro-Palestine student activists. The alumnus was sent to the emergency room that night with minor injuries to his hip, shoulder, and wrist that he sustained when the arresting officers pinned him against the concrete steps.

Tsives’s Instagram video, promoted by pro-Israel accounts like Jew Hate Database and JewBelong, quickly became the latest flash point in a concerted campaign to paint UCLA as a hotbed of antisemitism. The hardline Jewish Faculty Resilience Group at UCLA declared in a statement the next day that the film screening had “resulted in the violent assault of a Jewish student who had expressed support for Israel.”

On Fox News @ Night, the anchor Trace Gallagher played Tsives’s video and pronounced him “the victim of an antisemitic attack.” The UCLA administration, in a statement, rushed in to apologize to the student (they did not identify Tsives by name) who had been “physically assaulted” on the night of the screening: “We are sorry for what this student experienced, and we have already been in touch with him to offer support.”

This is a story about UCLA, but its outlines could apply to any number of US universities embroiled in struggles over political speech that are rapidly remaking our democracy as we know it. The dominant narrative advanced on cable news and in every major US newspaper over the last two years is one of a crisis of campus antisemitism. In *The New York Times* or on CNN, the student movement has been represented not so much by its core demand—that universities divest from companies complicit in the grinding annihilation of Gaza—as by the emotional experience of Jewish students who feel upset by it.

Students at Columbia created a buddy system “so that no Jew would have to walk across campus alone if they felt unsafe,” wrote Franklin Foer in an April 2024 cover story in *The Atlantic*. This image of the Jewish student in peril was projected internationally: “Every place you go around the world, you hear from Jews, and they’re worried about coming here, particularly to college campuses,” CNN’s Jake Tapper said on air in December 2023.

This narrative—which tends to shift public attention away from the atrocities in Gaza—has cast the most outspoken Zionists on campus as representative of Jewish students. There was the student at Yale who alleged that a passing protester “stabbed” her in the eye with a small Palestinian flag “because I am a Jew” (on Fox News the next day, her eye appeared unharmed); the Florida State University student in an Israel Defense Forces

t-shirt who told police he’d been “hate-crimed” in the gym by a graduate student who said, “Fuck Israel, free Palestine,” before she allegedly grazed his shoulder while making a grab for his smoothie. Such stories, often accompanied by inconclusive video, catch fire online among those predisposed to read them as examples of antisemitism.

The students on this social media dais have become savvy ambassadors for a worldview that conflates Jewishness and Zionism. In his senior year of high school, for example, Tsives did an internship with the Zionist group StandWithUs, where, he told me, instructors taught him “not just Israel 101 but also everything that you need to know about how to hold an argument” with pro-Palestine activists in college.

Long before Trump adopted the allegation of antisemitism as the central tool in his crusade against higher education, university administrators—under pressure from their donors and trustees and from activist members of Congress—have elevated even the flimsiest reports of harm to Jewish students as justification to tamp down on pro-Palestine activism.

Universities have suspended clubs, fired teachers, and punished their own star students for speaking out against Israel. Their official task forces to study campus antisemitism, convened in the months after October 7th, were sometimes chaired by professors of dentistry, epidemiology, and real estate finance—non-experts who happened to be Jewish and who produced reports that relied on outside pro-Israel groups like the ADL for their analysis. Yet even kowtowing, in televised grillings on Capitol Hill, to the notion that strident protest of Israel amounted to anti-Jewish hatred did not spare the presidents of Columbia, Penn, Harvard, and other universities their jobs.

What it did, instead, was help pave the way for Trump to attack the nation’s leading sites of critical inquiry. The Trump administration canceled \$400 million in funding for Columbia and, apparently acting on information provided by Zionist doxing group Canary Mission, sent ICE agents to detain Palestinian student activist Mahmoud Khalil.

In April, the same month that *The NY Times* was amplifying the “scathing” report by Harvard’s task force on antisemitism, the Trump administration withdrew \$2.2 billion in grants over DEI programs and alleged antisemitism. Unlike Columbia, Harvard took the feds to court yet the university had already fulfilled parts of their demand list, dismissing the faculty leaders of its Center for Middle Eastern Studies and suspending the partnership between its school of public health and Birzeit University in the West Bank.

