

A tale of two FBI raids

By Eric Brooks

Just before the FBI descended on Donald Trump's Florida residence last week, they conducted raids on the headquarters and homes of a Pan Africanist group in St. Petersburg, Florida, and St. Louis, Missouri. The search of Trump's home was related to a National Archive complaint that classified documents were improperly housed in the former president's basement; it's reported that the St. Petersburg and St. Louis searches were connected to the charging of a Russian national with attempts at influencing U.S. domestic policy.

The two raids were a study in contrasts. Trump's secret service detail and lawyers were apprised of the search warrant and pending visit prior to the FBI's arrival, who showed up in plain clothes, without weapons, and unmarked cars. In the second raid, homes were invaded without warning or showing a warrant and the individuals subjected to FBI agents employing flash grenades, weapons, and armored vehicles.

Notwithstanding the protocols accorded a former president, the comparison couldn't be more stark: On the one hand, a president impeached twice by Congress for abuse of power, obstruction of Congress, and incitement of insurrection; a potential Justice Department target for other crimes committed in and out of office; and the subject of multiple civil and criminal investigations in New

York and Georgia; on the other, members of a African American group involved in community self-help with a platform that calls for reparations, awakened at dawn by a military-style raid and handcuffed in the street. But as is typical, that didn't stop the FBI, who racially profiled and criminalized them. "It's a legitimate question," said CPUSA co-chair Joe Sims, "Why the heavy artillery? And where was the search warrant?" "I'll tell you why," he continued, "They're sending a message that we're

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ready to use overwhelming brute force."

While no charges have been brought yet in St. Petersburg and St. Louis, it's alleged that the Putin government has engaged in attempts at domestic influence peddling and that various groups are acting as "agents of a foreign principal," a charge



The kid-glove treatment vs. a violent raid.

made under the Smith Act against the Communist Party repeatedly during the Cold War. “They even handcuffed and arrested Dr. Du Bois when he was 83 years old for his leadership of the Peace Information Center, calling it a Moscow front,” commented Sims. The Peace Information Center was dedicated to eliminating atomic and other weapons of mass destruction. “We should be very careful here” he continued, “If accepting a plane ticket or participating in an international conference held in Russia is tantamount to a crime, what prevents the Justice Department from making similar charges against folks who go to, say, Cuba, Venezuela, or Sweden or France for that matter. It’s an extremely dangerous precedent, in light of attempts to launch a Cold War 2.0.”

Omalil Yeshitela, head of the targeted group, recounted what occurred:

I went down the stairwell [of my home], and when I got to the bottom of the stairwell, these laser dots from automatic weapons were bouncing off my

chest.... There was a large armored vehicle in front of my house. There were camouflage-clad troopers, FBI agents, and I don’t know who else, with flak jackets and automatic weapons.... [A] drone went past [my wife’s] ... head and into the house. I... was zip-tied at the side of the house. ... My wife was handcuffed.

The Justice Department investigation is continuing. “Even if the charges were true,” said Sims, “you have to ask, why target African Americans, who by the way have agency and aren’t doing anyone’s bidding, when there are many others including Trump’s minions on the extreme right who carry water for the Putin government. Now don’t get me wrong. We’re opposed to any country’s interference in U.S. affairs. And we just as strongly oppose the U.S.’s interference in the affairs of other countries.”

We must shine a light on these attacks, from wherever they arise, and call them out for what they are — attacks on democracy.

Combating right-wing threats a key theme at Pride@Work convention

By Mark Gruenberg

Combating threats to their freedoms to marry who they want, to accept jobs without fear of being fired for being gay, or of being the target of “social issue” campaigns around such schemes as “Don’t say gay” laws will be key issues at the AFL-CIO’s Pride@Work convention in downtown Minneapolis.

The convention ran from August 18-20. Delegates represent the AFL-CIO’s constituency group for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer+ workers. They’ll hear from top Minnesota political speakers, such as Attorney General Keith Ellison and Secretary of State Steve Simon and union leaders who are LGBTQ people.

