



VIEWS & COMMENTS

A Tiny Publication of Philly Metro WSA

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Welcome to Views & Comments!

What is *Views & Comments*? And why a tiny publication? As a small team of Anarchist-Syndicalist writers, we want to get ourselves back to print media, as we mostly write for online magazines.

We have a few projects in the works, but *Views & Comments* is meant to be a start. It's a two-page publication with the feel of a magazine, containing news, opinion journalism, and reviews, condensed into tiny articles.

The name *Views & Comments* comes from the Anarchist-Syndicalist publication of the same name, which was produced in the 1950s, on behalf of the Libertarian League, by Sam and Esther Dolgoff and Russell Blackwell.

Solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en Nation

By Charlotte Lecoin

On Saturday, June 18th, the International Committee of the Workers' Solidarity Alliance hosted an online talk with Wet'suwet'en activist Marlene Hale. Ms Hale, a chef and educator, has become a leading figure in the Wet'suwet'en Nation's fight for justice and equality, including the ongoing battle against a Coastal GasLink natural gas pipeline which would be built under the Wedzin Kwa River in British Columbia. She gave a history of the movement since 2019, highlighted poor conditions and police brutality faced by the indigenous people, and appealed for solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en fight. Donations to the legal aid fund for the arrested Wet'suwet'en activists can be found online. The Wet'suwet'en case is currently being heard in the Supreme Court of Canada. Ms Hale reiterated the Wet'suwet'en call to boycott the Royal Bank of Canada, which has been financing the Coastal GasLink pipeline.

The talk was attended by IWA members, affiliates, and friends from the USA, Canada, Australia, Spain, Slovakia, and Great Britain. Marlene Hale hosts regular webinars on her Facebook group, "Marlene's Solidarity Action Group," and appears in the documentary "Coming Home to Wet'suwet'en."

A World Without Roe v Wade

By Hanna Waldman

A pregnant woman, known only as Agnieszka T, was admitted to a Polish hospital on December 21st of last year. She was pregnant with twins, and soon one fetus had died in utero. This, due to Poland's ban on abortion, was a death sentence for Agnieszka and her second fetus. She passed away over a month later, likely from sepsis. Her death was entirely preventable, if the law did not dictate that nebulous Christian values overrode her—and half the population's—right to medical treatment. Stories like Agnieszka's regularly make their way out of Polish maternity wards—she is not unique in her manslaughter by the state. Anyone capable of pregnancy could find themselves in the same situation. This is the world many Americans have just entered, after the ruling in *Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health Organization* on June 24th. Abortion became illegal in 13 states as soon as the ruling was official, and is likely to be banned in 13 more within months.

When doctors must choose between criminal charges or allowing a patient to die, no one is safe—regardless of their religious or political stance. This is not only about a right to choice or autonomy. It threatens our right to live. But the Supreme Court, and a minority of Americans with extremist Christian views (as, for example, Jewish law commands that the mother be saved in circumstances such as Agnieszka's) have wrested power from the hands of the majority, and now value a "domestic supply of infants" (a phrase that, among other terrible implications, is a clear nod to dwindling workforce as labor, driven in large part by young women and LGBTQ people, gains momentum to come into its power once again) over human lives. Democrats in Congress promised to codify the protections of *Roe v. Wade* into law, but have failed due to members of their own party. Representative Mike Kelly (R-PA) has introduced a federal bill that would ban all abortions "after six weeks." Since pregnancy is measured not from conception, but from the date of last menstrual period, few people have to opportunity to know they're pregnant, let alone have the time to plan for and procure an abortion, before that point. It is, effectively, a blanket federal ban. Those of us living in "blue states" are not safe, either. The *Dobbs* ruling also leaves the door open for further rollbacks of civil rights—contraception access, LGBTQ rights, interracial marriage, and more.

STRIKE NOTES

Starbucks Coffee

Efforts to unionize Starbucks Coffee workers are still going strong. Despite Starbucks' concerted efforts at union-busting, 100 stores in 25 states had already voted to unionize by the end of May, with hundreds more preparing to vote in coming months.

UAW Raises Strike Pay

On June 6th, United Auto Workers announced that it would increase strike pay by almost 50%, from \$275 to \$400 weekly. The UAW will also start to allow workers who have previously collected unemployment benefits to collect strike pay—an important step in the wake of the pandemic.

Activision Blizzard

In a groundbreaking development for the video game industry, quality assurance employees at Raven Software, a division of powerhouse developer Activision Blizzard, have voted to unionize. This will have major ramifications going forward as Microsoft plans a purchase of Activision Blizzard.

The Threat of Increased Police Funding after Uvalde

By Marianne Wisniewski

The police response to the May 24th mass shooting in an Uvalde, Texas elementary school has, once again, thrown the ineffectiveness of government overspending on militarized police into the spotlight. In his State of the Union address earlier this year, President Biden suggested that even more police funding was necessary to stop the rise of violent crimes in America. Police funding already takes up 37% of the city budget for Uvalde, Texas. Despite the training and military-style gear paid for by such a large proportion of the city's budget, officers stood outside and failed to stop the shooter for more than an hour, costing numerous lives. The extent of their misconduct continues to be revealed as the shooting is investigated.

According to a Statista analysis of available data, as of June 1st, 2022, 39 people had been killed in mass shootings in the United States—21 of whom were victims of the Uvalde shooting. As of that same date, 47 Americans had died in police shootings. 1,039 Americans are recorded as having died in mass shootings since 1982. 1,055 Americans died at the hands of police officers in 2021 alone, a hugely disproportionate number of which were people of color. An oversized police budget may make the capitalist class feel safer, but statistically, it costs far more working-class lives than it saves.

Freedom for Kirill Ukraintsev!

By Sachio Ko-yin

At a January 30th meeting of the International Committee of the Workers' Solidarity Alliance, the case of Kirill Ukraintsev, President of the Russian Couriers' Union, was discussed. Ukraintsev has been arrested by the Russian authorities for nothing more than "calling or participating in an unauthorized rally more than twice within 180 days," for which he is facing trial this June 25th. Ukraintsev faces up to five years in prison. The International Committee read a statement put out by the CNT-AIT France giving more background on the history of Russia's repression of the Couriers' Union, and calling on labor activists to participate in acts of solidarity. The statement calls for the freedom of Ukraintsev, and calls for an end to the Russia's anti-union repression.

Since 2020, the Couriers' Union has led a number strikes demanding the return of stolen wages. It also demands real contracts for delivery workers. Ukraintsev was arrested in April, alongside multiple other delivery workers.

The statement from IWA-AIT France ends with the words from the Couriers Union: "Today we ask all comrades who are disgusted with the oppression of man by man and the alienation of labor by capital to support our organization of precarious workers... we call on our foreign companions to take part in these actions of solidarity."

Views & Comments is a publication of the Metro Philadelphia Chapter of the Workers' Solidarity Alliance, an anarchist-syndicalist activist group with members from all over North America. WSA has Friends status with the International Workers' Association (IWA-AIT).

Philadelphia Metro WSA can be found on Twitter @wsaphilly

Or online at philly-wsa.org

For Workers' Solidarity Alliance on a national level, please visit workersolidarity.org

For the IWA-AIT, please visit iwa-ait.org

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