Indeed, the Trump administration’s wide-ranging assault on universities has been built upon the successful efforts of campus pro-Israel advocates, along with donors and outside groups, in lobbying for the illiberal and violent repression of pro-Palestine speech. The Trump administration’s demands of Columbia substantially echoed a previous list of demands by the university’s own Zionist faculty activists. Similarly, Harvard’s CMES and its partnership with Birzeit had both come under attack by an influential Jewish alumni group in a distortion-filled May 2024 report.

The crisis at California’s largest public university, while attracting less national attention than its Ivy League equivalents, has exemplified these dynamics. I spent the spring quarter visiting UCLA and interviewing more than 40 people—students, faculty, staff, and outside advocates on all sides of this drama—in an attempt to understand how these national political trends were playing out at a single university.

The picture that emerges is one of a campus besieged from without and within, caught between the crusaders in the White House and those walking its own halls. Contrary to the ubiquitous narrative of Jewish victimhood, a sober look at the nation’s No. 2-ranked public university in this moment of fracture reveals that the power on campus overwhelmingly accrues to the most right-wing Zionist students and faculty in their efforts to stifle opposition to what United Nations experts call a genocide in Gaza.

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Guerrilla Fighters in West Papua Are Facing Extermination by Indonesia’s High-Tech Forces

by Kristo Langker [Excerpts from Drop Site News substack: <https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/west-papua-liberation-army-indonesia-counterinsurgency-star-mountains-china-france-weapons-lamek-taplo>] in the heart of the island of New Guinea.

KIWIROK, West Papua—On September 25, 2025, Lamek Taplo, the guerilla leader of a wing of the West Papua National Liberation Army (Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat, or TPNPB), left the jungle with his command to launch a series of raids on Indonesian military posts. Indonesia had established three new military posts in the Star Mountains region in the past year, according to Human Rights Monitor, with sources on the ground telling Drop Site News that nearby civilian houses and facilities—including a church, schools, and a health clinic—had been forcibly occupied in support of the military build-up.

Despite being severely outgunned, the command shot five Indonesian soldiers, killing one, while suffering no casualties themselves, according to Taplo and other members of his group. The raids continued for three more days. The command shot the fuselage of a helicopter and burned five buildings that Taplo’s group claimed were occupied by Indonesian security forces.

Taplo was killed less than three weeks later by an apparent drone strike. During an October 13 interview a week before his death, Taplo, a former teacher himself, told Drop Site why TPNPB targeted a school: “It’s because they (Indonesian military) used it as their base. There’s no teacher—only Indonesians. I know, because I was the teacher there, too.... Indonesia sent “teachers.” However, they’re actually military intelligence.”

Indonesia has laid claim to the western half of New Guinea since the 1960s with the backing of the U.S. For the past year, the Indonesian military has ramped up its indiscriminate attacks on subsistence farming villages, especially those that deny Indonesian rule.

The military presence has been growing exponentially after the October 2024 inauguration of President Prabowo Subianto, who is implicated in historic massacres in Papua from his time as commander of Indonesia’s special forces—called Komando Pasukan Khusus or “Kopassus.” According to witnesses interviewed in Kiwirok and its surrounding hamlets, and documented in videos, there are now snipers stationed along walking tracks, and civilians have been shot and killed attempting to retrieve their pigs.

Indonesia immediately retaliated against TPNPB’s September attacks by sending two consumer-grade DJI Mavic drones, rigged with servo motors, to drop Pindad-manufactured hand grenades. One drone targeted a hut that Taplo claimed did not house TPNPB but belonged to civilians. No one was killed as the grenade bounced off the sheet metal roof and exploded a few meters away. The other drone flew over a group of TPNPB raising the Morning Star flag of West Papua but was taken down by the guerrillas before a grenade could be dropped.

Holding the downed drone and grenade, Taplo likened the ordeal to Moses parting the Red Sea for the escaping Israelites: “It’s like the Pharoah and Moses... It was a miracle.” Then joking, “The bomb (grenade) was caught since it’s like the cucumber we eat.”