Those unionists include Teachers (AFT) President Randi Weingarten, Pride@Work Executive Director Jerame Davis, AFGE Vice President Jeremy Lannan and Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union President Stuart Applebaum.

And AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond and News Guild President Jon Schleuss will receive Solidarity Awards for their championship of LG-BTQ+ workers. Both will also speak.

Those threats hit home for the LGBTQ+ community when the Republican-named right-wing U.S.

Supreme Court majority deliberately destroyed the constitutional right to abortion in the recent case pitting Mississippi’s sole abortion clinic against the Magnolia State’s restrictive abortion statute. The clinic lost. It since closed permanently.

Not only did the justices, 5-4, toss out the 49-year-old Roe v Wade ruling which said abortion was constitutional, but the senior justice in that majority, Clarence Thomas, called for review of the constitutionality of same-sex marriage and even of contraception. In so many words, P@W Executive Director Davis asked: “Who’s next?”

The rightist threats even loom above Ellison and Simon. In the recent primary, Minnesota’s Republicans nominated Trump election 2020 deniers and rabid right-wingers to oppose both this fall.

“We chose our theme this year, Out for Democracy, to highlight how much democratic values underpin both the LGBTQ+ equality movement and the labor movement alike. Like the labor movement, Pride@Work believes in every person’s right to a voice in their workplace and their government. But those core democratic values are under attack from all sides,” the group’s convention call says.

Fights for the right to same sex marriage, the right to be free of discrimination on the job, and the right to be free of right wing attacks all to be tackled at AFL-CIO’s Pride gathering.

Domestic Workers Alliance takes Bill Of Rights drive national



By Press Associates

The National Domestic Workers Alliance is taking its drive for a Domestic Workers Bill of Rights national, combining an online petition with extensive testimony before sympathetic Democrats on the House Workforce Protections Subcommittee.

Illinois, Oregon, California, Connecticut, New York, Massachusetts, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico and Virginia, plus Seattle and Philadelphia, have passed their own Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. NDWA founder Ai-jen Poo and C. Nicole Mason, a PhD who heads the Institute for Women's Policy Research, laid out the case for a nationwide statute on July 28.

If approved, HR4826, the National Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, would do just that. It would ensure the nation's 2.2 million-plus domestic workers "access to a safe workplace," by setting standards their employers must meet.

"While the hearing marks a historic step towards moving the bill to the House floor for a vote and winning critical legislation for domestic workers, we need to ensure Congress acts with urgency to protect and respect domestic workers!" the petition declares.

"As we speak, there are millions of working parents and family caregivers counting on nannies, home care workers and cleaners to enable them to work," Ai-jen Poo told Subcommittee Chair Rep. Alva Adams, D-N.C., whose mother was a domestic worker.

That's because, as a result of racism when the original Fair Labor Standards Act passed in 1938, domestic workers—even then, mostly Black women—were excluded. So were agricultural workers, even then either Spanish-speaking or Black men, for the same reason. That old racism is compounded by the fact that domestic worker women toil in "hidden" workplaces "behind closed doors in private homes."

Domestic workers are "undervalued in our economy due to its (domestic work's) roots in forced enslavement and indentured servitude," Mason elaborated. As a result, domestic workers "were left out of a variety of federal labor protections throughout the 20th century leaving these workers particularly vulnerable to poverty and exploitation."

"The Covid-19 (coronavirus) she-cession" exposed that vulnerability. Domestic workers were among those most impacted as employers closed their homes." Many could not seek or get jobless benefits "and did not have sufficient access to paid sick leave or health insurance."

Needless to say, the panel's Republicans want to keep the nation's domestic workers in their place, though the party was careful not to use that racially loaded phrase. Instead, their leader, Rep. Fred Keller, R-Pa., cloaked their objections to HR4826 by claiming it loads "onerous federal regulations" onto individual families that employ domestic workers.

They take their fight onto the Internet with a petition and to Congress at a hearing.

LOCAL NEWS

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Zelensky calls on Western countries to ban entry to all Russians

By Morning Star

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has asked the West to ban all Russians from entering their respective countries.

In an interview published by the Washington Post today, he said that Russians should “live in their own world until they change their philosophy.