Over the next few weeks, a series of heavier aerial bombardments followed. Videos taken by Taplo show two Embraer EMB 314 Super Tucano turboprop aircraft darting through the air, followed by the thunderous sound of ordnance hitting the mountains.

Despite the fact that thousands of West Papuans have been killed in bombings like these since the 1970s, Taplo’s videos are the first to ever capture an aerial bombardment from the ground in West Papua, owing to the extreme isolation of the interior. In fact, many highland West Papuans’ first contact with the outside world was with Indonesian military campaigns.

In a counter-insurgency operation against a guerrilla independence movement, these bombings are primarily hitting civilians—tribal communities of subsistence farmers. The few fighters Indonesia is targeting are poorly armed—lacking bullets, let alone bombs—and live on ancestral land with their families. The most ubiquitous weapon among these groups remains the bow and arrow.

Taplo told Drop Site the bombings began on Monday, October 6. “Firstly they (Indonesia) did an unorganized attack: they dropped the bomb randomly... they just dropped it everywhere. You can see where the smoke was coming from. Even though it was an Indonesian military house, they just dropped it on there anyway. That was the first one; then they came back. The first place bombed after was a civilian house; the second was our base.”

“I live with the people, because there’s no military to protect my people”



Lamek Taplo holding a downed DJI Mavic drone and Pindad grenade. September 28, 2025 (Photo by Ngalum Kupel, TPNPB).

West Papua was a Dutch colony until 1962, when Indonesia, after a bitter dispute with the Netherlands, secured Washington’s backing to take over the territory.

Just three years after Washington tipped the scales in favor of Indonesia in their dispute with the Netherlands, the nationalist Indonesian President Sukarno was ousted in a U.S.-backed military coup in 1965. Hundreds of thousands of Indonesian leftists (or suspected leftists) were killed in just a few months by the new regime led by General Suharto.

Indonesia’s acquisition of West Papua is often treated as an event peripheral to this coup, yet both events held a symbiotic relationship that would become the impetus for many of the mass killings perpetrated by Indonesia in West Papua.

Forbes Wilson, the former vice president of U.S. mining giant Freeport, visited Indonesia in June 1966, and in his book, “The Conquest of Copper Mountain,” he boasts that he and several other Freeport executives were among the first foreigners to visit Indonesia after the events of 1965.

Wilson was there to negotiate with the new business friendly Suharto regime, particularly regarding the terms of Freeport’s Ertzberg mine, which was set to be located under Puncak Jaya—the tallest mountain in Oceania.

This mine eventually became the world’s largest gold and copper mine and Indonesia’s largest single taxpayer. The mine’s existence was one of the primary reasons Indonesia gained international backing to launch a vicious frontier war against the native and then-largely uncontacted Papuan highlanders.

The “war” continues to this day, though it is largely unlike other modern conflicts. Instead, the concerted Indonesian attacks are most comparable to the U.S. and Australian frontier wars. Indonesia, one of the world’s largest and most well-armed militaries, is steadily wiping out some of the world’s last pre-industrial indigenous cultures and people.

West Papuans fought back, forming the Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merdeka, or OPM) and its various splinter armed wings, whose most prominent one is the TPNPB. Due to the impenetrable terrain of the mountain highlands, the Indonesian military has difficulty fighting the TPNPB on the ground, often instead resorting to indiscriminate aerial bombardments. The TPNPB’s fight is as much about West Papuan independence as it is an effort by localized tribal communities and landowners using whatever means to prevent Indonesian massacres and land theft.

“No army has ever come to protect the people. I live with the people, because there’s no military to protect my people. From 2021 until this year 2025, I have not left my land; I have not left the land of my birth,” Taplo said in a video sent just before his death.

In October 2021, the Indonesian military launched one of these bombing campaigns in the remote Kiwirok district and its surrounding hamlets in the Star Mountains—deep

Because of this isolation, very little information about these bombings trickled out of the mountains—save for a few images of unexploded mortars and burning huts. Only a handful of journalists, including the author of this article, have been able to visit the area, and it took years and multiple visits to the Star Mountains for the full scale of the 2021 attacks to be reported.

It was eventually revealed that the Indonesian assaults included the use of most likely Airbus helicopters that shoot FZ-68 2.75-inch rockets, designed by French multinational defense contractor Thales, and reinforced by Blowfish A3 drones manufactured by the Chinese company Ziyan. These drones boast an artificial intelligence driven swarm function by which they litter villagers’ subsistence farms and huts with mortars improvised with proximity fuzes manufactured by the Serbian company Krušik.

A largely remote, open-source investigation by German NGO, Human Rights Monitor, revealed that hundreds of huts and buildings were destroyed in this attack. Over 2,000 villagers were displaced, and they still hide in makeshift jungle camps. “The systematic nature of these attacks prompts questions of

crimes against humanity under the Rome Statute,” the report noted. Witnesses gave the names of hundreds who died of starvation and illness after the bombings.

With little food, shelter, weapons, or even internet to connect them to the outside world, many of the thousands of Ngalum-Kupel people displaced since 2021 are displaced again—likely to die without anyone knowing—mirroring countless Indonesian campaigns to depopulate the mountains to make way for resource projects.

The impact of the latest wave of attacks in October 2025 is likely to be felt for years, as the bombs destroyed food gardens and shelters and displaced people who were already living in nothing more than crowded tarpaulins held up by branches, while having already been forced to hide in the jungle after the 2021 bombings. “It is the same situation with Palestine and Israel: people are now living without their home,” said Taplo.

On October 6, 2025, Indonesia retaliated further, deploying two aircraft that aviation sources confirmed to be Brazilian-made Embraer EMB 314 Super Tucano turboprops. These planes were filmed bombing and strafing the mountains. Drop Site confirmed that some of the shrapnel collected after these attacks is from Thales’s FZ 2.75-inch rockets—the same rockets used in the 2021 attacks.

On October 26, civilians in Kiwirok sent an appeal to the government of Papua New Guinea and other Pacific Island nations. So far, there has been no response, despite these bombings occurring on Papua New Guinea’s border. The last communication Drop Site received from Kiwirok indicated that the bombings were continuing and the mountains still swarmed with drones—limiting any chance of escape.

Pictures posted on social media in November by members of Indonesian security forces, those stationed in Kiwirok, give some insight into the level of zeal with which Indonesia is fighting this campaign. An Indonesian soldier can be seen wearing a T-shirt emblazoned with a skull wearing night vision goggles, a gun, and a lightning bolt forming a cross behind it. The caption reads “Black Zone Kiwirok.”

Another photo shows soldiers sitting in front of a banner which reads “Kompi Tempur Rajawali 431 Pemburu”—a reference to the elite “Eagle Hunter” units set up in the mid 1990s by then-General Prabowo Subianto to hunt down Falantil guerillas in Timor Leste. As there has been no record of these units being deployed in Papua—nor of an “Eagle Hunter” unit made up of soldiers from the 431st Infantry Battalion—it is unclear whether these banners are just Suharto-era nationalism on display, or if they signify that these units have been revived.

On his final phone call with the outside world, just before the signal cut out, Taplo vowed to continue the TPNPB’s fight: “We will fight for hundreds of days... We will fight... This war is by God. We have asked for power; we have prayed for nature’s power. This is our culture.”

On-Line Resources for *Turning the Tide* and ARA-LA/PART:

You can find archives of *Turning the Tide* at www.antiracist.org that go back more than 36 years.

In addition, there are several Facebook pages, such as facebook.com/tideturning. You can also follow @ara_losangeles on X, IG @antiracistaction_la, check for us on BluSky, and the De-Colonize LA! blog at ara-la.tumblr.com.

Once Upon a Time, There Was a Radio Station Where Free Expression Reigned Supreme

For those who feel saving Pacifica is the mission by Rodrigo Argueta <https://pacificafightback.org/once-upon-the-time-there-was-a-radio-station-where-free-expression-reigned-supreme/>

ONCE UPON THE TIME THERE WAS A RADIO STATION WHERE FREE EXPRESSION REIGNED SUPREME; TODAY IT IS A SLAVE, BOUND BY A THOUSAND CHAINS. The main character of this drama is the new dark day group, be advised....