“The most important sanctions are to close the borders — because the Russians are taking away someone else’s land,” Mr. Zelensky said.

“The population picked this government and they’re not fighting it, not arguing with it, not shouting at it.”

Mr. Zelensky reiterated his criticism of the current sanctions imposed on Russia, which he says are weak and ineffective.

He has consistently called for more arms to help Ukraine in the conflict against Russia and the imposition of a no-fly zone.

But he has rejected calls for peace, saying that dialogue can only take place after the defeat of Russia and the removal of all its soldiers from Ukrainian territory, including Crimea.

Russians have been banned from entering sports competitions including football’s World Cup and the Wimbledon tennis tournament.

Some Western education institutions have banned the teaching of Russian literature while inside Ukraine, Russian books and music has been banned as part of a “derussification” program.

‘Otra America’ de Barbara Kingsolver: Poemas en una edición bilingüe actualizada

By Eric Gordon

La escritora estadounidense Barbara Kingsolver es conocida como novelista, reconocida por obras de conciencia social como *The Lacuna*, *The Poisonwood Bible* y otros títulos. También ha escrito libros de no ficción, incluidos *Animal*, *Vegetable*, *Miracle: A Year in Food Life*; y *Manteniendo la línea: mujeres en la gran huelga minera de Arizona de 1983*.

El último libro está relacionado con su mudanza a Tucson, Arizona, justo después de la universidad. Como escribió en la primera edición de 1992 de *Otra América*, un volumen de poemas que en realidad fue su primer trabajo publicado: “Llegué al suroeste esperando cactus, amplios espacios abiertos y aventura. Encontré, en cambio, otra América. Ni postales ni nada parecido a lo que antes suponía que era la cultura estado-unidense. Arizona era cactus, claro que sí, y la majestad de las montañas púrpuras, pero en este desierto que ardía con una cruda belleza, se había construido un gran cerco que trataba de dividir el norte del sur. Me había topado con una tierra fronteriza en donde la gente perecía de calor durante el día, y de una fría hostilidad por la noche.”

En Arizona conoció tipos de seres humanos que nunca antes había conocido a “cientos de refugiados latino-americanos que huían de la muerte en sus países de origen, pero que tenían bloqueada la entrada a los Estados Unidos.” Y conoció a un ejército dedicado de personas extraordinarias en un ambiente informal de “ferrocarril subterráneo” que ofreció santuario, alimento, amistad, solidaridad. “Y de pronto me encontré compartiendo mi casa con refugiados, escuchando las

historias del terror del que habían huido. Me sorprendió saber que los regímenes brutales de sus países, como El Salvador y Chile, contaban con el apoyo y las armas de mi gobierno. Nuestros impuestos habían contribuido a entrenar y financiar a los ejércitos que acibillaban, torturaban, violaban y asesinaban a sus ciudadanos. Y nuestros impuestos pagaban a las patrullas fronterizas que detenían a estas familias cansadas de la guerra, devolviéndolas a destinos que podrían ser peores que la muerte.”

Por lo que conozco de cuero de zapatos y pescados, a lo mejor dos hombres que hambrientos de pan se pronunciarían para rechazar un festín, y la esencia ardiente de la sed del mediodía buscaría y encontraría la mesa donde los vasos de cristal se llenan de vinagre y sal.

Por lo que conozco, el barco elegiría la niebla y nunca buscaría la sirena del puerto que anuncia, por entre la bruma, del deshonor de un hombre agonizante, su canción única: borrar estos crímenes de la tierra.

En otro poema, “Las entrañas del monstruo,” dedicado a Ernesto Cardenal de Nicaragua, Kingsolver reflexiona sobre su propia infancia en América del Norte y su comprensión tardía de que las naciones del Sur vivían una realidad completamente diferente, aunque interrelacionada. En su totalidad:

Durante la aridez épica de mis años de infancia, aprendí a lanzarme bajo mi escritorio para sobrevivir a la lluvia de bombas cubanas. Aprendí a arrodillarme sobre el suelo astillado y rezar a Dios para que los comunistas no vinieran y nos obligaran a dejar de rezar.

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