“There is a vile race of semi-tyrants, puffed up with self-importance, claw and tooth, and there are others who exhale their perfume in love.” “As in the forest there are doves, there are wild beasts, and there are insectivorous plants, and in the gardens there are carnations.”

This is a thought based on the poems of the liberator José Martí.

I will not apologize for not having arrived at the November 9th meeting of the KPFFK LSB, a meeting of the invisible, and now I will tell you why. At the September 28, 2025 board meeting of my radio station KPFFK, I attended a feast of three petty tyrants accompanied by a recurring fairy godmother who “knows” all the laws of Pacifica and is presented as a parliamentarian without actually being one, but who always agrees with them.

At that time, a guest also arrived whom no one invited except the apprentices of infamy, those who have been capable of suing themselves to destroy the will of the Pacifica membership that voted against the attempt to reduce the Pacifica boards, the same ones who today, at the local and national levels, have created a litany of “laws” worthy of the times of the Inquisition; they are a litany of punishments, expulsions, and suspensions against anyone who opposes their will. The only thing missing is for them to add that after three violations of their moral code, they’ll break the first little finger.

They punish the arguments of political opponents with the violence of an executioner who punishes those who refuse to kneel, who knows the language of threats when faced with a lack of intelligence to counter-argue. They completely violate even the First Amendment of the United States Constitution regarding freedom of speech.

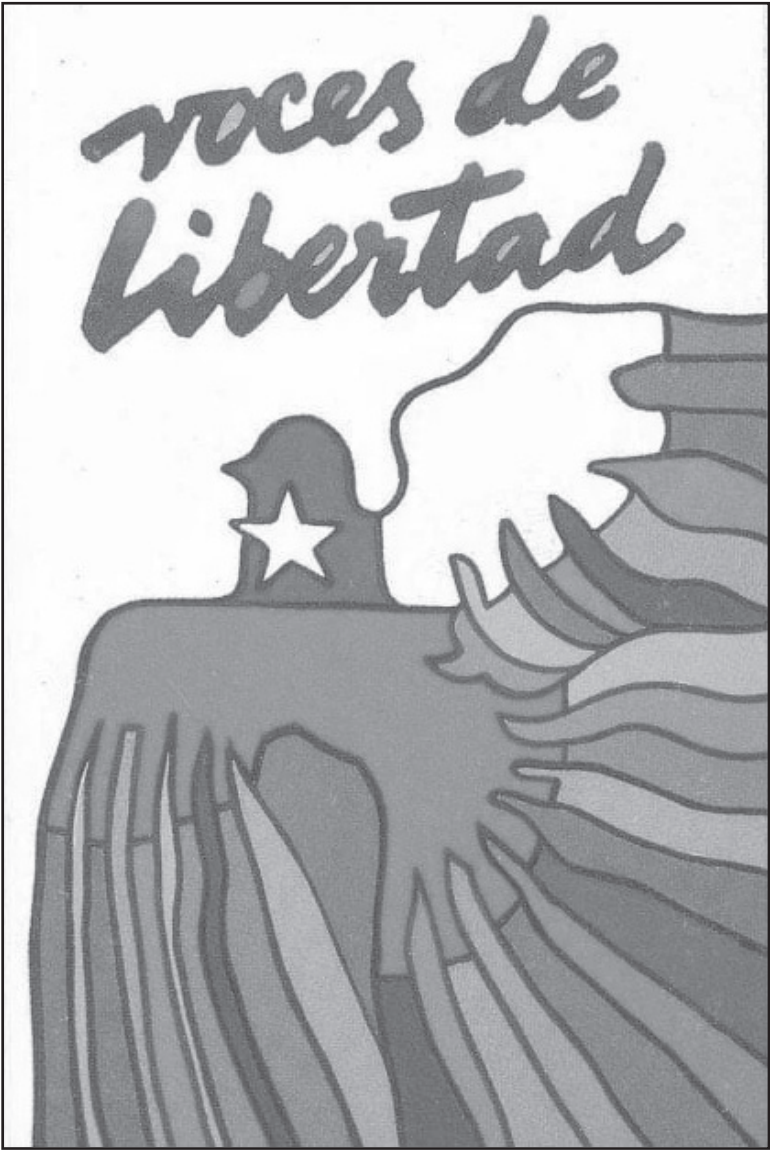
At the September meeting, someone suddenly started giving us lectures on how to behave and get along with each other. When asked what would happen when the president of the board himself didn’t know the rules, this person, unknown to me like most of the board members today, presented a remedy for misbehaving: “a virtual punishment room.”

As strange as this may sound to anyone who takes the time to read this informal denouncing letter, it shows that, with ignominious malice, the mastermind behind it and his henchmen created a place for the misbehaving, where they send those of us who committed the sin of opposing their schemes. Give me a break! We already have a microphone executioner in training who guillotines your voice on the mic whenever she/he feels like it, without the slightest respect. Now another executioner has arrived.

Well, let me tell you that after the first time they sent me to their punishment room, they made me feel like a child again, despite being a 60-year-old man. Even worse, since evil knows no bounds, upon returning from punishment—I think it was the second punishment—I also felt the fear of the threat when I heard the dry, threatening voice of someone who is perhaps president of something for the first time: “If you misbehave again, it will be worse for you.” It was a voice like an echo of other voices, like when a trained employee behaves under the orders of his boss. A voice made up of other voices that command hm, the voice of the unhealthy pleasure of the infamous neighborhood jailer.

Thus, Ignorance of our rules is undoubtedly the best breeding ground for human depravity. Yes, because you see, at the crazy table of KPFFK we have he who gives the orders and who obeys, here we have guests who are just there for show, we are people who feel distant, most of us don’t know each other, some I don’t remember their faces, I don’t know who they really are, and we’ve been meeting for more than a year or two, what does it matter? And of course, there are dates when the semi-tyrants decide not to meet on zoom.

So much so, that one day I joyfully thought—finally we’re going to meet and talk, we’ve already passed the motion to meet all in person and not through a piece of glass with tiny, anonymous beings—but oh, disappointment! It only took an order from the one who imposes the law—their law, which is not my law—and those who share our table, the second-rate ones, voted again not to know us, not to get to know us, and we returned to a Zoom meeting that allows us to be brave or cowardly virtually. Zoom allows us to hide who we are, especially those who are committing this harm against



Pacifica. Why don’t they take one day to be brave and look us in the eye to tell us their true intentions? Why the fear of meeting in person, or is it laziness?

These would-be tyrants sold off our building in North Hollywood for a pittance, a building that was a triumphant symbol against the stupidity of the capitalist state, a building whose walls hold the testimony of so many social and revolutionary fighters. But no, in the height of infamy, they lied a thousand times to sell our building, and in the end, they swore up and down that “nothing was left” of the profits, without providing any proof whatsoever—or did any of you reading this receive proof of how the money was “spent”? Then they themselves dumped us in a rented piece of a building without studios, without a place to meet, without anything for the unpaid volunteer workers.

We, the ones who work day after day to feed our families, are the producers, the reporters, the contributors, the announcers, the operators of KPFFK, KPFA, WBAI, and WPFW, our mistake has been allowing others to make all the decisions for the radio stations, others who haven’t even produced a program or spent 6, 8, or 10 hours or more a week , working on segments of history, music, philosophy, or politics for the listeners to enjoy. Young and old alike go out into the streets to talk to social activists, to cover events and marches, to travel to other countries to cover wars or social conflicts.

One of the LSB’s main objectives is to hold events to raise funds for KPFFK. Honestly, who of you has even organized a single event? Tomorrow, when you’re gone and return to your activities after deciding the fate of our radio station, we’ll still be here, alongside those who produce thousands of hours of content so that our listeners can contribute their part as a complement to the whole.

When you finish your term, I will never see you again, nor will I hear from you, and others will come later and will also read the infamous “land acknowledgment” with the clear intention of NOT returning the land stolen from our ancestors ever. And again, we will have to remind them to announce ”Does anyone need translation?” and a prejudiced character acting under the prejudice of little king/queen will hear “English only” once again.

This board is so bizarre that in this last meeting on November 9th, the motions that Oscar Ulloa and I had submitted since the 1rst meeting disappeared WITHOUT having been voted on . But don’t worry—I know you’re not worried—we will not present anything again at a table where there are found diners who applaud ignorance and racism.

Are the motions of the Latin American people important to Pacifica? No, today’s more subtle white people continue their philosophy of “ I know better” supported by some who were oppressed but still have the prejudice of the colonized consciousness.

At the meeting on September 28th, I denounced the fact that the current general manager had cut two hours of Spanish-language programming from our schedule, and the response was “punishment time” by the insolent little king without a crown, more so, when the most fascist regime is in power and our Latino Community is the center of its operation, KPFFK that serves a city where about 50% speak Spanish decides to remove our programming in the mornings and put a program that airs at 6 am where Informativo Pacifica used to be and airs the replacement again at 1 pm.

So our current GM decided that 1 program in “English only” is ok to be aired twice a day and to eliminate one of the best news programs in Spanish, way better produced than many other news casts, BUT.. it is in Spanish, so who cares!., right? Moneywise?, we have proof that we do as well as any program in English, even with an obsolete answering system that at nights there is no one to answer and if you are lucky and your call is taken, it’s in English !! an answering system that answers in English during the Spanish Language programming.. .. give me a break!

To conclude, my dear fellow travelers on this journey, I feel sadness and indignation. On the one hand, I know the most capable people are not in leadership positions of the most important foundation of the movement, and I am certain that we must also fight against this. On the other hand, there are also a good number of people who share the same

luminous ideal of a world where many worlds fit, as the Zapatistas of Chiapas so aptly put it.

It was painful to learn that at the November 9th meeting, Mr. Jack Neff and others were sent to “the dungeon of the disobedient.” The same as they did against Bella de Soto who now is the equivalent of a political prosecuted.

While this is nothing more than a dirty trick to cover up the ignorance and bad faith of those currently in power, it is a clear example of what they would do if they truly had the power. Every time I think about what they do, they remind me of Trump and his administration, but on a much smaller scale, yet just as dangerous. Pacifica has a code of ethics, rules of respect, and guidelines of inclusivity for all. Pacifica was born to give comfort, joy, equity and community empowerment by being the sound board for those of us who walk towards a better future. Today, those rules have gloomy gravediggers who are digging a deep grave for our beloved Pacifica Foundation.

To the rest of the board who believe the words of the punishers, ask yourselves if there is any reason to have turned the KPFFK board into, not a forum for debating ideas, but a miserable inquisition where dissent is punished by turning off your microphone, sending you to the virtual “dungeon of the disobedient” room, and threatening you that “next time it will be worse for you.” Oh, and for the next LSB meeting, keep using your medieval tools — the rack, the grinder, and the wheel for us the transgressors.. Rebels of your ridiculous laws

And to those on the national board that align with the new dark day of Pacifica you can suspend me right now, you mean nothing to me. Kicking me out will only prove how insecure a semi tyrant is.

We’re going to keep fighting, because only in this way do we honor our ancestors, our memory, and our present generations. We were born to fight and you were born with shame on your foreheads

What the New Day Group has done is a clear violation of the right to dissent which is in a clear violation of the first amendment of the constitution and the code of ethics of Pacifica and its bylaws.

I’m exercising my right of free speech and this is my opinion.

In honor & defense of the Pacifica mission

Sincerely,
Rodrigo Argueta

Member of the KPFFK Local Station Board,
Producer of “Voces de Libertad”

Comments? Email me at lacomite@aol.com

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

- ★ Dec 7 - Howard Zinn Book Fair, SF CityCollege - M. Novick on panel, 2:30
 - ★ Dec 9 - Mumia Freedom Tour / Jamal ibn Mumia, 6:30, 3423 W. 43rd Pl.
 - ★ Dec 16 - Dual Power/Free the Land - Build & Fight Learning Series on-line streaming live via YouTube, Instagram & Facebook.
 - ★ Dec 26 to Jan 1 - Kwanzaa: Celebrate Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-determination), Ujima (Collective work), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity) and Imani (Faith)
- Check us out via www.antiracist.org, facebook.com/tideturning, ara-la.tumblr.com

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- MUMIA ABU JAMAL

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